



FRAGMENTS

O F

ANCIENT POETRY,

Collected in the Highlands of Scotland,

A N D

Translated from the Galic or Erse Language.

*Vos quoque qui fortes animas, belloque peremtas
Laudibus in longum vates dimittitis ævum,
Plurima securi fudistis carmina Bardi.*

LUCAN.

E D I N B U R G H :

Printed for G. HAMILTON and J. BALFOUR.

MDCCLX.

$$\frac{k}{\pi}$$



P R E F A C E.

THE public may depend on the following fragments as genuine remains of ancient Scottish poetry. The date of their composition cannot be exactly ascertained. Tradition, in the country where they were written, refers them to an æra of the most remote antiquity: and this tradition is supported by the spirit and strain of the poems themselves; which abound with those ideas, and paint those manners, that belong to the most early state of society. The diction too; in the original, is very obsolete; and differs widely from the style of such poems as have been written in the same language two or three centuries ago. They were certainly composed before the establish-

ment of clanship in the northern part of Scotland, which is itself very ancient ; for had clans been then formed and known, they must have made a considerable figure in the work of a Highland Bard ; whereas there is not the least mention of them in these poems. It is remarkable that there are found in them no allusions to the Christian religion or worship ; indeed, few traces of religion of any kind. One circumstance seems to prove them to be coeval with the very infancy of Christianity in Scotland. In a fragment of the same poems, which the translator has seen, a Culdee or Monk is represented as desirous to take down in writing from the mouth of Ofcian, who is the principal personage in several of the following fragments, his warlike achievements and those of his family. But Ofcian treats the monk and his religion with disdain, telling him, that the deeds of such great men were subjects too high

high to be recorded by him, or by any of his religion: A full proof that Christianity was not as yet established in the country.

Though the poems now published appear as detached pieces in this collection, there is ground to believe that most of them were originally episodes of a greater work which related to the wars of Fingal. Concerning this hero innumerable traditions remain, to this day, in the Highlands of Scotland. The story of Ofcian, his son, is so generally known, that to describe one in whom the race of a great family ends, it has passed into a proverb; “Ofcian the last
“ of the heroes.”

There can be no doubt that these poems are to be ascribed to the Bards; a race of men well known to have continued throughout many ages in Ireland
and

and the north of Scotland. Every chief or great man had in his family a Bard or poet, whose office it was to record in verse, the illustrious actions of that family. By the succession of these Bards, such poems were handed down from race to race; some in manuscript, but more by oral tradition. And tradition, in a country so free of intermixture with foreigners, and among a people so strongly attached to the memory of their ancestors, has preserved many of them in a great measure incorrupted to this day.

They are not set to music, nor sung. The versification in the original is simple; and to such as understand the language, very smooth and beautiful. Rhyme is seldom used: but the cadence, and the length of the line varied, so as to suit the sense. The translation is extremely literal. Even the arrangement of the words in the original has been imitated;

imitated; to which must be imputed some inversions in the style, that otherwise would not have been chosen.

Of the poetical merit of these fragments nothing shall here be said. Let the public judge, and pronounce. It is believed, that, by a careful inquiry, many more remains of ancient genius, no less valuable than those now given to the world, might be found in the same country where these have been collected. In particular there is reason to hope that one work of considerable length, and which deserves to be styled an heroic poem, might be recovered and translated, if encouragement were given to such an undertaking. The subject is, an invasion of Ireland by Swarthan King of Lochlyn; which is the name of Denmark in the Erse language. Cuchulaid, the General or Chief of the Irish tribes, upon intelligence of the invasion,

invasion, assembles his forces. Councils are held; and battles fought. But after several unsuccessful engagements, the Irish are forced to submit. At length, Fingal King of Scotland, called in this poem, "The Desert of the hills," arrives with his ships to assist Cuchulaid. He expels the Danes from the country; and returns home victorious. This poem is held to be of greater antiquity than any of the rest that are preserved: And the author speaks of himself as present in the expedition of Fingal. The three last poems in the collection are fragments which the translator obtained of this epic poem; and though very imperfect, they were judged not unworthy of being inserted. If the whole were recovered, it might serve to throw considerable light upon the Scottish and Irish antiquities.

F R A G-

FRAGMENT

I.

SHILRIC, VINVELA.

VINVELA.

MY love is a son of the hill.
He pursues the flying deer.
His grey dogs are panting
around him; his bow-string sounds in
the wind. Whether by the fount of
the rock, or by the stream of the
mountain thou liest; when the rushes are
nodding with the wind, and the mist
is flying over thee, let me approach
my love unperceived, and see him
from the rock. Lovely I saw thee
first by the aged oak; thou wert re-
turning tall from the chace; the fairest
among thy friends.

B

SHILRIC.

SHILRIC.

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

VINVELA.

THEN thou art gone, O Shilric! and I am alone on the hill. The deer are seen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed;
 he

he is in the field of graves. Strangers! sons of the waves! spare my lovely Shilric.

SHILRIC.

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

VINVELA.

Yes!—I will remember thee—indeed my Shilric will fall. What shall I do, my love! when thou art gone for ever? Through these hills I will go at noon: I will go through the silent heath. There

I will see where often thou fatestt return-
ing from the chace. Indeed, my Shil-
ric will fall; but I will remember
him.

H.

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

BUT is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath ? bright
as

as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer-storm? — She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the pool. Hark!

RETURNEST thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric!

YES, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? why on the heath, alone?

ALONE I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-house. With grief for thee I expired. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb.

SHE fleets, she fails away; as grey mist before the wind! — and, wilt thou
not

not stay, my love? Stay and behold
my tears? fair thou appearest, my love!
fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit ; on
the top of the hill of winds. When
mid-day is silent around, converse, O
my love, with me ! come on the wings
of the gale ! on the blast of the moun-
tain, come ! Let me hear thy voice, as
thou passest, when mid-day is silent a-
round.

III.

EVENING is grey on the hills. The north wind resounds through the woods. White clouds rise on the sky: the trembling snow descends. The river howls afar, along its winding course. Sad, by a hollow rock, the grey-hair'd Carryl sat. Dry fern waves over his head; his seat is in an aged birch. Clear to the roaring winds he lifts his voice of woe.

TOSSED on the wavy ocean is He, the hope of the isles; Malcolm, the support of the poor; foe to the proud in arms! Why hast thou left us behind? why live we to mourn thy fate? We might have heard, with thee, the voice of the deep; have seen the oozy rock.

SAD on the sea-beat shore thy spouse looketh for thy return. The time of thy

thy promise is come ; the night is gathering around. But no white sail is on the sea ; no voice is heard except the blustering winds. Low is the foul of the war ! Wet are the locks of youth ! By the foot of some rock thou liest ; washed by the waves as they come. Why, ye winds, did ye bear him on the desert rock ? Why, ye waves, did ye roll over him ?

BUT, Oh ! what voice is that ? Who rides on that meteor of fire ! Green are his airy limbs. It is he ! it is the ghost of Malcolm !—Rest, lovely soul, rest on the rock ; and let me hear thy voice !—He is gone, like a dream of the night. I see him through the trees. Daughter of Reynold ! he is gone. Thy spouse shall return no more. No more shall his hounds come from the hill, forerunners of their master. No more from the distant rock shall his

C

voice

voice greet thine ear. Silent is he in the deep, unhappy daughter of Reynold !

I will sit by the stream of the plain.
Ye rocks ! hang over my head. Hear my voice, ye trees ! as ye bend on the shaggy hill. My voice shall preserve the praise of him, the hope of the isles.

IV.

CONNAL, CRIMORA,

CRIMORA.

WHO cometh from the hill, like
 a cloud tinged with the beam
 of the west? Whose voice is that, loud
 as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of
 Carryl? It is my love in the light of
 steel; but sad is his darkened brow.
 Live the mighty race of Fingal? or
 what disturbs my Connal?

CONNAL.

THEY live. I saw them return from
 the chace, like a stream of light. The
 sun was on their shields: In a line they
 descended the hill. Loud is the voice of

the youth; the war, my love, is near.
 To-morrow the enormous Dargo comes
 to try the force of our race. The race of
 Fingal he defies; the race of battle and
 wounds.

CRIMORA.

CONNAL, I saw his sails like grey mist
 on the fable wave. They came to land.
 Connal, many are the warriors of
 Dargo!

CONNAL.

BRING me thy father's shield; the iron
 shield of Rinval; that shield like the
 full moon when it is darkened in the
 sky.

CRIMORA.

CRIMORA.

THAT shield I bring, O Connal; but
 it did not defend my father. By the
 spear of Gauror he fell. Thou mayst
 fall, O Connal!

CONNAL.

FALL indeed I may: But raise my
 tomb, Crimora. Some stones, a mound
 of earth, shall keep my memory.
 Though fair thou art, my love, as the
 light; more pleasant than the gale of
 the hill; yet I will not stay. Raise my
 tomb, Crimora.

CRIMORA.

THEN give me those arms of light;
 that sword, and that spear of steel. I
 shall meet Dargo with thee, and aid my
 lovely

lovely Connal. Farewell, ye rocks of
 Ardven! ye deer! and ye streams of
 the hill!—We shall return no more.
 Our tombs are distant far.

V.

AUTUMN is dark on the mountains ;
 grey mist rests on the hills. The
 whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark
 rolls the river through the narrow plain.
 A tree stands alone on the hill, and
 marks the grave of Connal. The leaves
 whirl round with the wind, and strew
 the grave of the dead. At times are
 seen here the ghosts of the deceased,
 when the musing hunter alone stalks
 slowly over the heath.

WHO can reach the source of thy
 race, O Connal? and who recount thy
 Fathers? Thy family grew like an oak
 on the mountain, which meeteth the
 wind with its lofty head. But now it
 is torn from the earth. Who shall sup-
 ply the place of Connal?

HERE

HERE was the din of arms ; and here the groans of the dying. Mournful are the wars of Fingal ! O Connal ! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm ; thy sword, a beam of the sky ; thy height, a rock on the plain ; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, when thou confoundedst the field. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy.

DARGO the mighty came on, like a cloud of thunder. His brows were contracted and dark. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side ; dire was the clang of their steel.

THE daughter of Rival was near ; Crimora, bright in the armour of man ; her hair loose behind, her bow in her hand. She followed the youth to the
war,

war, Connal her much beloved. She drew the string on Dargo; but erring pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid!—He bleeds; her Connal dies. All the night long she cries, and all the day, O Connal, my love, and my friend! With grief the sad mourner died.

EARTH here incloseth the loveliest pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of their tomb; I sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass; and their memory rushes on my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of the mountain you rest alone.

VI.

SON of the noble Fingal, Ofcian,
 Prince of men ! what tears run down
 the cheeks of age ? what shades thy
 mighty soul ?

MEMORY, fon of Alpin, memory
 wounds the aged. Of former times are
 my thoughts ; my thoughts are of the
 noble Fingal. The race of the king re-
 turn into my mind, and wound me with
 remembrance.

ONE day, returned from the sport of
 the mountains, from pursuing the sons
 of the hill, we covered this heath with
 our youth. Fingal the mighty was here,
 and Ofeur, my fon, great in war. Fair
 on our fight from the sea, at once, a
 virgin came. Her breast was like the
 fnow of one night. Her cheek like the
 bud

bud of the rose. Mild was her blue rolling eye: but sorrow was big in her heart.

FINGAL renowned in war! she cries, sons of the king, preserve me! Speak secure, replies the king, daughter of beauty, speak: our ear is open to all: our swords redress the injured. I fly from Ullin, she cries, from Ullin famous in war. I fly from the embrace of him who would debase my blood. Cremor, the friend of men, was my father; Cremor the Prince of Inverne.

FINGAL's younger sons arose; Carryl expert in the bow; Fillan beloved of the fair; and Fergus first in the race. — Who from the farthest Lochlyn? who to the seas of Molochasquir? who dares hurt the maid whom the sons of Fingal guard? Daughter of beauty, rest

secure ; rest in peace, thou fairest of women.

FAR in the blue distance of the deep, some spot appeared like the back of the ridge-wave. But soon the ship increased on our sight. The hand of Ullin drew her to land. The mountains trembled as he moved. The hills shook at his steps. Dire rattled his armour around him. Death and destruction were in his eyes. His stature like the roe of Morven. He moved in the lightning of steel.

OUR warriors fell before him, like the field before the reapers. Fingal's three sons he bound. He plunged his sword into the fair-one's breast. She fell as a wreath of snow before the sun in spring. Her bosom heaved in death ; her soul came forth in blood.

OSCUR my son came down ; the
mighty in battle descended. His armour
rattled as thunder ; and the lightning of
his eyes was terrible. There, was the
clashing of swords ; there, was the voice
of steel. They struck and they thrust ;
they digged for death with their swords.
But death was distant far, and delayed
to come. The sun began to decline ;
and the cow-herd thought of home.
Then Oscur's keen steel found the heart
of Ullin. He fell like a mountain-oak
covered over with glistering frost : He
shone like a rock on the plain.—
Here the daughter of beauty lieth ; and
here the bravest of men. Here one
day ended the fair and the valiant.
Here rest the pursuer and the pur-
sued.

Son of Alpin ! the woes of the aged
are many : their tears are for the past.
This raised my sorrow, warriour ; me-
mory

mory awaked my grief. Oscur my
son was brave; but Oscur is now no
more. Thou hast heard my grief, O
son of Alpin; forgive the tears of the
aged.



VII.

WHY openest thou afresh the spring of my grief, O son of Alpin, inquiring how Oſcur fell? My eyes are blind with tears ; but memory beams on my heart. How can I relate the mournful death of the head of the people ! Prince of the warriors, Oſcur my ſon, ſhall I ſee thee no more !

HE fell as the moon in a ſtorm ; as the ſun from the miſt of his courſe, when clouds riſe from the waſte of the waves, when the blackneſs of the ſtorm inwraps the rocks of Ardannider. I, like an ancient oak on Morven, I moulder alone in my place. The blaſt hath lopped my branches away ; and I tremble at the wings of the north. Prince of the warriors, Oſcur my ſon ! ſhall I ſee thee no more !

DERMID

DERMID and Oſcur were one: They reaped the battle together. Their friendſhip was ſtrong as their ſteel; and death walked between them to the field. They came on the foe like two rocks falling from the brows of Ardven. Their ſwords were ſtained with the blood of the valiant: warriors fainter at their names. Who was a match for Oſcur, but Dermid? and who for Dermid, but Oſcur?

THEY killed mighty Dargo in the field; Dargo before invincible. His daughter was fair as the morn; mild as the beam of night. Her eyes, like two ſtars in a ſhower: her breath, the gale of ſpring: her breasts, as the new-fallen ſnow floating on the moving heath. The warriors ſaw her, and loved; their ſouls were fixed on the maid. Each loved her, as his fame; each muſt poſſeſs her or die. But her ſoul was fixed
on

on Ofcur ; my fon was the youth of her love. She forgot the blood of her father ; and loved the hand that flew him.

SON of Ofcian, faid Dermid, I love ;
O Ofcur, I love this maid. But her
foul cleaveth unto thee ; and nothing
can heal Dermid. Here, pierce this
bofom, Ofcur ; relieve me, my friend,
with thy fword.

MY fword, fon of Morny, fhall never
be ftained with the blood of Dermid.

WHO then is worthy to flay me, O
Ofcur fon of Ofcian ? Let not my life
pafs away unknown. Let none but Of-
cur flay me. Send me with honour to
the grave, and let my death be renown-
ed.

E

DERMID,

DERMID, make use of thy sword;
 son of Morny, wield thy steel. Would
 that I fell with thee! that my death
 came from the hand of Dermid!

THEY fought by the brook of the
 mountain; by the streams of Branno.
 Blood tinged the silvery stream, and
 crudled round the mossy stones. Der-
 mid the graceful fell; fell, and smiled in
 death.

AND fallest thou, son of Morny;
 fallest thou by Ofcur's hand! Dermid
 invincible in war, thus do I see thee fall!
 —He went, and returned to the maid
 whom he loved; returned, but she per-
 ceived his grief.

WHY that gloom, son of Ofcian?
 what shades thy mighty soul?

THOUGH once renowned for the bow,
 O

O maid, I have lost my fame. Fixed on a tree by the brook of the hill, is the shield of Gormur the brave, whom in battle I flew. I have wasted the day in vain, nor could my arrow pierce it.

LET me try, son of Ofcian, the skill of Dargo's daughter. My hands were taught the bow: my father delighted in my skill.

SHE went. He stood behind the shield. Her arrow flew and pierced his breast *.

* Nothing was held by the ancient Highlanders more essential to their glory, than to die by the hand of some person worthy or renowned. This was the occasion of Ofcur's contriving to be slain by his mistress, now that he was weary of life. In those early times suicide was utterly unknown among that people, and no traces of it are found in the old poetry. Whence the translator suspects the account that follows of the daughter of Dargo killing herself, to be the interpolation of some later Bard.

BLESSED be that hand of snow ; and
 blessed thy bow of yew ! I fall resolved
 on death : and who but the daughter of
 Dargo was worthy to slay me ? Lay me
 in the earth, my fair-one ; lay me by
 the side of Dermid.

OSCUR ! I have the blood, the soul
 of the mighty Dargo. Well pleased I
 can meet death. My sorrow I can end
 thus.—She pierced her white bosom
 with steel. She fell ; she trembled ; and
 died.

By the brook of the hill their graves
 are laid ; a birch's unequal shade covers
 their tomb. Often on their green earth-
 en tombs the branchy sons of the moun-
 tain feed, when mid-day is all in flames,
 and silence is over all the hills.

VIII.

BY the side of a rock on the hill, beneath the aged trees, old Oseian sat on the moss; the last of the race of Fingal. Sightless are his aged eyes; his beard is waving in the wind. Dull through the leafless trees he heard the voice of the north. Sorrow revived in his soul: he began and lamented the dead.

How hast thou fallen like an oak, with all thy branches round thee! Where is Fingal the King? where is Oseian my son? where are all my race? Alas! in the earth they lie. I feel their tombs with my hands. I hear the river below murmuring hoarsely over the stones. What dost thou, O river, to me? Thou bringest back the memory of the past.

THE

THE race of Fingal stood on thy banks, like a wood in a fertile soil. Keen were their spears of steel. Hardy was he who dared to encounter their rage. Fillan the great was there. Thou Oscur wert there, my son ! Fingal himself was there, strong in the grey locks of years. Full rose his sinewy limbs ; and wide his shoulders spread. The unhappy met with his arm, when the pride of his wrath arose.

THE son of Morny came ; Gaul, the tallest of men. He stood on the hill like an oak ; his voice was like the streams of the hill. Why reigneth alone, he cries, the son of the mighty Corval ? Fingal is not strong to save : he is no support for the people. I am strong as a storm in the ocean ; as a whirlwind on the hill. Yield, son of Corval ; Fingal, yield to me.

OSCUR

OSCUR stood forth to meet him;
 my son would meet the foe. But Fin-
 gal came in his strength, and smiled at
 the vaunter's boast. They threw their
 arms round each other; they struggled
 on the plain. The earth is ploughed with
 their heels. Their bones crack as the boat
 on the ocean, when it leaps from wave to
 wave. Long did they toil; with night,
 they fell on the sounding plain; as two
 oaks, with their branches mingled, fall
 crashing from the hill. The tall son
 of Mornay is bound; the aged over-
 came.

FAIR with her locks of gold, her
 smooth neck, and her breasts of snow;
 fair, as the spirits of the hill when at
 silent noon they glide along the heath;
 fair, as the rain-bow of heaven; came
 Minvane the maid. Fingal! she soft-
 ly saith, loose me my brother Gaul.
 Loose me the hope of my race, the ter-
 ror

ror of all but Fingal. Can I, replies the King, can I deny the lovely daughter of the hill? take thy brother, O Minvane, thou fairer than the snow of the north!

SUCH, Fingal! were thy words; but thy words I hear no more. Sightless I sit by thy tomb. I hear the wind in the wood; but no more I hear my friends. The cry of the hunter is over. The voice of war is ceased.

IX.

THOU askest, fair daughter of the isles ! whose memory is preserved in these tombs ? The memory of Ronnan the bold, and Connan the chief of men ; and of her, the fairest of maids, Rivine the lovely and the good. The wing of time is laden with care. Every moment hath woes of its own. Why seek we our grief from afar ? or give our tears to those of other times ? But thou commandest, and I obey, O fair daughter of the isles !

CONAR was mighty in war. Caul was the friend of strangers. His gates were open to all ; midnight darkened not on his barred door. Both lived upon the sons of the mountains. Their bow was the support of the poor.

F

CONNAN

CONNAN was the image of Conar's soul. Caul was renewed in Ronnan his son. Rivine the daughter of Conar was the love of Ronnan ; her brother Connan was his friend. She was fair as the harvest-moon setting in the seas of Molo-chasquir. Her soul was settled on Ronnan ; the youth was the dream of her nights.

RIVINE, my love ! says Ronnan, I go to my king in Norway*. A year and a day shall bring me back. Wilt thou be true to Ronnan ?

RONNAN ! a year and a day I will spend in sorrow. Ronnan, behave like a man, and my soul shall exult in thy valour. Connan my friend, says Ronnan, wilt thou preserve Rivine thy sister ? Durstan is in love with the maid ;

* Supposed to be Fergus II. This fragment is reckoned not altogether so ancient as most of the rest.

and soon shall the sea bring the stranger to our coast.

RONNAN, I will defend: Do thou securely go.—He went. He returned on his day. But Durstan returned before him.

GIVE me thy daughter, Conar, says Durstan ; or fear and feel my power.

HE who dares attempt my sister, says Connan, must meet this edge of steel. Unerring in battle is my arm: my sword, as the lightning of heaven.

RONNAN the warrior came; and much he threatened Durstan.

BUT, faith Euran the servant of gold, Ronnan ! by the gate of the north shall Durstan this night carry thy fair-one away. Accursed, answers Ron-

nan, be this arm if death meet him not there.

CONNAN! faith Euran, this night shall the stranger carry thy sister away. My sword shall meet him, replies Connan, and he shall lie low on earth.

THE friends met by night, and they fought. Blood and sweat ran down their limbs as water on the mossy rock. Connan falls; and cries, O Durstan, be favourable to Rivine! — And is it my friend, cries Ronnan, I have slain? O Connan! I knew thee not.

HE went, and he fought with Durstan. Day began to rise on the combat, when fainting they fell, and expired. Rivine came out with the morn; and — O what detains my Ronnan! — She saw him lying pale in his blood; and her brother lying pale by his side.

What

What could she say? what could she do? her complaints were many and vain. She opened this grave for the warriors; and fell into it herself, before it was closed; like the sun snatched away in a storm.

THOU hast heard this tale of grief,
O fair daughter of the isles! Rivine was
fair as thyself: shed on her grave a
tear.

X.

IT is night ; and I am alone, forlorn
 on the hill of storms. The wind is
 heard in the mountain. The torrent
 shrieks down the rock. No hut receives
 me from the rain ; forlorn, on the hill of
 winds.

RISE, moon ! from behind thy
 clouds ; stars of the night, appear !
 Lead me, some light, to the place where
 my love rests from the toil of the chase !
 his bow near him, unstrung ; his dogs
 panting around him. But here I must
 sit alone, by the rock of the mossy
 stream. The stream and the wind
 roar ; nor can I hear the voice of my
 love.

WHY delayeth my Shalgar, why the
 son of the hill, his promise ? Here is
 the

the rock ; and the tree ; and here the roaring stream. Thou promisedst with night to be here. Ah ! whither is my Shalgar gone ? With thee I would fly my father ; with thee, my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes ; but we are not foes, O Shalgar !

CEASE a little while, O wind ! stream, be thou silent a while ! let my voice be heard over the heath ; let my wanderer hear me. Shalgar ! it is I who call. Here is the tree, and the rock. Shalgar, my love ! I am here. Why delayest thou thy coming ? Alas ! no answer.

Lo ! the moon appeareth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are grey on the face of the hill. But I see him not on the brow ; his dogs before him tell not that he is coming. Here I must sit alone.

BUT

BUT who are these that lie beyond me on the heath? Are they my love and my brother? — Speak to me, O my friends! they answer not. My soul is tormented with fears.—Ah! they are dead. Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Shalgar? why, O Shalgar! hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! speak to me; hear my voice, sons of my love! But alas! they are silent; silent for ever! Cold are their breasts of clay!

OH! from the rock of the hill; from the top of the mountain of winds, speak ye ghosts of the dead! speak, and I will not be afraid.—Whither are ye gone to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find you?

I sit in my grief. I wait for morning in my tears. Rear the tomb, ye friends

friends of the dead ; but close it not till I come. My life flieth away like a dream : why should I stay behind ? Here shall I rest with my friends by the stream of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill ; when the wind is up on the heath ; my ghost shall stand in the wind, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth. He shall fear, but love my voice. For sweet shall my voice be for my friends ; for pleasant were they both to me.

XI.

SAD! I am sad indeed: nor small my
 cause of woe! — Kirmor, thou hast
 lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty. Connar the valiant lives; and Annir the fairest of maids. The boughs of thy family flourish, O Kirmor! but Armyn is the last of his race.

RISE, winds of autumn, rise; blow
 upon the dark heath! streams of the
 mountains, roar! howl, ye tempests,
 in the trees! walk through broken
 clouds, O moon! show by intervals thy
 pale face! bring to my mind that sad
 night, when all my children fell; when
 Arindel the mighty fell; when Daura
 the lovely died.

DAURA, my daughter! thou wert
 fair;

fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Jura; white as the driven snow; sweet as the breathing gale. Armor renowned in war came, and fought Daura's love; he was not long denied; fair was the hope of their friends.

EARCH son of Odgal repined; for his brother was slain by Armor. He came disguised like a son of the sea: fair was his skiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armyn! a rock not distant in the sea, bears a tree on its side; red shines the fruit afar. There Armor waiteth for Daura. I came to fetch his love. Come, fair daughter of Armyn!

SHE went; and she called on Armor. Nought answered, but the son of the rock. Armor, my love! my love!

why tormentest thou me with fear?
 come, graceful son of Ardnart, come;
 it is Daura who calleth thee! — Earch
 the traitor fled laughing to the land.
 She lifted up her voice, and cried for
 her brother and her father. Arindel!
 Armyn! none to relieve your Daura?

HER voice came over the sea. Arin-
 del my son descended from the hill;
 rough in the spoils of the chace. His
 arrows rattled by his side; his bow was
 in his hand; five grey dogs attended
 his steps. He saw fierce Earch on the
 shore; he seized and bound him to an
 oak. Thick fly the thongs of the hide
 around his limbs; he loads the wind
 with his groans.

ARINDEL ascends the surgy deep in
 his boat, to bring Daura to the land.
 Armor came in his wrath, and let fly
 the grey-feathered shaft. It sung; it
 sunk

sunk in thy heart, O Arindel my son !
 for Earch the traitor thou diedst. What
 is thy grief, O Daura, when round
 thy feet is poured thy brother's blood !

THE boat is broken in twain by the
 waves. Armor plunges into the sea, to
 rescue his Daura or die. Sudden a blast
 from the hill comes over the waves.
 He sunk, and he rose no more.

ALONE, on the sea-beat rock, my
 daughter was heard to complain. Fre-
 quent and loud were her cries ; nor
 could her father relieve her. All
 night I stood on the shore. All night I
 heard her cries. Loud was the wind ;
 and the rain beat hard on the side of the
 mountain. Before morning appeared,
 her voice was weak. It died away, like
 the evening-breeze among the grass of
 the rocks. Spent with grief she expired.
 O lay me soon by her side.

WHEN

WHEN the storms of the mountain come ; when the north lifts the waves on high ; I sit by the sounding shore, and look on the fatal rock. Often by the setting moon I see the ghosts of my children. Indistinct, they walk in mournful conference together. Will none of you speak to me ? — But they do not regard their father.

XII.

R Y N O, A L P I N.

R Y N O.

THE wind and the rain are over:
 calm is the noon of day. The
 clouds are divided in heaven. Over
 the green hills flies the inconstant sun.
 Red through the stony vale comes
 down the stream of the hill. Sweet are
 thy murmurs, O stream! but more
 sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice
 of Alpin the son of the song, mourning
 for the dead. Bent is his head of age,
 and red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou
 son of the song, why alone on the si-
 lent hill? why complaineſt thou, as a
 blaſt in the wood; as a wave on the
 lonely ſhore?

ALPIN.

A L P I N.

MY tears, O Ryno ! are for the dead ;
my voice, for the inhabitants of the
grave. Tall thou art on the hill ; fair
among the sons of the plain. But thou
shalt fall like Morar ; and the mourner
shalt sit on thy tomb. The hills shall
know thee no more ; thy bow shall lie in
the hall, unstrung.

THOU wert swift, O Morar ! as a
roe on the hill ; terrible as a meteor of
fire. Thy wrath was as the storm of
December. Thy sword in battle, as
lightning in the field. Thy voice was
like a stream after rain ; like thunder
on distant hills. Many fell by thy
arm ; they were consumed in the flames
of thy wrath.

BUT when thou returnedst from war,
how

how peaceful was thy brow ! Thy face was like the sun after rain ; like the moon in the silence of night ; calm as the breast of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

NARROW is thy dwelling now ; dark the place of thine abode. With three steps I compass thy grave, O thou who wast so great before ! Four stones with their heads of moss are the only memorial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass which whistles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar ! thou art low indeed. Thou hast no mother to mourn thee ; no maid with her tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

Who on his staff is this ? who is this, whose head is white with age, whose

H eyes

eyes are red with tears, who quakes at every step? — It is thy father, O Morar! the father of none but thee. He heard of thy fame in battle; he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's fame; why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! weep; but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead; low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice; no more shall he awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake?

FAREWELL, thou bravest of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field shall see thee no more; nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendor of thy steel. Thou hast left no son. But the song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee; they shall hear of the fallen Morar.

XIII *.

CUCHULAID sat by the wall ; by the tree of the rustling leaf †. His spear leaned against the mossy rock. His shield lay by him on the grass. Whilst he thought on the mighty Carbre whom he slew in battle, the scout of the ocean came, Moran the son of Fi-thil.

RISE, Cuchulaid, rise ! I see the ships of Garve. Many are the foe, Cuchulaid ; many the sons of Lochlyn.

MORAN ! thou ever tremblest ; thy fears increase the foe. They are the ships of the Desert of hills arrived to assist Cuchulaid.

* This is the opening of the epic poem mentioned in the preface. The two following fragments are parts of some episodes of the same work.

† The aspen or poplar tree.

I saw their chief, says Moran, tall as a rock of ice. His spear is like that fir; his shield like the rising moon. He sat upon a rock on the shore, as a grey cloud upon the hill. Many, mighty man ! I said, many are our heroes ; Garve, well art thou named *, many are the sons of our king.

HE answered like a wave on the rock ; who is like me here ? The valiant live not with me ; they go to the earth from my hand. The king of the Desert of hills alone can fight with Garve. Once we wrestled on the hill. Our heels overturned the wood. Rocks fell from their place, and rivulets changed their course. Three days we strove together ; heroes stood at a distance, and feared. On the fourth, the King saith that I fell ; but Garve saith, he

* Garve signifies a man of great size.

stood. Let Cuchulaid yield to him that is strong as a storm.

No. I will never yield to man. Cuchulaid will conquer or die. Go, Moran, take my spear ; strike the shield of Caithbait which hangs before the gate. It never rings in peace. My heroes shall hear on the hill. —

XIV.

D U C H O M M A R, M O R N A.

D U C H O M M A R.

* **M**ORNA, thou fairest of women,
 daughter of Cormac-Carbre!
 why in the circle of stones, in the cave
 of the rock, alone? The stream mur-
 mureth hoarsely. The blast groaneth
 in the aged tree. The lake is troubled
 before thee. Dark are the clouds of
 the sky. But thou art like snow on
 the heath. Thy hair like a thin cloud
 of gold on the top of Cromleach. Thy

* The signification of the names in this fragment are; Dubhchomar, a black well-shaped man. Muirne or Morna, a woman beloved by all. Cormac-cairbre, an unequalled and rough warrior. Cromleach, a crooked hill. Mugruch, a furly gloomy man. Tarman, thunder. Moinie, soft in temper and person.

breasts

breasts like two smooth rocks on the hill which is seen from the stream of Bran-nuin. Thy arms, as two white pillars in the hall of Fingal.

MORNA.

WHENCE the son of Mugruch, Duchommar the most gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows of terror. Red thy rolling eyes. Does Garve appear on the sea? What of the foe, Duchommar?

DUCHOMMAR.

FROM the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the flying deer. Three have I slain with my bow; three with my panting dogs. Daughter of Cormac-Carbre, I love thee as my soul. I have slain a deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.

MORNA.

MORNA.

GLOOMY son of Mugruch, Duchommar! I love thee not : hard is thy heart of rock ; dark thy terrible brow. But Cadmor the son of Tarman, thou art the love of Morna ! thou art like a sun-beam on the hill, in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Tarman, lovely on the hill of the chace ? Here the daughter of Cormac-Carbre waiteth the coming of Cadmor.

D U C H O M M A R.

AND long shall Morna wait. His blood is on my sword. I met him by the mossy stone, by the oak of the noisy stream. He fought ; but I slew him ; his blood is on my sword. High on the hill I will raise his tomb, daughter of Cormac-Carbre. But love thou the
son

son of Mugruch ; his arm is strong as a storm.

MORNA.

AND is the son of Tarman fallen ;
the youth with the breast of snow ! the
first in the chace of the hill ; the foe
of the sons of the ocean ! — Dúchóm-
mar, thou art gloomy indeed ; cruel is
thy arm to me. — But give me that
sword, son of Muqruch ; I love the
blood of Cadmor.

[HE gives her the sword, with which she instantly stabs him.]

DUCHOMMAR.

DAUGHTER of Cormac-Carbre, thou
 hast pierced Duchommar! the sword is
 cold in my breast; thou hast killed the
 son of Mugruch. Give me to Moinie

I. there

the maid ; for much she loved Duchommar. My tomb she will raise on the hill ; the hunter shall see it, and praise me. — But draw the sword from my side, Morna ; I feel it cold. —

[UPON her coming near him, he stabs her. As she fell, she plucked a stone from the side of the cave, and placed it betwixt them, that his blood might not be mingled with hers.]

XV.

* **W**HERE is Gealchoffa my love, the daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar? I left her in the hall of the plain, when I fought with the hairy Ulfadha. Return soon, she said, O Lamderg! for here I wait in sorrow. Her white breast rose with sighs; her cheek was wet with tears. But she cometh not to meet Lamderg; or sooth his soul after battle. Silent is the hall of joy; I hear not the voice of the fínger. Brann does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of his master. Where is Gealchoffa my love, the daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar?

* The signification of the names in this fragment are; Gealchoffack, white-legged. Tuathal-Teachtmhar, the surly, but fortunate man. Lambdearg, bloody-hand. Ulfadha, long-beard. Fíichios, the conqueror of men.

FLAMDERG ! says Firchios son of Aydon, Gealchoffa may be on the hill; she and her chosen maids pursuing the flying deer.

FIRCHIOS ! no noise I hear. No sound in the wood of the hill. No deer fly in my sight ; no panting dog pursueth. I see not Gealchoffa my love ; fair as the full moon setting on the hills of Cromleach. Go, Firchios ! go to Allad *, the grey-haired son of the rock. He liveth in the circle of stones ; he may tell of Gealchoffa.

ALLAD ! saith Firchios, thou who dwellest in the rock ; thou who tremblest alone ; what saw thine eyes of age ?

I saw, answered Allad the old, Ul-

* Allad is plainly a Druid consulted on this occasion.

Ullin the son of Carbre : He came like a cloud from the hill ; he hummed a furly song as he came, like a storm in leafless wood. He entered the hall of the plain. Lamderg, he cried, most dreadful of men ! fight, or yield to Ullin. Lamderg, replied Gealchoffa, Lamderg is not here : he fights the hairy Ulfadha ; mighty man, he is not here. But Lamderg never yields ; he will fight the son of Carbre. Lovely art thou, O daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar ! said Ullin. I carry thee to the house of Carbre ; the valiant shall have Gealchoffa. Three days from the top of Cromleach will I call Lamderg to fight. The fourth, you belong to Ullin, if Lamderg die, or fly my sword.

ALLAD ! peace to thy dreams ! — found the horn, Firchios ! — Ullin may hear, and meet me on the top of Cromleach.

LAMDERG

LAMDERG rushed on like a storm.
 On his spear he leaped over rivers. Few
 were his strides up the hill. The rocks
 fly back from his heels; loud crashing
 they bound to the plain. His armour,
 his buckler rung. He hummed a furly
 song, like the noise of the falling
 stream. Dark as a cloud he stood a-
 bove; his arms, like meteors, shone.
 From the summit of the hill, he rolled
 a rock. Ullin heard in the hall of
 Carbre. ———

F I N I S.







