



THE
P O E M S O F O S S I A N



THE
P O E M S O F O S S I A N

In the Original Gaelic

WITH A
LITERAL TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH
AND A
DISSERTATION ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE POEMS

BY THE
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TOGETHER WITH THE
ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY MACPHERSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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TO

JOHN MARQUESS OF BUTE

AT WHOSE REQUEST THIS WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN

AND THROUGH WHOSE LIBERALITY IT

IS NOW PUBLISHED

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EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES AND NOTES
AT END OF EACH POEM.

ERRATA.

- Vol. I. p. 207, l. 180, *for* "fall," *read* "falls."
Vol. II. p. 139, l. 18, *for* "seire," *read* "seirc."
Vol. II. p. 214, l. 544, *for* "Glac," *read* "Ghlac."

DISSERTATION

ON THE

AUTHENTICITY OF THE POEMS OF OSSIAN

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS GAELIC EDITIONS,
TRANSLATIONS, ETC., WHICH HAVE
BEEN HITHERTO PUBLISHED

DISSERTATION.

It has often been brought as a reproach against the Gæel that any knowledge of Gaelic literature possessed by the world is due to the labour of strangers; that the people themselves were indifferent to the subject. And it must be admitted that the reproach is in a great degree deserved. I am glad, however, to be able to show that the first known proposal to make the English public acquainted with the poetical treasures long buried in the obscurity of the Gaelic language, was made by a genuine Celt.

Alexander M'Donald, well known to his countrymen as perhaps the ablest of their modern poets, published in 1751 a volume of original Gaelic songs; and in an English Preface to his work he makes the following remarks:—

. . . “The other reason of (this) publication at present is to bespeak, if possible, the favour of the public to a greater collection of poems of the same sort in all kinds of poetry that have been in use amongst the most cultivated nations from those of the earliest composition to modern times; their antiquity either proved by historical accounts, or ascertained by the best tradition, with a translation into English verse, and critical observations on the nature of such writings, to render the work useful to those that do not understand the Gaelic language. And if such a series can be made out, . . . nothing, perhaps, will better contribute to discover the progress of genius through all its different degrees of improvement—from extreme simplicity to whatever height we shall happen, upon examination, to find it amongst this people, . . . (an examination), one would think, not displeasing even to the inhabitants of the Lowlands of Scotland, who have always shared with them the honour of every gallant action, and are now first invited to a participation of their reputation for arts—if that, too, shall be found, on an impartial scrutiny, to be justly claimed by them.

“Nor need it surprise any one that this genius should be found among a people so remote from the commerce of nations famous for arts and sciences, and now relegated to an obscure neglected corner, who considers that the

Knowledge of
Gaelic poetry
before the days
of Macpher-
son.

Alexander
M'Donald.

Celtic nation, of which they are a small but a precious remain, once diffused itself over a great part of the globe. . . .

“It would be agreeable to trace the progress of their genius as far as it is possible now to discover it through all its modifications and changes—to observe what different tinctures, as one may say, it has received from the many different climates, people, and customs through which, as so many strainers, it has passed. We cannot, however, but testify our surprise that, in an age in which the study of antiquity is so much in fashion, and so successfully applied to so many valuable purposes, whether religious or civil, this language alone, which is the depository of the manners, customs, and notions of the earliest inhabitants of this island, and consequently seems to promise, on an accurate review of it, the most authentic accounts of many things useful for us to know, should remain in a state not only of total abandon, but what is more astonishing in an age so happily distinguished from all others for freedom of thought, love of knowledge and moderation, this people and this language be alone persecuted and intolented.”

M'Donald was admirably qualified to carry into effect his own enlightened project. He was a man of general culture, and a true Gaelic poet. But he met with no encouragement, and his plan fell to the ground. He lived to a good old age, and published much poetry of his own composition; but it is remarkable that his name is never heard in the Ossianic controversy which sprang up so soon after.

Jerome Stone.

The next person who appears in the field is a pure Saxon, Jerome Stone, a native of the parish of Scoonie, Fifeshire. He was rector of an academy at Dunkeld, a Gaelic district, where he soon mastered the language of the mountains, and publicly made known his high estimate of its value. In a letter of date 15th November 1755, published in the ‘Scots Magazine,’ he complains of “the unfortunate neglect, or rather abhorrence, to which ignorance has subjected that emphatic language;” and adds, that “there are compositions in it which, for sublimity of sentiment, nervousness of expression, and high-spirited metaphor, are hardly to be equalled among the chief productions of the most cultivated nations.” In the following May he published in the same magazine a translation of a Gaelic poem, called by him “Albin and Mey;” but soon after, this enterprising and able scholar was cut off by death at the early age of thirty.

John Home.

John Home, the author of the once-celebrated tragedy of ‘Douglas,’ is the third person whom we find interesting himself in Gaelic literature. We have no account of his having conversed

with Jerome Stone, but it is to be presumed that he read the 'Scots Magazine;' and we see him questioning Professor Ferguson of Edinburgh on the subject of Gaelic poetry. Professor Ferguson confirmed the opinion expressed by Stone; and Home some time afterwards, meeting with James Macpherson, held with him that conversation which eventually led, through the discernment and energy of Dr Blair, to the publication of the poems of Ossian—poems which have become celebrated throughout Europe, and the publication of which, whatever opinion may be formed of their authorship, must be allowed to mark an era in the history of modern literature.

I have been thus minute in showing what was known regarding the existence of ancient Gaelic poetry apart from Macpherson, because the idea is prevalent that he was the first to direct attention to it. He, no doubt, did far more than all others taken together to bring Celtic poetry into public light; but the existence of that poetry was known to others as well as to him, and it was not only accidentally, but reluctantly, as we shall see, that he was led to undertake the important work which has made his name so famous. An outline of his able and successful career will prove interesting to the reader.

James Macpherson was born in the parish of Ruthven, Badenoch, in the year 1738, of parents in humble circumstances, but well connected. He was educated at the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh, where he distinguished himself in classical scholarship. In 1758 he published, in English, a poem under the title of "The Highlander," which has often been condemned as turgid and very destitute of good taste; and he wrote two others—one called "Death," the other "The Hunter"—which are much inferior even to "The Highlander." In 1759 he was tutor in the family of Mr Graham of Balgowan (afterwards Lord Lynedoch), where Mr Home met him, and changed his whole future course. He was employed during this and the three following years in collecting and translating the Ossianic poems, in the publication of which he was greatly assisted by the liberality of John, Earl of Bute, a patriotic Scotsman, then high in political power and office.

In 1764 he obtained, through the influence of the same nobleman, an important civil appointment in North America. He returned to Britain in 1766, and was employed by Government

Biographical
sketch of
James Mac-
pherson.

as a political writer. In 1771 he published an Introduction to the 'History of Great Britain and Ireland;' in 1773 his translation of Homer; and shortly afterwards the 'History of Great Britain, from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hanover.' These are his undoubted compositions; and it is certain that, while they display scholarship and research, they are not marked by originality of thought, vigour of imagination, or tastefulness of expression. I mention this solely as it affects the authorship of Ossian.

In 1780 Macpherson obtained a very lucrative appointment as agent for the Nabob of Arcot. He was returned to Parliament as member for the burgh of Camelford, and, after some time, purchased the beautiful estate of Belleville in his native district, to which he retired, and where he died in 1796 at the age of fifty-eight. He left a sum of £300 to build a monument to himself on his estate, and by his own appointment was buried in Westminster Abbey.

I come now to speak in detail of what he did for the Ossianic poems, and must entreat the reader's patience while entering into minute particulars; for it is a careful study of these which will enable us to come to a just conclusion on the oft-discussed question of their authenticity.*

Mr Home, as already stated, questioned Macpherson in the year 1759 as to the existence of ancient poems in the Gaelic language, and prevailed on him, after much solicitation, to translate two short specimens into English. Being much struck with their beauty, he showed them to Dr Blair, and they together

He publishes
'Fragments'
in 1760.

* The reader will find an interesting account of the Ossianic controversy in the fourth volume of Mr Campbell's 'Tales of the West Highlands.' There is a very clear and satisfactory monograph on Ossian by the late A. McNeill, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh; but the fullest account of the whole subject is to be found in the Report and Appendix by a Committee of the Highland Society, published in 1805. It is drawn up with clearness and elegance by the accomplished chairman, Henry Mackenzie, Esq., and is so far removed from the strong partizanship elsewhere manifested in the controversy as to show not only judicial calmness, but something of the coldness of indifference as to the verdict. I will venture to remark that the Committee have erred in not analysing the full and important details given in their own Appendix, which, if analysed, would carry much more weight than they have laid upon it. The Report and Appendix, however, contain the chief materials for forming a judgment on the vexed question of the authenticity of Ossian. I quote it as High. Soc. Rep.

persuaded Macpherson to translate such others as he might remember. He submitted sixteen short pieces, which he said were episodes of a greater work that related to the wars of Fingal. These were published in 1760 under the title of 'Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland,' and highly commended by Dr Blair in a preface to the book.

The 'Fragments' were very favourably received throughout the kingdom; and Dr Blair, then in the zenith of his fame, interested other influential literary men in the recovery of further portions of this poetry, so fresh in its spirit, and so totally opposite to the conventional style of the day. The consequence was, that Lord Elibank, Drs Blair, Robertson, and Ferguson, with Messrs Home and Chalmers, prevailed on Macpherson to undertake a journey to the Highlands, in order to gather what he could of the Ossianic poems. There is ample proof that he undertook the task with reluctance,* repeatedly declaring his unfitness for it; but he did undertake it, and set forth, furnished with introductory letters to influential persons in the Highlands, and with means of defraying his expenses. He was accompanied in the earlier part of the journey by Mr Lachlan Macpherson, tacksmen of Strathmashie in Badenoch, whose name is frequently referred to in the controversy, and in the latter by Mr Ewen Macpherson—both countrymen of his own, and competent Gaelic scholars.

In 1762 he published "Fingal, an ancient Epic poem, in six books, together with several other poems composed by Ossian, the son of Fingal, translated from the Gaelic language by James Macpherson." And in 1763 he published "Temora," with five minor poems, bearing also to be translated by him. "Fingal" was published partly by subscription and partly by the liberality of the Earl of Bute—"Temora" entirely at his lordship's expense.

The publication of these poems excited the wonder of literary men throughout Europe. They were translated into French, German, and Italian, and speedily ran through various editions. They commanded the admiration of Napoleon, of Goethe, who, in his 'Werther,' gives the "Songs of Selma," and of Schiller, who speaks of the "great nature of Ossian."

In Britain they called forth loudest praises from some, but at

Is sent to collect more Gaelic poetry through the Highlands in the same year.

Publishes English translation of "Fingal," &c., in 1762; "Temora" in 1763.

* High. Soc. Rep., App. p. 58.

Effect produced by the publication—poems highly praised by some; bitterly denounced by others as spurious and worthless.

the same time indignation and scorn from other critics. They were denounced as impudent forgeries, the composition of Macpherson himself; and, what is still more remarkable, condemned as destitute of all poetic merit—mere “bombast,” “fustian,” &c. They were assailed with a degree of rancour and even ferocity which, in the present day, it is difficult to believe in as reality, far more to comprehend. Political and national prejudices gave much of its bitterness to this attack. Sir John Sinclair says: “It will hardly be credited in these days (1807); but in the year 1762, when the poem of “Fingal” was published, there existed in many, both in England and Scotland, a great spirit of hostility to everything connected with the Gaelic language, and those by whom it was spoken, on account of the zeal with which the Highlanders in 1745 had supported the claims of the house of Stuart. Hence many were induced to decry the beauties of Ossian,” &c.;* and at a later period still, there was much anti-Celtic feeling shown in the obstacles thrown in the way of the publication of the ‘Myvyrian Archaeology,’ by the patriotic and indefatigable Welshman, Owen Jones.

A broader and a fairer spirit of criticism is now abroad. Increasing intelligence, the lectures of Professor Max Müller on the “Science of Language”—showing the Celtic to be a member of the great Aryan family—and the genial harmonising lectures of Professor Matthew Arnold on the “Study of Celtic Literature,” have all tended to produce this better state of feeling. We are no longer silenced by the old cry, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” but may look to the decision of every literary question on the evidence it can produce, apart from the witnesses being Celt or Teuton.

Trusting to be judged thus, I submit the following testimony from those who assisted Macpherson in collecting or translating these poems, and first mention Mr Macpherson, Strathmashie, who says, in a letter to Dr Blair, 22d October 1763:—

(1) “In the year 1760 I had the pleasure of accompanying my friend Mr Macpherson, during some parts of his journey, in search of the poems of Ossian. I assisted him in collecting them, and took down from oral recitation, and *transcribed from old MSS.*, by far the greatest part of those pieces he has published.” †

* Dissertation, &c., note, p. 11.

† High. Soc. Rep., App., p. 9.

Testimony of those who assisted Macpherson in collecting and translating.

1. Mr Macpherson, Strathmashie.

(2) Mr Ewen Macpherson certifies, 11th September 1800, that he took down poems of Ossian from the recitation of several individuals at different places, and that he gave them to Macpherson, who was seldom present when they were taken down; that he got from Macvurich, the representative of a long line of bards of that name, . . . “a book of the size of a New Testament,* which, among some other things, contained some of the poems of Ossian; and further, that Clan Ranald senior gave to Mr Macpherson an order on Lieutenant D. M'Donald, Edinburgh, for a Gaelic folio MS.” †

2. Mr Ewen Macpherson.

(3) Malcolm Macpherson, Portree, certifies that he gave to Mr Macpherson a 4to Gaelic MS., about an inch and a quarter in thickness. ‡

3. Malcolm Macpherson.

(4) The Rev. A. Gallie, minister of Kincardine, in a letter to C. Mackintosh, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, 12th March 1799, says that Mr James Macpherson was his intimate friend. . . . “When he returned from his tour through the West Highlands and Islands, he came to my house in Brae, Badenoch. I inquired the success of his journey, and he produced several volumes, small 8vo, or rather large 12mo, being the poems of Ossian and of other bards.” He speaks with great minuteness of one of these volumes, which he ascribes to the beginning of the fourteenth century, saying, “Every poem had the first letter of its first word most elegantly flourished and gilded—some red, some yellow, some blue, and some green. The volumes were bound in strong parchment.” §

4. Rev. A. Gallie.

(5) Captain Morison's testimony carries us still further. He says, in a communication to the Highland Society, 7th January 1801, that Mr Macpherson came to his house in Skye, and gave him some ancient poems, which he afterwards translated and published; “that afterwards, in London, he had access to Mr Macpherson's papers, saw the several MSS. which he had translated in different handwritings, some in his own hand, some not, as they were either gathered by himself, or sent from his friends in

5. Captain Morison.

* This appears a very indefinite description of size in the present day, but in 1760 the only New Testament common in the Highlands was the Irish translation, printed in Roman characters. I have seen two editions, both large 8vo; and even in 1800 none was published below a small 8vo form—so that the MS. must have been one of considerable bulk.

† High. Soc. Rep., App. p. 94. ‡ Ibid., p. 93. § High. Soc. Rep., p. 31.

the Highlands." . . . "He saw many MSS. in the old Gaelic character with Mr Macpherson, which MSS. they found difficult to read."* Further, in a letter to Sir John Sinclair in 1804, he says: "I distinctly remember assisting the late Mr Macpherson in preparing a copy of Ossian in the Gaelic for printing. My knowledge of the original Gaelic I considered superior to Mr Macpherson's. I did see and collected a few of these MSS., as well as traditionary tales, both of which I considered as perfectly authentic, and as such I delivered to Mr Macpherson." †

6. Rev. Mr M'Nicol.

(6) Mr M'Nicol, minister of Lismore, in his 'Remarks on Dr Johnson's Journey,' speaks minutely of a large folio MS. which Mr McDonald of Knoydart gave to Mr Macpherson (p. 461);

7. Mr Macpherson's own letters.

And (7) we have Macpherson's own acknowledgments to the Rev. Mr MacLaggan, Amulrie, in 1760-61: "I have met with a number of old MSS. in my travels." . . . "I was favoured with your letter enclosing the Gaelic poems, for which I hold myself extremely indebted to you." . . . "I have been lucky enough to lay my hands on a pretty complete poem, and truly epic concerning Fingal." . . . "I am favoured with your last letter enclosing four poems, for which I am much obliged to you. I beg you send me what more you can conveniently." ‡

Dr Johnson says, sneeringly, that the father of Ossian boasted of having two chestfuls of MSS. Macpherson did not so boast; but it is certain that he got many Gaelic MSS. I hope this will be kept in memory by the reader, as also that some of the gentlemen who saw these MSS. assisted him in translating them—that he made no secret of his MSS., or of his need of aid in rendering them into English.

His MSS. publicly deposited at his publisher's, and offered for publication;

Further, I call special attention to one fact which it appears to me has never had due weight attached to it. When the English translation appeared, Macpherson was very naturally and properly called upon to show his originals—to produce his MSS.; and it is a prevalent idea, a thing taken for granted, that he never did so. It is the truth, however, that he promptly and publicly answered the challenge. He deposited

* High. Soc. Rep., App. p. 176, 177.

† Sir J. Sinclair's Dissertation on Authenticity of Ossian's Poems, App. p. 125.

‡ High. Soc. Rep., App. p. 153-156.

the MSS. at his publishers, Beckett & De Hondt, Strand, London. He advertised in the newspapers that he had done so, offered to publish them if a sufficient number of subscribers came forward, and, in the 'Literary Journal' of the year 1784, Beckett certifies that the MSS. had lain in his shop for the space of a whole year.* One of the strangest things in this strange controversy is that, despite this opportunity of settling it decisively by examining the MSS. once for all, neither friend nor foe took the trouble of looking at them. Friends apparently thought it needless to do so, and foes, from their being utterly ignorant of the language in which they were written, could say nothing about them though they had examined them. It was easier to shut their eyes, and continue to maintain that as they did not see them they were not in existence. Macpherson's subsequent conduct in postponing from time to time the publication when urged to it by friends who had liberally furnished him with means for the purpose, and, more than all, allowing the MSS. to be lost or destroyed, is indefensible; but up to this time—to 1764—he acted openly and honestly, asked the aid of various friends in translating, spoke and wrote frankly of what he was doing, and then gave the public a full opportunity of examining for themselves. After this he treated his assailants with sullen scorn and contemptuous silence. Nor is it to be wondered at that a man of his irascible, proud, and disdainful temper should do so. He had done all that fairness could demand; yet he was called an impostor, a forger, a liar—denounced with blind unreasoning rage, and with such utter rudeness of manner as justly to place his assailants beyond the pale of the ordinary laws of regard or courtesy.

Let us now look more in detail at what they actually said.

Dr Samuel Johnson was in name and authority the most formidable assailant; † and yet, with all respect for the great moralist, it

* Dr Blair's Letter, High. Soc. Rep., App. p. 60. Dr Graham on the Authenticity of Ossian, p. 259.

† It is impossible to mention the names of all who engaged in the Ossianic controversy. But the principal supporters of the authenticity of the poems were Lord Kaimes, Sir John Sinclair, Drs Blair, Robertson, Graham, Gregory, with Mr John Home and the Committee of the Highland Society, of whom Henry Mackenzie was the accomplished chairman, and Dr Donald Smith, apparently the ablest and most laborious member. On the other side the leaders were Dr Johnson and Messrs Laing and Pinkerton.

but never examined.

Opponents to the authenticity of the poems:—

1. Dr Johnson.

must be said that anything he pronounces on the subject is utterly worthless. He was entirely ignorant of the language of the poems. Yet he lays down the law regarding it and them with absolute dogmatism. He says that it was "the rude speech of a barbarous people, who were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood"—adding, "there can be no polished language without books"—shutting his eyes to the fact that "speech precedes writing, and eloquence grammar." He says there was not a Gaelic MS. in the world one hundred years old, though there are in the Advocates' Library alone upwards of sixty Gaelic MSS. varying from three to five hundred years old, not to speak of the 'Book of Deer,' which is of still higher antiquity. Even in his own day two editions of M'Donald's Gaelic songs, as well as his vocabulary, and a volume of songs by MacIntyre, had been published, and these he might have seen had he wished. He says that Ossian's poems never existed in any other form than the English which Macpherson gave to the world—an assertion clearly shown by subsequent examination to be opposed to the truth. And he attempts to shut the door against all further evidence by speaking of "Caledonian bigotry," concluding with the unworthy but characteristic remark, that "a Scotchman must be a sturdy moralist who does not love Scotland better than truth."*

The dicta of Dr Johnson, contrary to facts as they were, carried great weight with the public, and many assailants of Macpherson appeared in Scotland as well as in England.

A notable one among them was Mr Pinkerton, author of several literary works. Instead of denouncing the language of the poems as Dr Johnson had done, he denounced, in very unmeasured terms, the people who spoke it—nay, the whole Celtic race as lying beneath the level even of barbarism, and thus necessarily incapable of producing either poetry or prose. "The Celts are of all savages the most deficient in understanding. Wisdom and ingenuity may be traced among the Samoieds, Laplanders, Negroes, &c., but among the Celts none of native growth. . . . To say that a writer is a Celt is to say he is a stranger to truth, modesty, and morality."†

It is some satisfaction even at such a distance of time to read the sentence of this railer's condemnation by a judge at once so just

* Johnson's Journey, p. 177-84.

† Pinkerton's Dissertation, &c., p. 102.

and so generous as Sir Walter Scott, who says: "Mr Pinkerton read a sort of recantation in a list of Scottish poets prefixed to a selection of poems from the Maitland MS., vol. i., 1786, in which he acknowledges as his own composition the pieces of spurious antiquity included in his 'Select Ballads' with a coolness which, when his subsequent invectives against others who had taken similar liberties is considered, infers as much audacity as the studied and laboured defence of obscenity with which he disgraced the same pages."* And in the 'Edinburgh Review' of July 1803, he is convicted of such falsification and fabrication of authorities, "as, according to his own judgment, ought to brand him with infamy."

I pass him by to mention Mr Laing, author of a 'History of Scotland,' and by far the most persevering and painstaking adversary in this contest. Truly marvellous is the minute care with which he examined every line and every word of Macpherson's translation, and of scores of other works—sacred and profane, ancient and modern—with the purpose of proving that translation to have been stolen from a hundred various sources, to be nothing but a patchwork of plagiarism. †

3. Mr Laing.

That there are passages in Ossian, particularly descriptions of the face of nature, and of battles, which bear a general resemblance to descriptions of the same objects by other poets, is beyond all question; and Macpherson, instead of seeking to conceal this, appears to me to make an ostentatious display of the extent of his reading in bringing forward similar passages, especially from classic authors. But it is obvious that two writers describing the same object must of necessity use terms which are similar; and if a general resemblance of one description to another is to be held as implying plagiarism in the second writer, it is clear that one only can be allowed the merit of originality in any given field. I have before me a curious book, with the title 'Homerus Hebræizōn,' written by Zachary Bogdan of Oxford, 1658, in which 320 closely-printed pages are filled with a list of coin-

* *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders*, ed. 1861, p. 75.

† Mr Laing had one apparent advantage over his comrades—he paid some attention to Gaelic; but his advantage was more apparent than real. He studied it only so far as to make his ignorance more glaringly conspicuous than if he had not attempted to explain it.

His charges of
plagiarism
considered and
answered.

cidences between Homer and the Old Testament; and, what is still more remarkable, 86 pages with a list of coincidences between the bard of Greece and the New Testament. The learned author never alleges that there was any borrowing in these cases. He points them out simply as interesting illustrations of the resemblance between the utterance of one great mind and another, which is natural, if not necessary, when they deal with the same or with cognate subjects. I have carefully examined Mr Laing's charges, and I do not believe that an impartial judge will allow many of them to be conclusive even against the translation, savouring as it does far too much of classic learning, ancient and modern; and I am convinced that, as against the original of Ossian, none of them will hold.

There is an article in the 'Edinburgh Review' of July 1805 where the Report of the Highland Society on Ossian, and Laing's edition of Macpherson, are criticised with considerable ability. The reviewer is of opinion that Mr Laing has in the main proved Macpherson to be a fabricator; and he gives two quotations as conclusive examples of plagiarism. I submit these as the most favourable towards Mr Laing, and my selection cannot be questioned:—

Laing.—"Like the darkened moon when she moves a dun circle through heaven, and dreadful change is expected by men.'

" ' Or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs; darkened so, yet shone, ' &c.*

"But the dreadful change expected by men was suppressed in the first edition to conceal the imitation of Milton's *dim eclipse*—the dun circle of the darkened moon." †

Now let it be observed that Macpherson's words are not here fully given. They are as follows: "They stretch their shields like the darkened moon, *the daughter of the starry skies*, when she moves a dun circle through heaven, and dreadful change is expected by men." The words in italics, as well as the beginning of the sentence, are omitted by Laing; and it is to be regretted that throughout he acts as the special pleader without even the

* Milton's Paradise Lost, l. 596.

† Laing's Ossian, vol. i p. 75, 76.

semblance of the impartiality of a judge. I do not see that there is any conclusive proof of plagiarism on the part of Macpherson when the two passages are laid fairly side by side. But I submit the following as the true rendering of Ossian :—

“On high was seen the mighty shield of heroes
Like moon when darkening in frown,
Haughty sister of the stars of heaven,
As she travels duskily from east,
Foreboding evil change to minds of men.”

—*Fingal*, Duan II. l. 321-25.

And I confidently ask if there be any such similarity between the two passages as to imply plagiarism ?

With the second instance I shall deal more briefly :—

Laing.—““On the rising side of Cromla stood Erin’s few sad sons like a grove through which the flame has rushed, &c. Distant, withered, dark they stand, &c., as restored in the edition of 1773.’* ”

“ ‘ Yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered ; as when heaven’s fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed tops their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath.’ ” †

Macpherson.—“ Now on the rising side of Cromla stood Erin’s few sad sons, like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by the winds of the stormy night ; distant, withered, dark they stand, with not a leaf to shake in the gale.” (The passage is garbled by Laing as usual.)

Literal translation—

“On the side of Cromla of high peaks,
Mournful, far away, the sons of Erin stood
Like a great forest burned to stems,
In night-wind rising on the cairn,
Far apart (and) scorched (and) brown,
Without a leaf to sound on high.”

—*Fingal*, Duan II. l. 330-35.

These are the two most conclusive instances selected by the Edinburgh Reviewer, who goes on to say : “ Nay, by the spirit of some of Mr Laing’s extreme cases, we should think it very possible to convict Chancer of pilfering from Homer, or Hafiz of

* Laing’s Ossian, vol. i. p. 76.

† Milton’s Paradise Lost, I. 611.

imitating Horace and Tibullus. It is easy to vary description, but sentiment and passion must always be uniform." Mr Laing carries his criticisms to a truly ludicrous degree of minuteness, and I will not follow him further; but if any one wishes to see his objections completely answered, let him consult 'An Essay on the Authenticity of Ossian,'* by the Rev. Dr Graham, minister of Aberfoyle, a work of scholarship, of a calm dignified character, written in a remarkably concise and clear style, showing the author to be quite worthy of the learned brotherhood of Drs Macpherson, Sleat; Smith, Campbelton; Stewart, Dingwall; and others whose writings shed lustre on the Church in the Highlands at that period. I am convinced that any one who truly understands the language of Ossian will, instead of regarding him as a borrower from other men, acknowledge him as among the most original, the most directly in contact with nature, of all poets.

But though the charge of plagiarism must be withdrawn, there is a deep-seated conviction in the minds of many that the condition of the ancient Caledonians was so barbarous as to render the growth of such poetry as the Ossianic among them a matter of absolute impossibility; and, as far as I have observed, it is this foregone conclusion which prevents the majority of readers from duly weighing the actual evidence in favour of the antiquity of Ossian. I must therefore deal with the point at some length.

There are few terms standing more in need of accurate definition than "civilisation" and "barbarism," or which, from the days of the Greeks downwards, have been more misleading. And there are many witnesses whose testimony must be taken before the Caledonians in the first centuries of the Christian era can be condemned as absolutely barbarous.

1. "The sculptured stones of Scotland" have their tale yet to tell.

2. The "vitrified forts" bespeak some measure of knowledge in the builders. They are often formed of stone which was conveyed from a considerable distance when that at hand was not fusible, and are placed in situations showing military skill of the highest order. Dr M'Culloch, who often sneers at Highlanders and at Ossian, when writing of these forts, says: "If the Duke

* Edinburgh, 1807.

A priori objection from the barbarism of the Caledonians.

Answers:—
1. Sculptured stones.
2. Vitrified forts.

of Wellington chose to occupy Noath to-morrow, he would order his works on the same principles. . . . If the same great soldier were to fortify this hill (Berigonium, Dùn Mac Sniochain, or Uisneachain), he could only follow the plan of his predecessor General M'Sniochain, whoever he was." *

The "vitrified forts" in various instances bear names which connect them with Ossianic heroes and heroines—and these would tell much could their speech be understood,† while the many inland "strengths" and duns belonging to the pre-Christian period speak of considerable skill and power on the part of their builders.

3. Wilson, neither a Celt nor a Philo-Celt, clearly shows in his Prehistoric Annals that the Caledonians had made great progress in metallurgy during Pagan times, evincing both ingenuity and taste in the manufacture of bronze and gold ornaments—a fact abundantly vouched by the many specimens preserved in our museums.

4. The influence of the Druids and bards ought also to be taken into account in forming our estimate of the extent of knowledge possessed by a people among whom they occupied a publicly-recognised and most honourable position. "We have the most weighty and explicit testimony—Strabo's, Caesar's, and Lucan's—that this race (the Druids) once possessed a special, profound, spiritual discipline—that they were, to use Mr Nash's words, 'wiser than their neighbours.'" ‡ And we may add that they also possessed a high degree of intellectual and moral culture. §

5. Or let us take the witness of Tacitus on the subject. I pass by what he says in his Life of Agricola of the armour and the bravery of the "civitates," and the union, "sanctioned by religion," among the Caledonians. But let us look at the speech, full of patriotic and enlightened spirit, which he puts into the mouth of their commander Galgacus before the battle of the

3. Caledonians skilled in decorative art.

4. Influence of the Druids.

5. Testimony of Tacitus.

* M'Culloch's Letters from the Highlands, vol. i. p. 293. (London, 1824.)

† Skene's Introduction to the Dean's Book, p. 81.

‡ Study of Celtic Literature, by Professor Arnold, p. 50.

§ It is disheartening to find writers of Scottish history even in the present day continuing to repeat the assertion, resting only on ignorance—that the Druids never had a place in Scotland. The ancient language of the country, its topography and traditions, afford the amplest proofs that the Druids exercised the highest authority there, and were revered as possessing supernatural power. I have adverted to this subject in note 8 to Fingal, Duan II.

Mons Grampius. It is scarcely needful to say that I do not for a moment believe Galgacus to have uttered those sententious sayings which have passed into proverbs among all civilised nations — “Atque omne ignotum pro magnifico est,” “Solitudinem faciunt, pacem adpellant,” &c. But I do believe that so very able a historian as Tacitus, writing in presence of thousands of educated Romans who were well acquainted with the state of Britain, would not make a chief, known to be a savage, utter enlightened and generous sentiments. His doing so is as improbable as that able historians of our age, Lord Macaulay, or Mr Froude, would make a Saunthal chief lecture on political economy, or the King of Dahomey discourse on the advantages of constitutional government. The speech of Galgacus must, from the high character of Tacitus, be in keeping with what was believed to be the Caledonian character.

Brave resistance to the Romans.

6. Or let us look at the brave, persevering, and often successful resistance which these men offered for a lengthened period to the mighty power of Rome. From A.D. 81, when Agricola's forts were erected in the line between the Forth and the Clyde, until 370, when Theodosius really subdued the province of Valentia—the central district of Scotland—the space between the two walls—was a debateable land lost and won repeatedly by either party. And when in less than half a century after the conquest by Theodosius the Roman power was withdrawn, the Caledonians not merely retook this oft-disputed territory, but speedily pushed on across the wall of Hadrian, wringing from the despairing Britons the helpless cry to their old masters, “The barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea back to the barbarians.” The Caledonians may be called barbarians or savages; but it is undeniable that for full three centuries they quitted themselves like brave, patriotic, and resolute men.

The springing up of heroic poetry among such a people highly probable.

Surely it is not an improbable thing that heroic poetry should spring up among a people thus engaged. The improbability, in fact, is all the other way; for it seems that at a certain stage in the history of every people this description of poetry bursts forth naturally, and as if of necessity. The Eddas of the North, the Servian poetry, the Spanish Ballads of the Cid, the Niebelungen of the Germans, not to speak of the unrivalled productions of the Grecian muse, or of the Epics of the East, bear

witness to the uniformity of what appears to be a law of social and national development.

And we can see in the circumstances of the Caledonians at the time what may naturally account for the mournful tone of the Ossianic strains. The great Celtic family, of which they formed a branch, had at one time occupied most of the area of Western Europe, and had frequently driven back those who encroached upon them. One of their kings, "a Brennus, conquered Rome B.C. 390. Another Brennus threatened Delphi B.C. 280." They were, however, subdued in Italy. Gaul had become a Roman province. After many fierce and bloody struggles, the whole south of Britain also was compelled to yield to the mighty power of Rome. The last remnant, the "nobilissimi totius Britanniae," as Galgacus calls them, fought resolutely amid the fastnesses of the mountains of the North against the insatiate aggressor; and if the national heart were at all to express itself in song, we might expect it to be in lofty but in wailing strains, mourning over the greatness and the glory of which the nation had been bereft. As to the tone of refinement to be seen in these poems, which is very remarkable, it is probably due to the superior learning of the Druids and the bards, already referred to; and we know from modern Gaelic poetry that, wherever the writers got their ideal of the character of rulers and chiefs, it was a very exalted one. They attribute qualities to them such as no chief in the North or the South has ever yet exhibited in real life: * further, there is still in the ordinary conversation of old Highlanders a degree of refinement and delicacy such as is not to be met with, I believe, among any other peasantry in the world. †

We thus see that the condition of the ancient Caledonians, as far as it is known, offers no serious obstacle to our receiving the Ossianic poetry as theirs; and that the question cannot be disposed of by mere *a priori* reasoning. There are few subjects on which it is safe to trust to this kind of argument, experience daily confounding the most plausible theories. No one would predict the production of the glorious Homeric poetry by a blind

* I have adverted to this fact in a memoir of Col. Cameron of Fassiefern. Murray, Glasgow, 1859.

† *Vide* Introduction to Mr Campbell's 'Tales of the West Highlands,' and 'Reminiscences of a Highland Parish,' by the Rev. Dr Macleod.

“Kalewala,”
the epic poem
of the Finns.

Ionian minstrel, or of noble and tender lyrics by an Ayrshire ploughman, or of the most surpassing poetry which the world has ever heard by a Warwickshire deer-stealer. Yet Homer and Burns and Shakespeare are realities. And I now wish particularly to present to the reader as a fact more remarkable than the production and preservation of the Ossianic poetry by the Caledonians the production and preservation of the “Kalewala,” the great epic poem of the Finns. Professor Max Müller, whose authority will be acknowledged by all, speaking of this race, of whom only about a million and a-half remain in Finland, Olometz, and Archangel, says: “Their literature, and above all their popular poetry, bear witness to a high intellectual development in times which we may call mythical. . . . The epic songs still live among the poorest, *recorded by oral tradition alone*, and preserving all the features of a perfect metre, and of a more ancient language. . . . From the mouths of the aged, an epic poem has been collected equalling the ‘Iliad’ in length and completeness—nay, if we can forget for a moment all that we in our youth learned to call beautiful, not less beautiful. A Finn is not a Greek, and Wainamainen was not a Homer. But if the poet may take his colours from that nature by which he is surrounded, if he may depict the men with whom he lives, ‘Kalewala’ possesses merits not dissimilar from those of the ‘Iliad,’ and will claim its place as the fifth national epic of the world, side by side with the Ionian songs, with the ‘Mahábháráta,’ the ‘Shanámah,’ and the ‘Niebelungen.’”* Now, if we are to admit that the Finns could produce such a poem as this, equal in length and in beauty to the ‘Iliad,’ and preserve it by tradition alone from mythical times to the present, it is very unreasonable to say that the Caledonians could not produce and preserve such poems as those of Ossian.

Having thus answered the two main arguments against the authenticity of the Ossianic poems, I must now advert to various assertions against them made from time to time—assertions which, though unsupported by any evidence, have obtained currency with the public.

I. It is said that these poems are Macpherson’s own composition, written first in English and subsequently translated into Gaelic.

Allegation
that the poems
were composed
in English by
Macpherson.

* Science of Language, first series, p. 330.

(a) This theory charges with deliberate falsehood, in many instances with perjury, those respectable men whose testimony I have already quoted, for they declare most pointedly that they assisted Macpherson, before the publication of his English, in translating Gaelic MSS., which it is most certain he had. And I shall, in a subsequent section, show that a considerable portion of these poems was known before his day.

(b) Macpherson was not familiar with Gaelic. This is stated in the High. Soc. Rep., p. 29, and considering that he left the Highlands when young, and was busily occupied with public affairs in England and elsewhere, it was scarcely possible that he could be so. There are several Gaelic passages which confessedly he misunderstands, and these not the most obscure. He fails glaringly in the "sea-pieces," sometimes making the most graphic and stirring descriptions almost meaningless in his translation. I think it will be admitted that if he could not translate these passages accurately, he certainly could not have composed them.

(c) His poetical compositions in English are of a very inferior description, verbose and turgid. How can it be believed that while he writes thus in the language which he knew best, he would rise to true sublimity and pathos in the language which he knew least?

(d) Though it may sound paradoxical, yet I will say, that while the high excellences of these poems place them far above Macpherson's reach of talent, their obvious blemishes and defects place them just as far below the extent of his cleverness. There are obvious imitations of "Fingal" in "Temora." There are passages here and there utterly inconsistent with Ossian's manner. There are lines so very obscure and ill-arranged, that it is difficult to make any meaning out of them; and there are various blanks in the middle of lines here and there, all of which I point out in my notes. Macpherson was far too clever to fall into such blunders as these. But if we suppose him, with his imperfect knowledge of Gaelic, to have taken what he got from ignorant transcribers or reciters just as they gave it, these blemishes are easily accounted for, and similar to what we meet with in other ancient poems.

That he constructed them from old ballads.

II. It is said that he constructed his work out of the Ossianic ballads which are so numerous in the Highlands. But the history of the Homeridæ, and of other imitators of great poets, leads to the presumption that the authors of the Gaelic ballads were also imitators; and if any man take the trouble of comparing them with Macpherson's Ossian, he will not be long in doubt as to which is the original and which the copy, which the text and which the oft-disjointed and dreary commentary. They are frequently verbose amplifications of the concise and pointed narratives of Ossian. Sometimes they form sequels to the history given by him, in not a few instances as little like nature as Thackeray's sequels (in 'Punch') to Sir Walter Scott's novels. In many cases they are diluted and tedious, in not a few extravagantly absurd, while at times they plainly show their modern origin by allusions to the Christian religion. If any man fashioned Macpherson's Ossian out of these materials, he showed more mental power than if he had described from simple nature.

Macpherson's own statement.

III. It is hardly necessary to advert to what is called Macpherson's own direct claims to the authorship of these poems. He appears to me to have been judged harshly in regard to this, as well as in various other instances. In his correspondence, and in all the early editions of his work, he uniformly represents himself as the translator. In the preface to the last edition, published in 1773, he speaks of himself once as the "author," three times as the "translator." It is natural, then, to believe that he spoke of himself as the author of the translation, not of the original poetry. But however this may be, it is certain that no one who looks at the history of the original collection, or at the testimony of Captain Morison, Mr Gallie, and Strathmashie, who helped him in translating his MSS., would give the slightest heed to a claim of authorship by him, whether said or sworn. It is as certain as anything of the kind can be that he was the translator, and only the translator.

Authorship ascribed to Mr Macpherson, Strathmashie.

IV. But they who are determined to assign a modern origin to these poems maintain that, though James Macpherson did not produce them, his namesake Mr Macpherson at Strathmashie, a well-known poet, did it for him. Fortunately, there is as much known

of Strathmashie's poetry as is quite enough to dispose of this theory. He composed five or six songs which have been printed in various collections. They show familiarity with vernacular Gaelic, and considerable facility in rhyming, but no high poetic powers. They are, with one exception—an elegy to the brave Cluny of the '45—of a homely, humorous, satirical cast, and I regret to say in many instances coarse to indecency. They are in every respect entirely opposite to the pure and lofty strains of the "Voice of Cona;" and it would be as easy to believe that the author of 'Hudibras' wrote 'Paradise Lost,' or that "Peter Pindar" wrote the 'Idylls of the King,' as that Strathmashie wrote Ossian.*

The only man of that period (1760-80) who could with any show of reason be supposed capable of producing Ossianic poetry is Alexander McDonald, referred to in the opening of my Dissertation. But whatever his poetic powers may have been, we know that he never came into contact with Macpherson or the publishers of Ossian.

I will venture on one assertion before closing this part of the subject. Whether these poems were composed by Macpherson or M'Fingal (as Mr M'Gregor, in his translation, often designates Ossian), one thing is beyond all doubt or dispute to any rational man who understands both the Gaelic and the English languages—that is, that the Gaelic is the original, and the English the translation. There is a living freshness, a richness, a minuteness of colouring and detail in the similes of the Gaelic, of which not a trace is to be found in the indefinite, hazy generalities of Macpherson's translation, and which could not by any law of thought be learned from it. It would be as possible to construct Homer from Pope's translation as Ossian from Macpherson's.

There are points connected with this controversy on which it is still injudicious to speak with absolute confidence. But on

Auswer.

Gaelic is certainly the original language of the poems.

* A story has got into circulation about a MS. copy of the seventh book of "Temora" having been some time seen by somebody in Badenoch written out by Strathmashie, with several interlineations and corrections. Supposing this to have been the case, it is entirely according to Strathmashie's own public statement of his having copied out for his friend the greater part of the poetry which he published, and decides nothing as to authorship or antiquity. I must further say that I have been in the habit of visiting Badenoch for the last twenty years, and have made frequent inquiries on this subject, very minute inquiries recently, but never could get hold either of the MS. or of any one who had heard of it.

this particular point of the Gaelic being the original, I feel such thorough conviction as constrains me to speak emphatically. And I must be allowed to enter a protest against the utter unreasonableness of any one who does not understand Gaelic pronouncing a verdict on this question. What would be thought of a critic dogmatising on the genuineness and merits of the Homeric poems who knew them only through Pope's translation, and did not understand a syllable of Greek! Yet Pope's translation is truer to Homer than Macpherson's is to Ossian.

The transmission of the poems.

V. As to the difficulty of transmitting these poems from age to age, the institution of the bards is quite sufficient to meet it; and what Professor M. Müller says of the great Epic of the Finns more than meets it—shows us what is much more remarkable.

Objected that "cars" could not be used in the Highlands of old.

VI. One other objection I must notice. The mention of "car-borne heroes" and of horses in such a mountainous country as Caledonia, has been often laughed at as proving incontestably the poems to be a forgery; and Wordsworth, in his Essay on Poetry, is particularly severe on this point, saying that "Morven, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface." With the ignorance which unfortunately characterises so many of the opponents of these poems—ignorance not to be wondered at when they never come nearer the subject than "a few miles' distance"—he mistakes the parish of Morven for the wide country of "the great mountains," and mentions, as a proof of modern origin, what is in reality an unanswerable argument in favour of the great antiquity of the poems of Ossian. For, Tacitus speaks expressly of many war-chariots being used by the Caledonians in resisting the Romans; but, for several centuries previous to the eighteenth, cars or carriages of any kind were almost unknown in the Highlands, and the brave fellows who in 1689 made such havoc at "Killiecrankie" were terrified at the sight of war-horses. If we give due weight to these facts, we must admit that the frequent mention of chariots and "snorting steeds" would never enter the imagina-

Answer.

tion of a modern forger of Gaelic poems—that this fact by itself undeniably carries Ossian back for many centuries.

Having now attempted, and I hope with success, to clear the ground for the examination of the Ossianic poems as we actually have them, I go on to prove that various portions of them are undeniably older than the days of Macpherson, and were widely known throughout the Highlands.

The 'Fragments,' containing from 700 to 800 lines, are now generally allowed to be genuine—*vide* Mr Skene's Introduction to the Dean's Book, p. 48,—and any one who takes the trouble of examining the circumstances in which they were produced, will find it impossible to adopt any other conclusion. But the Highland Society's Report carries us much further than the 'Fragments.' The Rev. Dr Macpherson of Sleat, a man of the highest character, writes to Dr Blair, 27th November 1763, that he had gathered around him all the persons who were able to rehearse from memory any parts of the poetry published by Mr Macpherson, that he compared with great care the pieces rehearsed by them with Mr Macpherson's translation, and that those pieces are as follows:—

1. The Description of Cuchullin's Chariot.—Fingal, Book I. p. 11.
2. The Episode of Fainne-Soluis.—Fingal, Book III. p. 45.
3. The Actions of Ossian at the lake of Lego, and his Courtship of Evir-alin.—Fingal, Book IV., p. 50.
4. Fingal's Combat with the King of Lochlin, p. 62.
5. The Battle of Lora, p. 111.
6. Darthula, p. 155.
7. The Combat between Oscar and Ullin, in the Fragments.
8. The Lamentation of the Spouse of Dargo, sung by thousands in the isles.*

The Rev. Angus M'Neill, Hovemore, South Uist, in the same manner verifies the terms of peace proposed by Morla, in Swaran's name, to Cuchullin—Fingal, Book II. p. 6,—likewise Fingal's orders for raising his standards, his orders to his chiefs before the battle, the chiefs' resolutions thereupon of fighting, each of them, a Lochlin chief, contained in p. 57, 58, of Fingal, Book IV.; the single combat between Fingal and Swaran, which perfectly agreed with the translation—Fingal, Book V. p. 62;

* High. Soc. Rep., App., p. 11, 12.

Portions of Macpherson's poetry were collected by others in the Highlands.

Testimony of Rev. Dr Macpherson of Sleat.

Of Rev. A. M'Neill.

also Ossian's Courtship of Evir-alin, Book IV. p. 49-51; and the whole poem of DARTHULA.*

Of Rev. N.
Macleod.

The Rev. Niel Macleod, minister of Ross, Mull, 22d January 1764, says: "From my own memory I can assure you that Morla's proposal to Cuchullin, Fingal, Book II. p. 26, with Cuchullin's answer and Morla's reply, is a just translation. So is the whole Episode of Borbar and Fainne-Soluis, Fingal, Book III. p. 45, 46, and Fingal, Book IV. p. 57, 58, from 'We reared the sun-beam,' and to 'Now like a hundred different winds.' I can still repeat some of these in the original. . . . All these and many more I heard in the island of Skye, when I was a little boy, from an old man, who used to repeat them to me for some tobacco. . . . This man died when I was but young, and I could never since meet with any person that could repeat so many of the poems of Ossian, and so perfectly."†

Of Rev. Mr
Macaulay.

Mr Macaulay, military chaplain, Edinburgh, 25th January 1764, encloses a letter from Lieutenant Duncan M'Niocol of the 88th Regiment, living at Soccoch, in Glenorchy, in which he says: "I have found out as follows—Fingal, Book III. p. 45, 'Oscar, I was young like thee when lovely Fainne-Soluis' (Eviralin), &c., to the end of the third book. Fingal, Book IV. p. 50, 'Eight were the heroes of Ossian,' &c., mostly word for word, to p. 58, or the end of the fourth book. The story of Orla, in the beginning of the fifth book, to p. 71, 'Then Gaul and Ossian sat on the green banks of Lubar;' 'The battle of Lora,' mostly; 'Darthula,' p. 155, pretty well to the end of p. 171; 'Temora,' much the same, p. 172 to the end of p. 190; 'Carrie-thura,' p. 207. 'Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal!' &c., till you come to the passage that begins thus, 'Dire was the clang of their steel.'‡

Of Rev. D.
Macleod.

The Rev. Donald Macleod, minister of Glenelg, 26th March 1764, says, as I have quoted in one of my notes, that it was in his house Mr Macpherson got the description of Cuchullin's horses and car, "from Allan M'Caskle, schoolmaster, and Rory Macleod." He adds, "I have heard the poem in Book III., relating Fingal's voyage to Lochlin, the snares laid for him by Starno, death of Agandecca, &c. &c., when, p. 38, 'he eyed his valiant chiefs—his valiant chiefs took arms.'‡

* High. Soc. Rep., App., p. 18 20.

† Ibid., p. 23.

‡ Ibid., p. 21, 22.

§ Ibid., p. 28 32.

The testimony of these men, who were perfectly capable of judging what they pronounced on, and all of high character, proves incontestably that various portions of what was published by Macpherson in English was known in Gaelic by many people dwelling wide apart—in Skye, Mull, and Glenorchy. But we have still further evidence to the same effect. Gillies's Collection of Gaelic poems, which I very frequently refer to in my notes, was published at Perth in the year 1786. At p. 29, 30, we have "Malvina's Dream," and part of Ossian's answer to her (fifty-seven lines), which Macpherson gives in the beginning of "Croma."* There are slight verbal differences between the two versions, but they are to all intents and purposes the same poem.

Gillies's Col-
lection, 1786.

At p. 34, 35, we have Fingal's words to Oscar quite the same in substance with what Macpherson gives in Fingal, Duan III. l. 426-446; but Gillies's is decidedly superior in strength and expressiveness.

Further, the last of the minor poems given by Macpherson is "Calhon and Cuhona," consisting of 197 lines. We have this poem in a Gaelic Collection by A. and D. Stewart, published in 1804. It contains some lines which are not in Macpherson's, omits others, gives much better readings in two or three instances, and consists of 185 lines.

Stewart's.

We have another version in the Irvine MS.,† consisting of 183 lines, in many instances badly written, but substantially the same with the other two.

Irvine MS.

In the same MS. there is a copy of the Address to the Sun, at the end of "Carhon," another in Stewart's Collection, and another in the Appendix to High. Soc. Rep., which the Rev. Mr M'Diarmid, minister of Weem, got from an old man in Glen Lyon, Perthshire, in the year 1765. This copy by Mr M'Diarmid may be the original

Rev. Mr
M'Diarmid.

* The same poem is again given without any explanation at p. 210, 211, and bearing the barbarous title of "Mhaline's Brughdar le Ossain."

† This MS., which I often mention in my notes, is a collection made from 1796 to 1802, by the Rev. Mr Irvine of Rannoch, subsequently Dr Irvine of Dunkeld, taken principally from the recitation of the family of M'Donald of Dalchosnie, who got the poems from their ancestors, the M'Donalds of Kepoch in Lochaber. Many of these are the merest fragments, many very little worth recording, but occasionally there are lines which have the genuine ring of antiquity—couplets given by Macpherson, embedded in a great deal of what is commonplace and coarse. Its authenticity, however, is beyond all question.

of Irvine's and Stewart's. Mr Laing tries hard to show that the only copy of it known was got from Macpherson's papers; but this can be believed only on the supposition that Mr M'Diarmid, an aged and respected clergyman, deliberately and gratuitously asserted what he knew to be false. His letter of April 9, 1801, is clear and precise.* The brief Address to the Sun in "Carrichthra" has the same unquestionable evidence in its favour, as appears from the letter referred to, and from the Collections of Irvine and Stewart.

Now, let it be observed that Macpherson's Gaelic was not published until the year 1807, that the men who repeated these poems in Inverness-shire, in Argyleshire, and in Perthshire, some as early as 1763, and all before 1806, could not by possibility have had any access to it, and it will be seen that we have various pieces, amounting in all to about 900 lines (if we include the 'Fragments,' to 1700 lines), of Macpherson's poetry clearly proved to be known among Highlanders independently of him and his companions. This fact acquires much additional weight when we observe that among the pieces thus verified are some of the minor poems, the Gaelic of which Macpherson never published.

It is also of great importance to observe that among these pieces there are many of the very gems of the Ossianic poetry. The Sun Hymns, Malvina's Dream, &c., are among the finest of Ossian's compositions. Two things are thus undeniable—viz., that the power of producing poetry of the highest order must be conceded to the Caledonians before the days of Macpherson; and that there are several portions of the Gaelic Ossian which are unquestionably genuine.

It has been asked, however, when so much has been collected by oral recitation, why could not the whole of Ossian be so collected? To this question there are various answers.

1. It was never alleged that Macpherson collected his poems from oral recitation alone. What I have so often adverted to must be here remembered—that he got many MSS. When these were lost, all trace of their contents may have disappeared. We know that even printed books have perished. Professor O'Curry proves that several Irish MSS. have been lost within the last 200 years. "In Germany the 'Lay of the Niebelungs' had been long

* High. Soc. Rep., p. 71, 72.

utterly forgotten, when, in the eighteenth century, it was for the first time printed from a MS. in the old library of a noble family. Eighty years ago England possessed only one tattered copy of 'Childe Waters and Sir Cauline.' Spain only one tattered copy of the noble poem of the 'Cid.' The snuff of a candle or a mischievous dog might in a moment have deprived the world for ever of any of these fine compositions."*

2. It should be considered that Macpherson's Ossian is far more elevated in sentiment and compressed in diction—thus more difficult to remember—than are those ballads of which so many are still preserved in the Highlands. I doubt not that if the noble works of Milton were by any evil chance destroyed, it would be impossible to recover them among the peasantry of Britain, while many inferior poems are engraven on the memory of thousands. Ossian is very Miltonic in many respects.

3. The Ossianic poetry was not recited or sung as a whole, but in detached portions, as were the various parts of the 'Iliad.'

4. It should also be remembered that the Highland Society committed a grave mistake in the manner of recovering these ancient poems. They contented themselves with addressing letters of inquiry to special persons here and there. Had they sent forth young and active searchers like Macpherson, who would make themselves at home with the common people, and who had something of the marvellous talent of Mr J. F. Campbell for drawing out their stores of tales and traditions, a very different harvest would have been gathered. And while Dr Blair made his inquiry in good time, the Society allowed about forty years to elapse before completing theirs—forty years not of mere change, but of complete revolution in the circumstances of the Highlands.

I must now direct attention to other collections of Gaelic poems, which are not few. And while these do not directly prove the genuineness of Macpherson's Ossian, they throw great light on the state of poetry among the ancient Celts. They are necessary to be known in order to form a fair judgment on the question before us. I have first, however, to mention a very interesting statement regarding the Douay MS. as it is called, which unfortunately is not now in existence, but the history of which is too remarkable to be passed over in any discussion of the Ossianic poems.

* Lord Macanlay's Preface to 'Lays of Ancient Rome,' p. 11, ed. 1866.

Other collections of ancient Gaelic poetry.

The Douay MS.

The full account of this MS. is to be found in Sir John Sinclair's Dissertation, prefixed to the Society's edition of Ossian, 1807, p. 40-58. I give the substance of it briefly. Dr Cameron, Roman Catholic Bishop of Edinburgh, along with four Roman Catholic clergymen, all Highlanders, who had, however, been educated in foreign colleges, certify the following facts:—

The Rev. John Farquharson, of the family of Inverey, Balmoral, latterly Prefect of Studies in the colleges of Douay and Dinant, was in his younger days missionary in Strathglass, Inverness-shire. Urged by Mrs Fraser of Culbockie, an enthusiastic admirer and collector of old Gaelic poetry, he also began to collect before 1745, and filled a volume of folio size, about three inches thick. He took this volume abroad with him, and all these gentlemen repeatedly saw it in his possession from the year 1763 to 1777. In 1766 Macpherson's translation was sent to him at Douay. They saw and heard him often comparing it with his Gaelic originals; saw him comparing the poems of "*Fingal*" and "*Temora*," as well as others. He said that he had all which Macpherson had translated, and several other poems quite equal to them in merit. He complained of the inferiority of the translation throughout. Mr Farquharson returned to Scotland in 1773, and left the MS. at Douay. Mr M'Gilvray, one of the declarants, saw it there in 1777 much tattered and torn, tossed about by the students, who knew nothing of its value, and who tore leaves off it to kindle their fires. Bishop Cameron thinks that shortly after this period, when all the papers of the College were carried off by the revolutionary government of France, it must have been destroyed.

It appears from the same correspondence that Mr Farquharson made a second collection in Braemar, which, with equal thoughtlessness, he left there and lost; also, that Captain Simon Fraser, on accompanying his regiment to the American war, carried with him the collection made by Mrs Fraser of Culbockie, his mother, that he died in prison there, and that the collection was lost; once more, it is declared that the Rev. Peter Maedonald, chaplain to Lord Maedonald, had, after the Restoration, made a collection of Gaelic poetry, of which, however, nothing further is known.

I am quite aware that some deduction must be made from all this, as being in a certain sense testimony at second hand. But

after making every reasonable deduction, the testimony must be allowed to have great weight in deciding the authenticity of Ossian. For it cannot be supposed that five intelligent and respectable gentlemen, should, without any apparent object, all conspire to tell deliberate falsehoods. The letters of Mr M'Gilvray especially are so minute and circumstantial as necessarily to convey the conviction of truthfulness, and great carefulness of statement.

I. The oldest of the collections actually preserved is that commonly known as the Book of the Dean of Lismore. It was written between the years 1512 and 1526 by Sir James M'Gregor, Dean of Lismore and Vicar of Fortingal. The MS. is in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. An account of it is given in the High. Soc. Rep. and Appendix by Dr Donald Smith, who printed and translated three of the poems contained in it. Ewen M'Lauchlan of Aberdeen made two transcripts of it, which have not been published. But the merit of making it accessible to every Celtic scholar belongs to the Rev. Dr M'Lauchlan of Edinburgh, who, in 1862, published by far the greater part of the original text, transferred into modern Gaelic on the opposite page, accompanied by an English translation, and by many valuable notes. "It is hardly possible to convey to the reader an adequate conception of the labour of the task undertaken by Mr (Dr) M'Lauchlan, or of the courage, perseverance, and ability with which it has been overcome."* The book, enriched by an able Introduction from the pen of Mr Skene, now forms a necessary and a valuable portion of the library of every student of Celtic.

The Dean's MS. is a literary commonplace-book, or miscellany, consisting of 311 pages of the most varied contents, ascribed to no fewer than forty-seven different authors, among whom are an Earl of Argyle, Countess Isabella Campbell, Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy, and other persons of rank, while many pieces are anonymous. The great bulk of it consists of poetry either in Irish or Scottish Gaelic, embracing the heroic, religious, humorous, and satirical styles. There are some pieces in Latin, some in Scotch, and there are various genealogical and historical abstracts.

Of the poems, nine are ascribed to Ossian, and several to con-

* Mr Skene's Introduction, p. 12.

temporaries, or immediate successors. They are very inferior to the Collections of Macpherson and of Smith, and cannot for a moment be referred to the same authorship. But several of them are possessed of considerable poetic merit, among which may be mentioned "The Evening Complaint;" "The Death of Oscar," bearing considerable resemblance to what is found in Kennedy's Collection, and in other versions of the same story, but widely differing from Macpherson's account in the first book of "Temora;" "Sliabh nam Ban Fionn" ("The Hill of Fair Women"), well known throughout the Highlands; "Dyre Borb," very like Macpherson's "Maid of Craca," Miss Brooke's, Dr Smith's, and Kennedy's versions; "The Death of Fraoch," closely resembling what was published two hundred years later by Jerome Stone; the poem attributed to Conal Cearnach, published by Mr Campbell in his 'West Highland Tales,' and widely known as "Laoidh nan Ceann," or the "Lay of the Heads;" and the "Character of Fingal," very well written, but portions of which are found in other collections describing the character of Gaul, the son of Morni.

The orthography of the Dean's Book is unfortunately purely phonetic, and I would say, with deference to others better acquainted than I am with old writings, by no means regular or systematic. I see the same characters bearing different values in the same line; but I content myself with giving the verdict of Ewen M'Lachlan on the subject, who says: "Our language, exhibited in the uncouth garb of Anglo-monkish orthography, is so disfigured and caricatured, that hardly a vestige of its grammar or philosophy can be traced."

But whatever may be the value of the collection in a linguistic point of view, it is interesting and important as throwing clear light on some of the questions raised in the Ossianic controversy.

1. It effectually disposes, as already observed, of the ignorant assertion that there is no Gaelic writing one hundred years old.

2. It shows that more than three hundred years ago Ossian was held to be the "king of song," and Fingal "the hero of heroes."

3. It shows that several of the events mentioned by Macpherson were the subject of popular poetry at that period.

4. In the close similarity of several ballads collected by Stone,

Kennedy, and others, to the versions in the Dean's Book, very remarkable proof of the fidelity of tradition for a period of more than two centuries is afforded; and,

5. It shows, though very inferior to other collections which I shall notice, that Gaelic poetry was carefully cultivated in the Highlands three centuries and a half back.

It would be unfair, however, to end my notice of the Dean's Book without mentioning what it is not pleasant to dwell on, that it is disfigured by several compositions which are gross to utter indecency, and by satires on women both coarse and bitter; and if the collection be a fair index of the style of composition popular in his day, it shows a woeful falling off in the Celtic mind from the days when the purity and dignity of Ossian commanded universal admiration.*

II. The MS. Collection of Jerome Stone comes next in order of time, having been written from 1750 to 1756. It contains ten long Ossianic ballads very similar to those found in other collections, and which, as I advert to them in my notes, I will not dwell on here further than saying that they are highly interesting as an independent collection made in the centre of Perthshire by a man to whom they could have had no attraction but their intrinsic merit, he being not a Celt, but a Saxon.

Jerome Stone's
MS.

III. The most important by far, however, of all the collections of Gaelic poetry which have yet been made known, excepting Macpherson's, is that by the Rev. Dr Smith, minister of Campbelton, a man well known for high scholarship and for Christian character. Following the example of Macpherson, he first published an English translation in measured prose, 1780; but fortunately he, some time thereafter, 1787, published his Gaelic originals under

Rev. Dr
Smith's 'Sean
Dána.'

* Modern Gaelic poetry is, I believe, fully freer from immoral taint than English poetry; but there are, I regret to say, several compositions in print which are disgraceful to any people. M'Donald's volume in 1751 contains pieces which no language is sufficiently strong to condemn. "Rob Donn," edited by a clergyman, is full of very disgusting coarseness; Allan M'Dougall has some songs deserving of the severest reprobation; and a recent edition of the very beautiful songs of W. Ross is utterly disfigured by one or two pieces of the lowest character. The stainless purity of Ossian is a very conclusive proof that he belonged to a different era from Macpherson's or the Dean of Lismore's.

the title of 'Sean Dàna,' 'Ancient Lays,' in an 8vo volume of 348 pages. My limits forbid any minute examination of these poems; but I will venture to say, that he who studies them carefully, and examines their history impartially, will not consider the genuineness of Macpherson's Ossian impossible or improbable. They profess to be the work "of Ossian, Orran, Ullin, &c., collected in the Western Highlands and Isles, by John Smith, D.D.," &c. The names of the persons from whom they were collected are given. The manner in which they were corrected by selections of the best passages from various editions, and joined together by a few lines where a gap occurred, is freely told, and various readings are given at the foot of the page.

This frank statement by Dr Smith has been laid hold of in order to prove that the poems are in no sense genuine, but are to be treated as mainly his own composition. Let any one, however, look at the editing of Percy's Reliques, and say if this be a reasonable conclusion; or I would rest the case on Sir Walter Scott's Introduction to the 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,' and even on what he says of the one celebrated ballad of "Otterburn, or Chevy Chase" (Edinburgh, 1861). He gives various readings widely different—nay, he tells that by copies got from the recitation of old persons residing at the head of Ettrick Forest, the first edition had been much improved. If Dr Smith's 'Ancient Lays' are to be rejected, so must Percy's Reliques, and the Minstrelsy also, not to speak of the 'Iliad,' which contains many passages that are pronounced by the warmest admirers of Homer to be interpolations.

The 'Ancient Lays' refer entirely to Ossianic heroes, and are far more finished in form than Macpherson's Ossian, showing the work of a master of Gaelic who wrought leisurely and skilfully at the materials before him. I do not notice even one line that is harsh or unintelligible, whereas there are scores of such in Macpherson. Further, in point of picturesqueness of description and true pathos, they are equal to the very finest portions of Macpherson's; but they are, notwithstanding, very different in many respects, wanting in the rugged abruptness and in the gloomy grandeur which characterise the Macpherson Collection. They are as Claude Lorraine's paintings to Michael Angelo's. They well deserve a better English translation, and will richly repay the most careful examination.

IV. Very similar to the 'Lays' is a beautiful poem called "Mordubh," a translation of which, with several others, was published in 1780 by Mr John Clark, land-surveyor in Badenoch, an early companion of Macpherson, and a very judicious writer on the Ossianic controversy. A portion of this poem was published by Gillies in 1786; and of its antiquity there can be little doubt.

Clark's Caledonian bards.

V. The only other collection deserving of any lengthened notice is the Kennedy MS., now in the Advocates' Library. He was a schoolmaster at Kilmelford in Argyleshire, and collected his poems during various journeys through Morven, Sunard, and Lochaber from 1774 to 1783; and he gives the names of the persons from whom he obtained them. He lent his MS. to Dr Smith, who made considerable use of it, and thereafter he sold it to the Highland Society. It contains thirty poems of very unequal merit; but some of them are of a high order.

Kennedy MS.

Now, let it be observed that, whatever be thought of the authorship of these poems, they are entirely independent of Macpherson. He had nothing whatever to do with them. Supposing, then, that his Collection were entirely given up, the difficulties found in believing that poetry of a very high order, refined in feeling, exquisite in description, was produced by the old Caledonians, present themselves over and over again. The main question of interest to him who studies the development of mind among the various races, and the varied circumstances of mankind, does not approach a solution by the condemnation of Macpherson. The high poetic power of the Caledonians remains in a great degree untouched by any judgment which may be pronounced on him. And further, suppose we adopt even Pinkerton's low estimate of Celtic veracity, and consider all the witnesses in this case as unblushing liars and forgers, we land in a still greater difficulty. None of these collectors gave any evidence of poetic power; not Jerome Stone, assuredly, who had only begun the study of Gaelic, and whose English poems are very stiff and tame. Dr Smith made some very judicious improvements on an older edition of the Gaelic Metrical Psalms, but I am not aware that he ever attempted original poetic composition; and his English translation of the 'Ancient Lays' will form a permanent proof of his utter

Argument for the genuineness of these poems from their excellence, and the prosaic character of the collectors.

want of poetic taste. John Clark was a plain practical man, making no pretensions to literary attainment; and Kennedy gives under his own hand and seal, in *Arguments, Notes, &c.*, abundant evidence that he was ignorant of composition, whether in poetry or prose. How is it, then, to be explained that these men of prosaic minds should all, as soon as they attempt to forge ancient Gaelic poetry, become suddenly gifted with "the vision and the faculty divine"? The supposition is irrational and absurd, and the common method of disposing of the difficulties connected with the ancient poetry of the Caledonians leads to infinitely greater difficulties.

Did my space permit, I might enumerate various other collections, which show a gradually deteriorating series of imitators of Ossian down to a comparatively recent period, when a modern school arose—weak and tame in comparison with that of the "king of music and of song," but yet natural, and therefore interesting.

Modern Gaelic
poetry.

Of this modern Gaelic poetry—what has been composed within the last two hundred and fifty years, from Mary Macleod and John Lom downwards, and published in various editions—I must content myself with saying in one word that there is a quantity of it which I suspect our English neighbours are not in the least aware of. I can name at least sixty authors who have "sacrificed to the muses" during that period, and whose writings amount to fully sixty thousand lines. The quality of all this miscellaneous poetry varies greatly, but much of it shows true poetic feeling, and descriptive powers of no mean order. The late Mr Patison of Islay has, in his *'Gaelic Bards'* (Glasgow, 1866), very happily translated several of these into English; and an examination of his work would help to remove much of the misconception that still exists regarding Gaelic song, ancient and modern. The truth is, that Macpherson's Collection forms but a small portion of the mass of Gaelic poetry which has been written down by several others as well as by him, and of which, while a great deal has been lost, a considerable quantity has been preserved. It is of consequence to keep before us the fact that the bardic spirit has always manifested itself, and does still manifest itself, strongly among the Caledonians as among other branches of the Celts.

I have thus endeavoured to answer the objections which have

been generally brought against the authenticity of the Ossianic poems, and pointed to a greater amount of external evidence in their favour than has hitherto been done, as far as I am aware. I come now to the internal evidence, the ground on which the question must be finally decided.

There is one branch of this evidence which a person, though ignorant of the poet's language, may to a great extent judge of by means of a faithful translation—that is, the very primitive, simple, original character of the poetry. We have nature pure and primitive dealt with by man in a very primitive state, and treated in a manner without example elsewhere, as far as I know. There is no allusion to agriculture or commerce, to arts or sciences, to laws or ordinances. There is not the remotest reference to Christianity, or to any of the great moral and social changes which it brings in its train. There is no abstraction or generalisation of ideas. Objects are dealt with individually as they present themselves at the first glance. And least of all is there a trace of that subjective, self-reflecting, moral picturing of the outer world—of that use of the “pathetic fallacy,” as Mr Ruskin calls it—which we find in the poetry produced by the high culture of modern days. The mind is, in a sense, passive in the act of perception, and the poetry reflects the face of nature with the unimpassioned fidelity of a mirror. I have sometimes seen Ben Nevis on a day of calm brightness reflected from head to foot in the waters of Loch Iel. I have seen every rock and ravine—nay, every tuft of fern and of heather—clearly mirrored at such moments in its depths. There is of course a vast variety of life, vegetable and animal, stirring in the loch, yet not a fin of fish, or leaf of sea-tangle, mingles with the picture of the mountain. It is reflected with perfect faithfulness, without any change, even as from a sea of smooth, cold glass. And thus does Ossian give back the face of nature simply and purely as it impresses itself on his eye, without a trace of self once colouring the image; but he depicts the image so vividly and clearly as to show the true poetic vision. Many of his descriptions are unsurpassed, if not unequalled, by any other poet, ancient or modern.

It may perhaps be possible for a man who has been trained under the power of Christianity, of classical learning, and of the endlessly-diversified influences which unconsciously mould

Internal evidence from the nature of the poetry.

us to what we are in modern days, to divest himself of the effects of all these—to travel back on his journey of life, stripping himself of every fold of being which gathered round him as he advanced—to step beyond the sway of every acquired mental habit and association, and occupy ground entirely new and strange. This may perhaps be possible; but it will not be credible until stronger evidence of the accomplishment of such a marvellous feat be afforded than any which the world has yet beheld. And therefore I hold the improbability of modern or mediæval authorship for Ossian's poems to be incalculably greater than that of an ancient one.

From the language.

But there is a second branch of internal evidence on which a translation throws no light, which can be judged of only by a Gaelic scholar—and that is the language in which the poems are written. That language is in its vocables confessedly the language of modern times. There are a few obsolete words, such as *os* for “deer,” *sionaidh* for “master,” *iuthaidh* for “arrow,” &c., but they do not amount to one in three hundred. They are scarcely worth taking into account. It is at once pronounced impossible that this should be at the same time ancient—a language fourteen or fifteen centuries old. The impossibility is not so certain when we look to facts in regard to other languages. The Norse language, as Professor Müller testifies, remained unchanged for seven centuries. The Greek has undergone no vital change for two thousand years. The Highlands have been so isolated as to give every chance of permanency to their ancient tongue, and we see that to this day Scottish Gaelic is far freer of foreign admixture than its cognate tongues in Wales and Ireland. The public and frequent recitation of ancient tales and poems by the bardic order helped greatly to preserve the language from any violent change; and we have some documents showing that the change has not been great for the last four hundred years.

In the second part of the National MSS. of Scotland, so very ably edited by Cosmo Innes, Esq., No. 59 consists of a charter of certain lands in Islay, granted by Macdonald, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Ross, to Brian Vicar Mackay, the only charter in the Gaelic language which is known to exist. It is dated May 1408, and is written in Gaelic, which any intelligent Highlander will

readily understand. In fact, it contains only one word that has become obsolete.

Again, there is a song frequently printed called the Battle-Song of the Macdonalds on the day of Harlaw, 1411. It probably is a century later, and is entirely destitute of poetic merit, being a long alliterative composition, more tiresome and less talented than the once well-known "*Pugna Porcorum per Publium Porcium, poetam;*" but it is decidedly modern in its terms. What is still more remarkable is that, "in the older life of St Kentigern, written prior to 1164, it is said that Servanus at Culross, when he heard of Kentigern's birth, exclaimed, '*A dia cur fir sin, quod sonat Latine, O utinam sic esset.*' In modern Scotch Gaelic the phrase would be, '*A Dhia gur fìor sin,*'*" (probably "*A Dhia cuir fìor sin,*" or "*cuir sin fìor,*"—"God make that true. Be it so!")

These scraps are similar to the Gaelic of Ossian, the Gaelic now in use; and scanty as they are, they show, as far as they go, that Gaelic has undergone little change for several hundred years back. At the same time there are other and more numerous documents which, on the other hand, seem to show the changes within the same period to have been very great. The Dean of Lismore's Book, on account of its very peculiar phonography, can scarcely be quoted as a competent witness on the question. But the '*Book of Deer,*' in the twelfth century, and several of the MSS. in the Advocates' Library, are widely different from any modern Gaelic.

I am not aware that this subject has been thoroughly examined yet, but I have no doubt the solution will be found in the fact, pointed out by Mr Skene and others, that a monkish and a bardic Gaelic ran side by side—that in the one case we have the "vernacular" of the people, in the other the learned dialect written by scholars. In our comparative ignorance of the matter, then, I found nothing on the mere vocables of Ossian. It is possible that they are as old as the tenth century, and even much older. In the absence of other writings of those ages, this cannot be proved. But the structure and arrangement—the syntax of the poems—I believe to be most certainly ancient. It is undeniably very different from what we find in any modern Gaelic. Having frequently pointed out instances of this difference in my notes, I

* Mr Skene's Introduction to the Dean's Book, p. 45.

will not enlarge on it here, but merely observe that there is a remarkable absence of secondary or subsidiary words, of pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions; that generally, instead of an adjective qualifying a noun, we have two nouns in regimen; that the same word is used in an extraordinary variety of different meanings—homonymy, as linguists call it;* and that there is an almost utter disregard of inflections, whether of nouns or of verbs, as there is also of the present order of syntax. I am quite aware that at a certain early period in the history of language, before “phonetic decay” has made many ravages on it, inflections are much more abundant than at a later stage, when the friction of long-continued use has worn down all its distinctive marks. But there is a period older than this still, “when language knows no inflections;” † and the language of Ossian seems to me clearly to belong to such a period as this. ‡

Unfortunately nothing can be deduced from the spelling of these poems, as they were modernised before being published, and we have not even Macpherson’s own transcript of them. The only specimens of his Gaelic which, as far as I know, remain to us are the seventh book of “*Temora*,” which he published at the end of his Collection in 1763, and a portion of “*Carrie-thura*,” given in High. Soc. Rep. The orthography of the seventh book of “*Temora*” is different from any other Gaelic which I have met with; and there are two peculiarities belonging to it which I would briefly point out:—

1. There is a “*destitutio tenuium*”—the hard consonants *c, p, t*, are used where the soft ones *g, b, d*, are now written; and let it be remembered that this use of the hard instead of the soft

* My attempts to explain this variety in regard to such words as *ch, tuar*, and many more, compel me to such repetition in my sidenotes as must be wearisome to the reader.

† Professor M. Muller’s *Science of Languages*, second series, p. 84-87.

‡ It has been objected to Ossian that he frequently places the adjective before the substantive, in entire opposition to modern Gaelic usage. *Làn-bhroill-ach òigh*, &c., has been called bad Gaelic. I notice, however, in the few Gaelic entries of the ‘*Book of Deer*,’ written in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, that this disposition of noun and adjective frequently occurs. The modern *maor-mòr* is uniformly written *mòr-maor*. At the same time I am sorry to observe that the remarkable looseness which is still a reproach to Gaelic orthography dates as far back as the days of the clerics of Deer, who, in the same sentence, use two or three spellings of the same word.

The seventh Duan of “*Temora*” appears to have been copied from some ancient MS.

consonants is the test which Zeuss has applied to determine the age of Celtic writings.

2. There is a very troublesome rule laid down by Irish grammarians as to the harmony of vowels, enjoining that if the last vowel in a syllable be broad, the first vowel in the next syllable must be so also, and *vice versa*. Professor M. Müller states that the same rule is followed in Turkish, and in some other languages of the Turanian family; but it seems to be unknown in any Aryan language except the Gaelic, as it is wholly unknown in Semitic. The writers of Scottish Gaelic have frequently protested against it; but all modern Gaelic observes it, nevertheless. Now this rule is disregarded in the seventh Duan of "Temora," while it is followed in other writings of the same period, and in the specimen of "Carric-thura" by Macpherson. Strathmashie gets the credit of writing this book, and is frequently used as the "deus ex machina"—the good fairy to solve difficulties by those who adopt a theory of compromise in regard to the authorship, a theory very characteristic of the spirit of the present day. Here, however, apart altogether from his own distinct testimony, we have full proof that he cannot stand sponsor. In Gillies's Collection we have some of his songs, and as Gillies knew nothing of Gaelic, we must conclude that they were printed from the author's own writing. Their orthography corresponds in all things with that of the period, and is widely different from "Temora."

Macpherson says, in a prefatory note, that he altered the orthography in many instances; but the striking peculiarities of this Duan afford at the least a presumption of its having been transcribed from an old writing; and it certainly deserves a more searching examination than has yet been bestowed on it.

There are various other points of considerable interest connected with these poems which, for want of space, I must touch on very briefly:—

1. Are they historical? I believe they are historical in the sense of truly depicting the manners of the times in which they were written, but that the reality of the special battles which they describe, whether with Caracul or with Swaran, cannot be proved.

Many persons, according to the tendency of the age, make them myths—astronomical fables; and it does not require a very

Are the poems
historical?

They may be mythical, but are probably historical.

vivid imagination to give some colour to this theory. The great hero Fingal may be "white-white"—*i.e.*, "dazzling." He is, according to the tales, a son of the "Clann Baoisgne," "the children of brightness;" his sword, which never sought a second stroke, is the son of Luno, or of "shining;" his great standard, irresistible when "she spread her wing on the wind," was *Dù-gréine*, or "sunbeam;" his wife was *Ros-gréine*, *Roscrana*, or *Grainè*, also signifying "sunbeam," or the "eyelid of the sun." According to the tales, she eloped with *Diarmad*,* in whose name we have at least "light and atmosphere," whatever more, possibly "the god of the court of the sky" (?) This Diarmad is wounded and deprived of his paramour for a time by a grim giant called *Ciùthach*, or *Citheach*, very like *Ceathach*, the common name for "mist." Diarmad at last destroys him, but is himself, through the contrivance of Fingal, slain by a venomous boar—"on Ben Gulbin," or "the pointed hill," "the Ben of peaks;" and etymology would find it no hard task to connect several other Ossianic names with the sky. All this looks astronomical and mythical. And Professor M. Müller says that "the story of Helen is a dawn myth;" † while elsewhere he says, "the siege of Troy has no historic basis." ‡ It is certain that the 'Æneid' has no historic basis; and it appears to me that the real value of the Ossianic poems is very slightly affected by either view as to their historical character. But a statement will be found in Mr Skene's 'Essay on the Highlanders,' vol. i. p. 206-216, which is of very great importance in deciding this question. The sum is as follows: The account given of the Irish kings in Ossian is diametrically opposed to that given by the Irish historians, who quoted from the monkish chroniclers of the fourteenth century. But the Annals of Tighernae, first published in 1825, agree entirely with Ossian. These Annals, written in the eleventh century,

Evidence of Mr Skene;

* The following account of the perseverance and ingenuity of this lady in carrying off Dermid is given in some of the tales: He had repeatedly rejected her proposals for an elopement, and at last declared that he would not accompany her on foot, or on horseback, indoors or out, by night or by day; when lo and behold! on the following morning, mounted on a foal, and standing midway in his door, she called to him just at the dawn of day, and told him that here she was, neither on foot nor on horseback, neither indoors nor out, neither in night nor in day. Overcome by this appeal he yielded—to his final undoing.

† Science of Language, second series, p. 472.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

were absolutely unknown in Macpherson's days. He could not possibly have had access to them. It follows, then, that the historic portion of Ossian is older than the fourteenth century, and is based on truth. He adds, in a note (p. 213), a striking confirmation by the celebrated antiquary Finn Magnussen, who proves that the religion of the Lochlanners, as described by Ossian, is a correct picture of the ancient religion of the Scandinavians, and that the real nature of that religion could not have been known to Macpherson, being unknown to modern scholars at the time.

I do not see how such testimony as this can be set aside; and I will add that a native of the Highlands, to whom almost every mountain and glen repeat Ossianic names and speak of Ossianic hero-deeds, to whom Ossianic maxims and proverbs are familiar as household words from his earliest youth, finds it hard, if not impossible, to believe in the mythical theory. He must believe that "Fingal fought" at some time, as well as that "Ossian sang." I am quite aware that our early Scottish annals or histories are not to be relied on for accuracy of statement, but it is worth observing that Barbour (1375) mentions both Fingal and Gaul the son of Morni; and, not to speak of Boece, Bishop Leslie (1578) places Fingal, the son of Cuhul, in the fifth century,—which shows that the belief in the existence and antiquity of these heroes prevailed among the Saxon inhabitants of Scotland as well as among the Celts.

The prevalence of Ossianic names throughout the topography of the Highlands should enable us clearly to identify the localities; and I submit the following statement by Dr Smith on this subject: "There is an astonishing correspondence between some of these poems and scenes which they are found to describe, but which were too distant and too obscure for the translator ever to see or hear of, and concerning which there is not even a tradition, so far as ever I could learn; so that Mr Macpherson must have found them in MS., otherwise they had never appeared. I mention one instance chosen purposely from the part least known in Gaelic of the whole collection. It is one of the songs of Selma. The names of Daura and Erath, there spoken of, are so uncommon that I am confident we may defy anybody to produce any instance of their being heard in name, surname,

Evidence
from topo-
graphy.

or tradition; yet in an obscure and almost inaccessible part of Argyleshire, which it is certain the translator of Ossian never saw, and which, from his own silence—the silence of tradition upon that story—and the distance and obscurity of the place, it is equally certain he never heard of,—in this place can be traced out the very scene, and the very uncommon names of that episode which, of all the collection, is perhaps the least known to a Gaelic antiquary. The island to which the traitor Erath beguiled Daura still retains his name of *Innis-Eraith*, ‘the island of Erath.’ The ferry and farm contiguous to it derive from him also their name; and about a mile distant from it is another farm consisting of an extensive heath, bounded by a large mountain-stream, and still retaining from that unfortunate lady the name of *Dura’inn*, the ‘stream of Daura;’ and what further confirms that this is the scene described by Ossian is, that several places within sight of it are denominated from Connal and others of his heroes whose names are better known. As nobody can suppose that the translator of Ossian could thus stumble by chance on names the least common, and places the least known, so as to make so many circumstances exactly correspond with his poems without his ever knowing it, we must certainly allow this a most confounding proof of their authenticity.*

The places here mentioned are situated in the parish of Dalavich, on Loch Awe, in Argyleshire; and it is interesting to find that the outline of the sad story of Daura is still to be heard from old people in the locality; but I have been unable to recover any part of the poem among them.

Further, I consider it highly probable that the modern “Connal,” “raging flood,” near Oban, represents Ossian’s *Lora*, or *Laoire*, “rapid stream,” for we still have *Beinn-Laoire* in the immediate neighbourhood; and it is certain that “hero-deeds,” in memory of which the “mossy stone” was raised, were done in this district of country at some remote period.

Dun Mac Uisneachain (or Sniochain) is said to be the ancient Selma, and is only two miles from Lora. A little to the north of it, towards the old castle of Barcaldine, are two farms called *Achacharra* and *Cùil-charran*, names which bear witness to the cairns which once stood there, and some of which have been

* Smith’s Dissertation on Authenticity of Ossian, p. 97, 98, footnote.

barbarously removed within a few years back. There is also *Tom Oiscin*, or Ossian's hill. But there is much more to be seen on the southern side. In the moss of *Achnacriithe*, at the foot of Ben Laoire, are several *cromleacs*, pillars, and circles, which fortunately have attracted the notice of the Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh; and some few miles further south still, at the head of Loch Nell, there is a large pillar known as "Dermid's stone," while the neighbouring farm is called *Toir an Tuirc*, "the Boar's hill," on which is a spring known as *Tobar nam bas toll*, "the spring of the leaky palms,"* referring to the cause of the hero's death.

Again, if we follow Loch Etive to the north, a few miles above Connal or Lora, we find *Ru-nan-càrn*, "the point of cairns;" and far up the wilds of Glen Etive, on the farms of Ardmaddy and Inverliver, are several circles and memorial stones. At the very end of the loch is a hill called *Grianan Dheard'uil*, "Darthula's sunny spot." In the loch is the island of Usnoth, and near its shore the wood of Nathos his son.

It is also deserving of remark that Selma is the first to the south of these remarkable strongholds known as "vitrified forts," which, while to be found in various places in Scotland, extend north in a continuous line through the great Glen of Alba to the Moray Firth. I speak of several of the above localities from familiar personal knowledge; and it is possible that more careful research would enable us to recognise other Ossianic scenes; but I cannot venture to pronounce with confidence on any other specific places.

The general features of the Ossianic scenery are, however, very clearly defined. And as certainly as the Homeric poems mark an Ionian sky and a "many-flashing sea," or Shakespeare's writings English fields and deer-parks, Ossian's poems mark the north-west Highlands as the place which gave them birth. The

* The common account of the immediate cause of Dermid's death is that Fingal refused to give him a drink out of his magic healing-cup. But the version localised in the neighbourhood of this spring bears that a drink of pure water from any source would suffice to heal him. His companions pretended to fetch this for him, but either jealous of his great fame, or afraid of offending Fingal, they allowed the water to escape between their fingers, whence the name of the well. And there is still another version of the story, saying that the women of the party, with all of whom Dermid was a favourite, ran to the well to succour him, but in their haste and agitation spilled the water, and thus he died of thirst.

serrated mountain-peaks so frequently shrouded in mist which assumes all conceivable and inconceivable forms; the narrow stormy firth, with its raging, roaring currents; the generally lonely, sombre, and stern aspect of nature, varied here and there, however, by spots of greenest verdure and brightest beauty in the hidden corrie or remote glenlet, have all a local colouring which is felt to be true by every one who compares the description with the reality.

Ossianic measure.

It may be proper, for the sake of completeness to my Dissertation, to state what has already been frequently stated regarding the measure of the Ossianic verse, that generally it consists of octosyllabic quatrains; but both measure and rhythm are very frequently disregarded.

I have now endeavoured to clear the ground for a fairer and fuller discussion of the authenticity of these remarkable poems than it has ever yet received. I have striven to show that there is no such *prima facie* evidence against them as to throw them out of court without a hearing—that they are entitled to an impartial examination, and ought to be considered far more apart from Macpherson's conduct and character than they have been—that many of them are entirely independent of him—that they must be looked at in connection with a great mass of other Gaelic poetry, as also in the light of Scottish history—above all, that they must be judged of in their native dress, not in a foreign disguise, and that the internal evidence in their favour deserves consideration which has never been bestowed on it. If they be treated thus, I believe they will be found, as to proofs of genuineness, to stand on the same ground with many other ancient poems. I admit freely that no demonstration can be given of the existence of Fingal or Ossian—no certain proof that the poems were composed in the third, or fourth, or fifth century. Further, while there is a striking resemblance between the general style of the whole, some appear to be older than others. “Calhon and Colvala,” “Conloch and Cuhona,” as well as “Carhon,” appear to me to have more of hoar antiquity about them than any of the rest. There is a good deal in the cast of “Covala” which bespeaks a different authorship from the others. There are, as I have already pointed out, imitations of “Fingal” in “Temora,” which, I think, clearly show a later hand

making up the second of these poems; while, at the same time, it is, on the whole, as thoroughly Ossianic, and as rich in poetic beauty, as any in the whole collection. There are repetitions of the same descriptions, occasional lines which I have no doubt are spurious, and which I have marked as such. But do we not find every one of these difficulties, and many more, besetting the 'Iliad' and other old poems?

Let us for a moment look at some of these. Lycurgus is said to have brought the Homeric ballads from Ionia three hundred years after the death of Homer. Who vouched or countersigned his MS.? Pisistratus is generally said to have "arranged" them, "disposuisse" according to Cicero—and widely-different significations have been attached to this word—many maintaining that he constructed them anew, even as Macpherson is said to have done with the Ossianic ballads. But while Cicero attributes this work to Pisistratus, Diogenes Laertius gives the credit of it to Solon, Plato to Hipparchus. In short, old Homer had several "Strathmashies" to bring him to his present shape. Again, Zenodotus, and particularly Aristarchus, revised the poems, rejecting what they considered spurious; and the Alexandrian grammarians seem to have given them a further polishing. Who can tell what additions and subtractions have been made by all these hands? Taking the text as we have it, however, the warmest defenders of Homer admit that it contains many interpolations. Professor Blackie applies the bracket freely, and even Mr Gladstone says that in the eleventh book alone there are 150 lines absolutely irrelevant. There are various discrepancies pointed out; and a glaring contradiction, far surpassing any blemish in Ossian, is to be seen between Book V. (v. 576), where Pylaemenes is out and out killed by Menelaus, and Book XIII. (v. 658), where this slain warrior appears in life and vigour; and a literal repetition of lines in Book IV. (v. 446) is to be found in Book VIII. (v. 601). These facts are admitted by the strongest advocates of the authenticity of the 'Iliad.' Wolff, Lachmann, and a host of other learned men, scout the idea of its authenticity as strongly as Laing did that of "Fingal." But notwithstanding all this, the Homeric poems were received by the Greeks, are received by the general public in every civilised country, as the genuine utterance of the ancient Grecian muse,

Parallel between the difficulties surrounding the authenticity of these poems and other ancient poems.

The 'Iliad.'

and will be received in all time to come, notwithstanding the gainsaying of the very critical and very learned.* Let the same broad common-sense view which pronounces this opinion in the face of many difficulties and objections be taken of the Ossianic poems, and they also will be received as truly "the voice of Cona,"—the genuine utterance of the ancient Celtic muse.

The 'Edda.'

Or let us look at the 'Edda.' It is said to have been composed in the sixth, carried to Iceland in the ninth, written down in the eleventh century. The prose portions of the old 'Edda' may be of more modern origin. "They betray in many instances the hand of a Christian writer. . . . How do we know, for instance, that Sœmund (1056-1133) collected the old, Snorro Sturleson the young, 'Edda'? How do we know that the MSS. which we now possess have a right to the title of 'Edda'? All this rests, as far as we know, on the authority of Bishop Brynjulf Swendsen, who discovered the 'Codex Regius' in 1643, and wrote on the copy of it with his own hand the title of 'Edda Sœmundar hinns froda.' None of the MSS. of the second or prose 'Edda' bear that title in any well-authenticated form; still less is it known whether Snorro composed either part or the whole of it." † Elsewhere he says,—“The 'Edda' is not well authenticated, but depends on internal evidence.”

Surely there is as good a case for Ossian as for the 'Edda.'

The 'Niebelungen Lied.'

Or let us look at the 'Niebelungen Lied.' Professor M. Müller traces it back to the 'Edda,' and, still further, to Grecian and Persian myths, about the unceasing contest between darkness and light, winter and summer. ‡ But taking it in the historical view generally given of it, it is said to refer to events of the fifth century, to have been written down in the end of the twelfth, and entirely forgotten, when a MS. of it was accidentally discovered in the library of a German noble in the eighteenth century (*vide* p. xxix.) There is no attestation or countersigning of that MS. — nothing of the lawyer-like proof demanded of Ossian. Yet the 'Niebelungen Lied' is justly received as an ancient poem, and a very noble one.

* I am indebted for most of the facts here stated regarding the 'Lied' to the very able Homeric Dissertations of Professor Blackie.

† Professor M. Müller, *Chips, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 196, 197. ‡ *Ibid.*, 109-114.

I will not speak of the Eastern Vedas, concerning the age and purity of which there are still such wide diversities of opinion. But let us look at what is nearer home—the works of Taliessin and other Welsh bards. There is no ancient MS. of these to be found more than of the others. But whoever reads Mr Skene's able Introduction to the 'Four Ancient Books of Wales,' will be very unreasonable if he admit not that these were, as Welshmen maintain, composed about the sixth century, and written down in the twelfth.

Or, once more, let us examine Miss Brooke's ballads in her 'Reliques of Irish Poetry.' These were published in 1788, long after Macpherson had published Ossian. Her English translation is very poetical, yet far more paraphrastic than even Macpherson's. But what I point attention to is, that her Irish originals were printed from the writing of Mr O'Haloran, who had no ancient MSS. to show, and who was never asked to show them. The ballads were received as genuine, and I have no doubt they are so; but they are so received without any of the evidence demanded of Macpherson.

No one can tell the precise period in which any of these poems was composed. No one can tell what changes rhapsodists, skalds, and bards may have wrought on them. So of Ossian nothing precise concerning him can be proved in a court of law; but the whole character of his poetry declares it to belong to pre-Christian times—that is, in Caledonia before the end of the sixth century; while any historical reference which we have in our Scottish annals to the period of Fingal confirms this view. But we have some further evidence to guide us back to times which, if not quite so far away, are at least very remote from ours.

Mr Skene, quoted p. xlii, shows that the historic portion of these poems is older than the fourteenth century; and I think we may safely venture to assign to them a still older date. It is an undoubted fact that Malcolm Canmore, in the eleventh century, banished the Gaelic language from his court. It is altogether improbable that poems claiming to be national should be composed in a language placed under royal ban. Further, and what is still more conclusive, we find in the same century the names of regularly-constituted offices appearing in the Celtic kingdom of Scotland—*Muormor*, *Toiseach*, and *Tighern*. No mention of

The Welsh poems.

Miss Brooke's 'Reliques of Irish Poetry.'

Probable period of the composition of the Ossianic poems.

such occurs in Ossian ; and had it been written at this, or at any subsequent period, it is impossible to believe that it would omit all reference to the highest dignities in the land. Still further, Scotland was united into one monarchy by Kenneth MacAlpin in the ninth century ; but Fingal does not appear to have possessed any civil power, or to have exercised any general authority over the state. He is presented to us as a leader armed with supreme authority in times of great exigency, and then only. In ordinary circumstances the tribes seem to have been subject each to its own chief. The description of Fingal's position corresponds exactly to that assigned by Tacitus to Galgacus ; and it could not have found a place in national poetry composed after a permanent sovereign had acquired the sway of the whole kingdom.

This reason appears to demand the carrying of these poems back to the ninth century, and sanctions, if it do not absolutely demand, their being referred to a still earlier period—that of the sixth century—before the light of Christianity shone on the islands of the West. In the eleventh century, as we have seen, they were banished from the high places of the land ; but they continued to live in the hut, and in the shieling, and in the corrie. The common people, as in other similar instances, cherished the old heroic songs. It is certain that at least a portion of them was committed to writing long ago, while other portions were so engraved on the memories of many as to be independent of writing. Macpherson got much from MSS. and much from oral recitation. It is most probable that he has given the minor poems exactly as he found them. He may have made considerable changes on the larger ones in giving them their present form, although I do not believe that he, or any of his assistants, added much, even in the way of connecting-links between the various episodes ; for, any attentive reader will see that these are generally introduced with an abruptness which is startling and confusing, rendering it very difficult to see a connection between them and the context. Macpherson, in his translation, gives such a cast to them as to make them fit in some degree into the place which they occupy. But in the Gaelic, it is often difficult to perceive any special fitness for that particular place.

It is to be remembered, at the same time, that the remarkable story of the Douay MS. leads to the supposition that some Gaelic

Pisistratus had anticipated Macpherson in the work of arrangement. But we may readily believe that he arranged and connected various ballads in the larger poems, yet ask acknowledgment for them as genuine remains of Celtic poetry on grounds in all respects similar to those on which the claims of the 'Iliad' and 'Edda' rest; and I would again refer to the "Kalewala," the epic of the Finns, preserved by oral tradition alone for a much longer period than is claimed even by Macpherson, as meeting every rational objection ever brought against Ossian.

I do not wish to overstate the evidence in favour of Ossian; and I am quite aware that, in the present state of our knowledge, the question is far from being ripe for a final decision. The internal evidence to be derived from the language in which the poems are written must be examined much more carefully than it has been before we arrive at this stage.* But the following conclusions appear to me to be fairly deducible from the evidence now before us:—

I. It is certain, and according to the unanimous verdict of Celtic scholars, that the Gaelic is the original language of these poems.

II. It is also certain that considerable portions of them, and those the very gems of the Ossianic poetry, were known in the Highlands to many who had no communication with Macpherson.—*Vide* p. xxv, xxvi.

III. It is equally certain that Macpherson got many Gaelic MSS. older than his day; that he openly employed others to assist him in translating them; that, under public advertisement, his MSS. lay for twelve months in the shop of his publishers, Messrs Beckett & De Hondt, Strand, London, and with an offer of publication, on condition of subscribers coming forward.

IV. There is nothing to prove that he gave other than the con-

* The few who seek a knowledge of Celtic are deeply indebted to the Germans, who carefully study this as they do all other languages. Zeuss's 'Grammatica Celtica,' so wonderful for its patient research, is a very storehouse of knowledge, though unfortunately shedding no direct light on the language of Ossian, as it does not treat Scottish Gaelic apart from Irish. Dr August Ebrard, of Erlangen, has this year written a grammar and vocabulary specially to illustrate Ossian. In Scotland, on the other hand, any one attempting to bring Gaelic writing to such order as is established among other civilised languages, meets with much unreasonable and unreasoning opposition.

tents of these MSS. The account of the Douay MS. renders it probable that he found even the longest of the poems arranged in the order in which he has given them; while at the same time it is possible that he may have done much in arranging and connecting their detached portions.

V. The era of Ossian cannot now be ascertained with any approach to minute accuracy, nor can the strictly historical character of the poems be proved. But there is as much external evidence in favour of their antiquity and genuineness as there is in favour of the 'Iliad,' the 'Edda,' or those other old poems which I have mentioned; and the reasoning which would strike the name of the Bard of Selma from the roll of venerable national minstrels, would also blot out the names of the authors of all those other grand old national songs; while the internal evidence is decisive in favour of the very great antiquity of the Ossianic poems.

Lastly, Everything connected with the subject proves to demonstration that, while Macpherson was the active, intelligent collector, and the very spirited translator, he was not the author of any of these poems—that the theory of his being the author is utterly absurd.

I have purposely abstained from adverting to the claims frequently and strongly advanced by our Irish cousins to the exclusive authorship of Macpherson's Ossianic poems; for I hope that the time is not distant when the Scotch and Irish G ael will rejoice in all old Celtic literary treasures as common family property. Nay, the time should be at hand when every inhabitant of Britain will acknowledge the ancient productions of the Celtic muse as part of the national stock; for unquestionably the Celts were occupants of Britain before Roman or Teuton set foot on it, and their blood mingles freely with that of the later settlers in the kingdom.

The claims of Ireland are discussed by Mr Skene with his usual ability in his Introduction to the Book of the Dean of Lismore, and very fully and fairly argued by Mr Campbell in the fourth volume of his 'West Highland Tales.' It is enough for me here to state that Macpherson never was in Ireland, nor got a MS. from it; that, while Ireland possesses a quantity of what is called Ossianic poetry, none of the poems given by Macpherson have

The alleged
Irish origin of
the poems.

been found there. I have, both in my notes and in this Dissertation, referred at sufficient length to Miss Brooke's 'Reliques.' Several of the poems are similar to portions of Macpherson's Ossian, but in no instance are they identical with them. It is altogether unreasonable, then, to say that these poems, undoubtedly collected in Scotland, and never found in Ireland, belong to the latter country.

I now give briefly the history of the Gaelic text before us, of the Ossian which we have actually got, and of the principal English translations made from it.

The proposal of publishing the Gaelic by subscription having failed, Macpherson, as formerly mentioned (p. xi), withdrew from the controversy in sullen silence. After some time, however, his friends urged him to the publication. He pleaded the great expense as an insurmountable obstacle in the way; whereupon Sir J. Murray McGregor, and other Highland gentlemen, then in the East India Company's service, subscribed and sent to him £1000 for the purpose. He now alleged want of leisure for the task, and allowed year after year to pass without doing what he had promised. He did not, however, wholly neglect the work. He sent to John McKenzie, Esq., of the Temple, London, left as executor under his will, the Gaelic poems which we now possess, and left the £1000 for publishing them. These Gaelic poems were all written either in his own hand or in those of amanuenses employed by him. No one can tell how the MSS. which he had collected in the Highlands were disposed of; but it is the strange and the sad fact that not a leaf of them was left behind, or any explanation given of their fate.

Mr Mackenzie delayed the publication from day to day, and finally handed over the MSS. to the Highland Society of London, who showed a noble liberality in making the fullest inquiry regarding the poems, and in publishing them in a very handsome form. This was done in the year 1807, the Gaelic being accompanied by a Latin translation from the pen of Robert Macfarlan, Esq., A.M., and by various notes and dissertations—a particularly valuable one from the pen of Sir John Sinclair, Bart. of Ulbster.* The editing of the Gaelic was committed to the

* The Society published all the Gaelic poems left by Macpherson. Besides these, however, he published short poems bearing the following titles: "The War

History of the
Gaelic text of
Ossian.

Society's edition by Dr Ross,

Rev. Thomas Ross, subsequently well known as Dr Ross, minister of Lochbroom, the correcting of the press being intrusted to the Rev. Dr Stewart of Dingwall, both men of talent and scholarship. The Society ordered them to conform the orthography of the text to that of the Gaelic Scriptures, an unfortunate injunction in many ways—for it would be interesting, and might be instructive, to see the Gaelic which Macpherson himself wrote down; and the 1801 edition of the Gaelic Scriptures, the model proposed, is an extremely faulty one. Founded to some extent on Bishop Bedell's Irish version, it retains many phrases and spellings which never belonged to Scottish Gaelic. It conforms to a most vitiated phonetic style of writing, following colloquial pronunciation in running two words together, and dropping subsidiary words without giving any sign of elision. And throughout it is written with great looseness, different constructions of the same phrase being met with not only in the same page, but even in the same verse. Subsequent editions have been issued which have in some instances avoided some of these errors, but even that which obtained the sanction of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland retains hundreds of them. People speak of the Gaelic Scriptures being the standard for Gaelic writing; but if they ever have examined what they speak of, they must use the word standard in a very different meaning from that commonly understood by it—for there is in the authorised version a total want of the uniformity to be found in all languages whose orthography has become settled. There are many foreign idioms, and what probably is worst of all, the frequent use of those colloquial and unscholarly contractions which I adverted to above.

of Caros," "The War of Inisthona," "The Battle of Lora," "The Death of Cuthullin," "Darthula," "The Songs of Selma," "Lathmon," "Oithona," and "Berrathon," along with "Fingal"; "Cathlin of Clutha" and "Sulmalla of Lumon" along with "Temora,"—all bearing, like the others, to be translations from Gaelic. As these are not in the Society's edition, it does not fall within my province to discuss them, but I must observe that generally they are quite equal in beauty and in strength to the rest of the collection; and I think it right to call attention to the fact briefly stated at p. xxviii, that, as appears from the three immediately preceding pages, several of these minor poems were recited in Gaelic by various persons throughout the Highlands. But as Macpherson never published them in Gaelic, the proof of their genuineness is beyond contradiction. The extract from Dr Smith, p. xliii, xliv, appears to me as conclusive as anything of the kind can ever be.

Dr Ross did not obey the injunctions given him. He did better. Still there is a great deal of looseness in his edition. He is very careless in marking elisions, and he has introduced a few Ross-shire conversationalisms which do not find any general acceptance. Dr Ross's Gaelic, however, is all that we have of the original of Ossian; for, with the fatality which has attended all dealings with these poems, even Macpherson's Gaelic MS. has disappeared. It was at one time in the Advocates' Library, but every trace of it is meantime lost.

A second Gaelic edition was published in 1818 by Mr Ewen Maclachlan of Aberdeen, who makes considerable changes in phraseology, fills up the blanks left by Dr Ross, without any indication of doing one or the other, and also writes the whole in a very careless style. I wish to speak of Ewen Maclachlan with unfeigned respect as a Celtic and as a general classic scholar. He was a man of very rare attainments, yet it is undeniable that his Ossian is no standard of Gaelic writing; and his very eloquent preface is, as far as orthography is concerned, written with extreme slovenliness.

A third edition was published in 1861 under the editorship of the Rev. Dr M'Lauchlan, Edinburgh, who has in many respects improved the orthography; but he follows the text of his namesake of Aberdeen, and his scope did not lead him to give explanatory notes, which his extensive scholarship would have rendered so valuable.

I felt myself bound to follow the Society's text, and in so doing have written with much of that irregularity which I condemn in the writing of prose. I was obliged to do as I have done; for the attempt to bring Ossian's sentences under the rules of modern grammar would, in thousands of instances, thoroughly change their structure, and uniformity of spelling would often utterly destroy the rhythm which gives them so much beauty and impressiveness. I have, however, corrected hundreds of typographical errors. I have banished those modern softenings evidently introduced by Dr Ross, such as "na bhuaill?" for "an do bhuaill?" "dha 'n duine" for "do 'n duine," "roimhe" ("through") for "troimhe." I have written these as I find them in every grammar and dictionary, as well as in other writings. I have, in numerous marginal notes, pointed out words which I consider doubtful. I have indicated every blank which I have filled up, bracketed such lines

Mr E. Mac-
lachlan's.

Rev. D
M'Lauchlan's.

The present
edition.

as I consider spurious, and have been at very great pains in separating words improperly run together, according to the unscholarly method of writing Gaelic which is so common. I have also marked elisions with an apostrophe. I have thus written the language so that a student can see what the words are, or have been; and have succeeded, I trust, in giving a better text of Ossian than has hitherto been given, though very much remains yet to be done in purifying and correcting it.

Translations :
Mr Macfarlan's ;

As to translations, a Latin one by Mr Macfarlan was published under the sanction of the Society in 1807. It deserves great praise for its laboriousness; but the author realises, more completely than any one I have ever met with, Horace's "fidus interpres," most conscientiously doing what the judicious critic forbade—giving the "verbum verbo" throughout. Thus it is of little help towards reaching the true meaning of the original, and the Latin is anything but classical or tasteful.

Macpherson's :

It is needless to speak of the many translations into foreign languages which have given Ossian so high a place among Continental nations; but of English translations Macpherson's justly holds the first place, and, with those ignorant of the original, will in all likelihood continue to hold that place, just as Pope's Homer continues to be the favourite with the general public, notwithstanding its unfaithfulness to the original. Macpherson is open to the same most serious objection. As a rule, he passes by obscure and difficult phrases; he frequently tones down the boldest images of his author; he unhesitatingly adds not merely epithets to round his periods, but sentences to bring out the meaning. At the same time he omits words and lines, and sometimes mistranslates very glaringly. Notwithstanding all this, as I have said at some length in Note 11 to "Fingal," Duan I., he deserves very high praise for giving so striking an outline of the leading features of a remarkably difficult author. He has done a signal service not only to Celtic but to general literature, and "has left his mark upon the mountain-side." I have thought it in every way proper to print his translation by the side of my own.

Mr M'Gregor's.

The only other complete translation which I have seen is by Mr M'Gregor, London, 1840. I cannot say that it is fitted to make Ossian better known; but the preliminary Dissertation to it is well worth perusal.

There is a translation of "Fingal" by Dr Ross, in many respects very good; yet, singularly enough, while very severe on Macpherson for his additions and omissions, he himself often drops important epithets without an attempt to give an equivalent.

I think passages of higher beauty than any in "Fingal" are to be found both in some of the minor poems and in "Temora;" but "Fingal" seems to have been the favourite poem with the public; consequently various translations of it have appeared from time to time—one, in very smooth-flowing rhymes, by the Rev. J. Wodrow, minister in Islay, 1771; another by Mr Ewen Cameron in 1777, not deserving of the same praise: and both being founded on Macpherson's English, they are paraphrases of a paraphrase.

The only translation of any portion of Ossian justly deserving the name which I have seen is contained in Smith's 'Summer in Skye' (Strahan, London, 1866), and is the work of the Rev. Mr Macpherson, minister of Inveraray. It is literal and spirited, well fitted to give a true idea of the strength and beauty of the Gaelic; and, had he translated the whole, there would have been no place left for my work; but unfortunately he has given only a few detached fragments.

In my work I have been led, both by the excellences and the blemishes of Macpherson, to give a more literal rendering than I otherwise would have done. I have aimed at preserving the peculiarities of the original, and thus the reader must be always aware that he has a translation before him. In the earlier part of my work I endeavoured, as far as possible, to preserve the very order of the words as they are in Gaelic; but I abandoned this plan as leading to excessive stiffness and obscurity. I discarded all restraint of rhyme or measure, and honestly sought to make the meaning of Ossian truly known to the English reader. In doing so I can say with Cowper, "I have invented nothing; I have omitted nothing."

In translating I studiously excluded from my mind all question of authenticity, as well as of time and place, seeking only to make the "voice of Cona" intelligible to the English reader.* In

* In my endeavour to explain every passage by itself, I have made statements in my Notes which may sometimes appear inconsistent with each other; for I consider it the first duty of a translator to give the original as he finds it.

Of Fingal, by
Dr Ross;

by Mr Wod-
row;
by Mr
Cameron.

Fragments by
Rev. Mr Mac-
pherson, In-
veraray.

Account of the
present trans-
lation.

my earnest desire to do this, and this only, I have done what, as far as I know, has not been done by any other translator of so large a work. I have not merely restricted myself to the same number of lines with the original, but I have not allowed one line to run into another. I have given each as it stands.

I am quite aware of the many disadvantages of such a plan—of the rugged and abrupt character it imparts to the translation—but I believe that its advantages on the whole overweigh the disadvantages; and I trust that, imperfect as my rendering is, it will give the English reader a more faithful idea of that original than has been hitherto given.

Some apology may be necessary for my frequent use of words which are more Gaelic than English—such as *ben*, *glen*, *strath*, *corrie*, &c.—but they are to some extent already known in English, and they are far more expressive than the “hill” and “vale” so constantly occurring in Macpherson.

On the other hand, I have followed his example in changing the form of proper names, so as to bring them within the powers of a Saxon tongue. I think the giving them in pure Gaelic form would render them absolutely unpronounceable to the English reader. *Aghaidh an t sneachda*, *Dubh-mac-Roinne*, and many others, will be recognised and may be pronounced as Agandecca, Du mac Roin; but if left unchanged, would have small chance of being ever named by a Saxon tongue.

The marginal explanations which I have given will enable the reader to follow the thread of the story throughout, and the notes at the end of each Book will, I trust, throw light on some obscure expressions and similes; while I would specially mention Note 8 to “Fingal,” Duan I., where I show that the clan system, said to be unknown to Ossian, is over and over again mentioned by him in clear and unmistakable terms. I have also shown in Note 2 to “Fingal,” Duan III., that there are frequent allusions to some kind of worship at the *Cromlee*.

I need not enlarge on the great difficulty of translating an author whose whole mode of thought is so remote from that of modern times—a difficulty greatly increased by the absence of contemporary literature to throw light on his meaning. There are thus passages in themselves very obscure, and there are others which are rendered so by an imperfect and corrupted text. In

the present state of Gaelic philology the meaning of several of these must be a matter of mere conjecture. It is probable that in various instances I may have erred. All I will say is, that I have given the meaning which appeared to me the most probable.

I am most painfully conscious of the utter inadequacy of my translation to give a full representation either of the grandeur or the pathos of the original. But if it prove the means of attracting greater attention to Ossian, and of inducing men to study him in his own expressive tongue, I am sure that my imperfections will be freely forgiven by them, and I shall consider my labour well bestowed.

I do not propose to enter into a formal or lengthened criticism of the Ossianic poetry. Dr Blair and others have done this, and done it well, long ago. But I will venture a few remarks on points which appear to me to have been in some measure overlooked, and advert to some of the objections brought against its general character.

It is very remarkable that there is no allusion whatever throughout the whole poems to the voice of singing birds with which the woods of the Highlands must have been tuneful in the days of old as they are now. There is mention made of the "hum of the mountain-bee" and the "droning dance of the evening fly." In the seventh Duan of "Temora" the birds of night are startled by the loud sound of Fingal's shield—and the flight of sea-birds is noticed; but no reference is ever made to lark, or thrush, or blackbird—to any bird of song. The eagle ("the true bird," according to its Gaelic name, *fir-eun*) is the only bird ever specially named. Of this omission I can give no explanation.

It has been remarked that, of all the dwellers in the waters, the whale alone is mentioned—the reason sometimes assigned for the omission being the fact that the ancient Celts, like the Homeric heroes, ate no fish. I do not think this a sufficient reason in a poet's estimation, but I can give no better. It is to be observed that modern Gaelic poetry abounds with descriptions of thrush and lark, as well as of the salmon, "the monarch of the flood."

Much has been said of the sublimity of the Ossianic poems—and they are deserving of it all—but they contain singularly faithful and beautiful descriptions of nature in her calm and more genial moods, which are sometimes used to illustrate the bright and gentle side of human character. These have not, in my

General remarks on some of the characteristics of the poetry of Ossian.

opinion, been sufficiently appreciated. I subjoin a few of them as examples. At p. 461, vol. i., we have the following description of early morning :—

“ Pleasing the tale of the time which has gone,
Soothing as noiseless dew of morning mild,
On the brake and knoll of roes,
When slowly rises the sun
On the silent flank of hoary Bens—
The loch, unruffled, far away,
Calm and blue on the floor of the glens.”

At p. 211, vol. ii., the youthful prince of Ullin is thus described :—

“ Stood Cormac in their midst, as bright
As a young star, when, rising in the sky,
It looks in gentle gladness
From the back of misty mountains in the east,
Its fresh brightness shining through the dew
That travels in pureness from ocean ;
In silence moves its path on high,
Without a cloud in frown to dim its light.”

Then, again, Fingal's joy in beholding the bravery of his young son is thus spoken of, vol. ii. p. 309 :—

“ Joy, like a gentle breeze from the glen,
Comes over the countenance of the king
While he sees his son in renown.
Like the joy of the cloudless sun,
When he looks on a tree which grew
Beneath his light on the brow of the hill,
As alone it waves its head
On the side of the glen ; so was the king
In joy for Fillan his son.”

Once more, the description of Ossian's gladness in listening to “sweet voices from the march of bards” is thus described, vol. ii. p. 323 :—

“ Even so heareth a tree,
In the narrow gorge of desert Bens,
The voice of spring approach its side ;
Its foliage springs around its head
And opens to the shining of the sun ;
It shakes its branches all alone—
The hum of the mountain-bee is nigh ;
The hunter with joy beholds it wave
Amid the blight and baldness of the crags.”

An "evening scene" at Dora, vol. ii. p. 209, is too long for quotation, but is singularly beautiful; and the first twenty-two lines of "Temora," Duan L, vol. ii. p. 171, 173, contain a very striking contrast between the peacefulness of outward nature and the turmoil of a guilty mind.

Scenes of touching pathos in describing the softer emotions of the heart, presenting "tenderness beyond all tenderness," have been so frequently pointed out that I need not particularise them.

But, as to objections often made to the general character of the poetry, I would remark that—

1. The charges of exaggeration and bombast, however applicable to Macpherson's translation, do not lie against the original. Ossian's words do not overbalance his ideas.

2. The poetry is said to be very obscure. In some places it is so; and perhaps I may in my Notes have complained rather too frequently on this point. I doubt not, however, that much of its darkness to us is due to the antiquity of the poems, referring, as they often do, to matters which have passed away; much to the confusing effect of the episodes which mingle in the narrative with distracting frequency; much to our comparative ignorance of the language, which has received hitherto very inadequate illustration, whether in grammar or dictionary; and very much, I am certain, is owing to imperfect recording. The text is in many places corrupt. These facts frequently obscure the meaning; but there are everywhere throughout the poems couplets, and even individual lines, showing such remarkable grasp and pictorial power as to prove that the author was capable of forming full and clear views of his subject.

3. It is alleged that the characters are monotonous, and all cast in the same mould. An attentive study of the work, however, will remove much of this objection.

Ossian has not the wonderfully vivid and varied descriptive power of Homer, but he has much more of it than Virgil, and his heroes have more distinctive characteristics than the "fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum" of the Roman. Fingal, one of the noblest and best heroes described either in ancient or modern poetry, is not merely the resistless warrior, or the great king. To the very close of his life he manifests an unchanging affection for Agandecca, his first love; a never-failing interest in the friends of

Answers to
occasional
criticisms.

his youth ; a lively sympathy with the young ; and a freshness of love for his sons, which are intensely human and attractive. Hear him, for instance, lamenting the fall of Ryno (vol. ii. p. 67) :—

“ Farewell, thou foremost on the field !
No more shall I keep thine arrow from straying :*
Thou who wast fairest of the heroes,
I shall see thee no more—farewell ! ”

Or again, when calling his sons to the chase, the familiar name of the dead comes as usual to his lips—he exclaims :

“ Ryno—he is in the grave,
My son is in the sleep of death ! ”

I would also mention his touching lamentation for Fillan—his starting back and leaping over the river when Bran, the favourite dog, sprang up from beside his young master's broken shield (vol. ii. p. 499, 501). All these are traits which bring him within the range of human sympathy in every age. He is fully more interesting and winning than Tennyson's “ blameless king.”

Thoroughly opposite to the picture of Fingal is that of Starno in “ Ca-Lodin,” the very embodiment of a savage ruthless viking and pirate. Again, we have Conan (vol. ii. p. 127), true to his currish name, snarling and biting as wont. Car-hon (in the poem which bears his name) is grave and sombre, always carrying the “ great grief which has saddened his age.” Oscar, Fillan, and others are cheerful and hopeful. Malhos and Folda (vol. ii. p. 347, 349) are fierce and quarrelsome, yet withal generous ; while Duntalmo, in “ Calhon and Colvala,” and Cairbar, in the first Duan of “ Temora,” are treacherous and bloodthirsty. Totally unlike these are Ca-olt (“ Fingal,” Duan II.) and Hidala (“ Temora,” Duan VII.), gentle and accomplished, lovers of music and of song. But it is worthy of remark that even the fiercest of these warriors occasionally show “ a touch of nature,” which prevents us from abhorring them. Thus Starno, savage as he was, “ trembled at the slaying of his son.” Cairbar always cherished love and fidelity to his noble brother Ca-mor.

“ Brightness clear, at all times, shone
On Ca-mor, from his gloomy mind,
Like the moon looking forth from a cloud,
Through the dark-red thunders of night.”

—Vol. ii. p. 273.

* A most touching allusion to the training of his boy in the use of the bow.

And Folda, whose joy in death was the prospect of often descending from his cloud to view the graves of those he had slain, yet preserves in his heart one green spot, in which dwelt the image of his only daughter Lena :—

“ On her shone calmest light
From his soul at the height of the storm.”

—Vol. ii. p. 399, 401.

So of his female characters—all of them in purity, dignity, and tenderness immeasurably superior to the coarse, scolding, fighting goddesses of Homer—too many of them die in despair over their lovers' graves ; but we see Oi-nam-mor-hul happily united to Tormod of the waves through the generosity of Ossian, as Uha is to Fro-hal (in “ Carric-thura ”) by the kindness of Fingal. Golnandona secures Toscar by following him to the chase. The fate of Morna (“ Fingal,” Duan I.) is tragical enough to excite deepest interest. Sulvalla (in “ Temora ”), the most queenly of them all, closes her career in sadness ; but the poet, with great art, throws a veil of darkness over it—

“ Let there be no remembrance of her grief,
It sorely wastes the soul of age.”

And to show that, with all his pure and noble chivalry towards women, he did not believe in their absolute perfection, he presents to us in Ded-gel a thorough specimen of female perfidy and heartlessness.—(“ Fingal,” Duan II. l. 389-443.)

The descriptions of Stri-nan-dona (“ Ca-Lodin,” Duan III.) and of Agandecca (“ Fingal,” Duan III.) have often been quoted as surpassingly beautiful. I would refer to that of Golnandona in the beginning of the poem bearing her name, and to an example of truly fine poetic fancy in the three following lines regarding Roscrana (“ Temora,” Duan IV. l. 87-89) :—

“ I saw her mild blue eye
Move like a pure and playful spirit,
Half hidden in fringe of dark clouds.”

The truly sublime, however, is the grand characteristic of Ossian. I will not quote instances of what may be found on almost every page ; but I would observe that his sublimity is often of a peculiar kind—arising from his blending the material and the

Ossian's descriptions of scenery.

spirit worlds in a manner entirely his own—not employed by any other poet. Indeed he rarely, if ever, separates them completely. He does not, like Milton, ascend to the pure empyrean, or, like Dante, descend to an *inferno*. He has created a dim border-land, visited by the inhabitants of both worlds, who meet and hold converse, if with some reserve and awe, yet without any of the dread, and even horror, with which poets generally invest the presence of dwellers in the invisible world. His heroes are, on every occasion of danger or difficulty, surrounded by spirits—undoubtedly spirits, for the “stars are seen through their forms”—but they take a deep and kindly interest in all that pertains to their friends on earth. “They shine on the wind when glory wakes their sons anew” (vol. i. p. 265); they sorrow deeply when these suffer; they warn them of impending danger, and soothe them to sleep amid anxiety. They are more etherealised human beings than thoroughly disembodied spirits, and the description of their constant presence produces a feeling of *ecriness* such as is not produced by any other poetry—but *ecriness* entirely distinct from dread or horror.

His poetry suggested by, and a reflection of, Highland scenery.

It is true there are spirits of the storm and of the flood apparently of a different order from men, who “ride the horse of the whirlwind,” who “rouse the waves of the raging sea,” and shroud the world in gloom and terror; but, generally speaking, the ghosts of Ossian are those I have been describing; and I have often thought that his representation of them might be illustrated, or even explained, by an attentive study of the face of nature in her wildly-varying moods in the north-west Highlands. What strange effects, for instance, are often produced by those dense banks of white mist which come rolling in from the Western Ocean! They at times envelop the summits of the loftiest mountains in thickest folds of cloud; at other times sinking downwards into the glens, and shrouding from view the habitations of men, they leave the lofty peaks in the pure brightness of the skies standing out like lonely islands in some mystic sea. How powerful in its effects on the imagination is this wondrous blending of sea and land, of earth and sky, sometimes, as on a day of storm, in dark and weird confusion, sometimes in soft and bright repose! At times “the bursting of the storm” suddenly scatters the mist, at others the “eddy breeze” gently raises

corners of the white veil, and you obtain glimpses of sea and land, earth and sky, which you recognise as real; yet you have not that feeling of the solidity and permanence of things around you possessed by the dweller on level land under a clear dry sky. You feel a "presence and a power" of something belonging to a higher sphere, yet not wholly foreign to that in which you move—a power linking both together, and awing but not overwhelming the spirit within you.

I believe that a careful analysis would resolve very much of Ossian's most weird imagery into idealised representations of the ever-varying and truly wonderful aspects of cloud and mist, of sea and mountain, which may be seen by every observant eye in the Highlands; and it is no fancy to say that the perusal of these poems, as we have them, may well be illustrated by travelling a range of the Highland mountains. The moor is often dusky and dreary enough. The ascent to the peak is arduous; but once there you find yourself entirely separated from the bustle and conventionalism of the ordinary everyday life of the world, face to face with nature in her grandest and most solemn aspects. The storm arises, and the clouds thicken round you. In the moaning of the wind among caves and corries, or in its shrieking through fissured clefts of rocks—in the sound of many waters made by rushing cataracts—in the *thud* of the great sea on the shore—or in the prolonged echoes of the thunder over many mountains and glens, you hear voices which cannot fail to solemnise and awe you. But anon the clouds are chased away by the wind, the blue sky is seen, and the mountains again reveal themselves in their old familiar forms. You descend the other side, and you come to a hidden glenlet or sheltered corrie, bright in sunshine, clothed in greenest verdure, with its "wimpling burn" winding through it, and fragrant birches waving around it—the haunt of the mountain-deer, the very abode of purity and of peace. So in these pages, after passing occasionally over dreary flats, we are many times led to the loftiest heights—"the bed of the clouds"—where we are among all the elements of sublimity and grandeur; but we are not asked to tarry long among their darkness. We descend to gaze anew on nature in some fairer and gentler form. The light of valour, of purity, and of truth brightens around us; and we find ourselves led into some quiet retreat, where the springs

of warmest and tenderest affection pour forth their gladdening streams.

Conclusion.

I may conclude my observations by quoting the Abbé Cæsarotti's words regarding the character of Ossian as a poet—"Whether he be the son of Fingal or not, he is undoubtedly the son of Apollo." And Tennyson's words regarding the broken pearl-necklace of the queen may probably illustrate the form in which his poems are now presented to us. Pearls, and royal pearls, they still are.

"This rhyme

Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the queen
That burst in dancing, and the pearls were spilt—
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept ;
But never more the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss each other
On her white neck : so is it with this rhyme—
It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differently."

Among several friends who kindly interested themselves in the success of my work, I have pleasure in mentioning Principal Shairp of St Andrews, as one who often gave me most important aid ; Mr Skene, who kindly solved every antiquarian doubt which I submitted to him ; the late Archibald McNeill, Esq., W.S., Principal Clerk to the Court of Session ; Dr Laing, of the Signet Library, whose vast extent of accurate knowledge is equalled only by his readiness to impart its benefits to others ; A. Nicolson, Esq., advocate, whose knowledge of Gaelic and acute learning helped me through various difficulties ; and the Rev. J. Macleod, of the parish of Dunse, who possesses many high and rare qualifications for making the Bard of Morven truly known to the English reader.

I ought to have profited more by such able assistance. But very imperfect as in all truth I know my work to be, I trust that it may be the means of directing a greater degree of public attention to these wonderful and precious fragments of ancient British* poetry ; and if so, I shall consider myself well rewarded.

* I use the term British advisedly, as referring to the ancient inhabitants of all Britain.

C A - L O D I N

I THINK it no more than justice to Macpherson to give the "Arguments" or "Contents" which he prefixes to the various poems which he edited; for he had a system alike of chronology and topography before him, and it is right that these should be known. At the same time I beg leave to say that I do not in the least commit myself to his views either of time or of place. My object is to lay the thoughts and words of Ossian faithfully before the English reader, leaving every one to draw from them the conclusions which he thinks they really sustain. The reader will understand, then, that the "Argument" is Macpherson's throughout. I give copious side-notes explaining the story as I understand it. The *letters* on the English margin refer to linguistic remarks to be found on the margin of the Gaelic page; the *numbers* to explanatory notes at the close of each poem. I subjoin Macpherson's translation at the foot of the page.

NOTE.—*Duan* signifies "poem," or "song." I have retained it to mark the divisions, finding it used by Macpherson. It is here equivalent to *Canto*.

A. C.

D U A N I.

ARGUMENT.

“Fingal, when very young, making a voyage to the Orkney Islands, was driven, by stress of weather, into a bay of Scandinavia, near the residence of Starno, King of Lochlin. Starno invites Fingal to a feast. Fingal, doubting the faith of the king, and mindful of a former breach of hospitality, refuses to go. Starno gathers together his tribes; Fingal resolves to defend himself. Night coming on, Duthmaruno 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 Lodin concerning the issue of the war. The rencounter of Fingal and Swaran. Duan I. concludes with a description of the airy hall of Cruth-Lodin, supposed to be the Odin of Scandinavia.”—M.

CATH-LODUINN.

D U A N I.

SGEUL RI 'AITHRIS AIR 'AM O AOIS.

- A CHAOIN aiteil, gun d'fhaicinn a chaoidh,
 'Lùbadh chluaran mu Lòra nan sian;
 Thu air astar 'an caol-ghleann na gaoith,
 C'uime 'thrèig thu mo chluasa co dian?
 5 Cha chluinnear gairm nan liath shruth àrd,
 No guth clàrsaich o chàrn nan gas.
 'Mhalmhìna nan teud, thig gu d' bhàrd,
 Till anam do bhàrd air ais;
 Till m'anam, a làmh-ghéal, dhomh féin.
- 10 Mi 'coimhead air Lochlin nan sonn,
 Ciar uisge Uthorno nan tonn;
 O'n iar-chuan a' teurnadh mo rìgh;
 'S muir bheucaich fo ghaoith a' strì;
 'S neo-honmhor glan òigridh nam beam;^a
 15 Tìr choigrich a' togail fo'n ceann.

^a Few are the youth; literally, *unnecessary*.

A tale of the times of old!

Why, thou wanderer unseen! thou bender of 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

CA - L O D I N .

D U A N I .

A TALE TO TELL OF THE OLDEN TIME.

THOU genial breeze for evermore unseen,
 Swaying thistles round Lora of storms,
 Wandering through narrow glen of the wind,
 Why so suddenly forsake my ear ?

- 5 The call of hoary mountain-streams no more is heard,
 Nor voice of harp from bosky cairn.
 Malvina of (harp) strings, come to thy Bard,
 The soul of thy Bard do thou restore ;
 Restore, thou White-hand, my soul to me.

Ossian, com-
 plaining of
 the silence of
 mountain-
 breeze and
 stream, in-
 vokes Malvina
 to restore his
 soul.

- 10 I look to Lochlin of valiant men—
 The dark sea of U-horno of waves ;
 From western main descends my king,
 While wrestles with the wind the bellowing sea.
 Few are the gallant youth of the Bens,^a
 15 While the land of the stranger rises before them.

He recalls a
 scene of the
 olden time,
 when Fingal
 is driven by
 storm to Loch
 lin, the land
 of Starno his
 enemy. Star-
 no invites him
 to a feast.

rock ! Come, thou huntress of Lutha, Malvina, call back his soul to
 the bard. I look forward to Lochlin of lakes, to the dark, billowy
 bay of U-thorno, where Fingal descends from ocean, from the roar
 of winds. Few are the heroes of Morven, in a land unknown !

DUAN I.

^a Plenteous
feast; lit.
feast of banquetts.

Ghairm Starno o Lòduinn fear faoin,
'Chuireadh Fhionnghail gu cuirm nam fleagh; ^a
Chuimhnich an rìgh an òigh chaoin;
Ghluais àrdan a làmh ri a shleagh.

- 20 “Ni-m faicear leam Gorm-mheall, no Starno:
Tha bàs a' snàmh, mar fhaileas ciar,
Air imtinn an triath a tha borb.
Cha tréig m'anam an dearsa o'n ear,
Ainnir làmh-gheal a's àirde cliu.
- 25 O m' fhianuis, 'mhic Lòduinn, gu grad.
Dhomh féin a ta 'fhocal mar ghaoith,
A thogas 's a thréigeas an dos
'An dubb-ghleann fo dhubh-nial ciuin.”

^b Death-deal-
ing arms; lit.
death-arms.

- “'Dhubh-mhic Ròinne nam bàs-arm geur; ^b
30 'Chromaghlais, 'fhir cruaidh nan sgiath;
'Shrùthmhoir, a thuineadh riamh
'An truscan ciar a' chòmhraig;
'Chormair, leis an ònaiche long
A' gearradh a h-astair feadh thonn.
- 35 Gun chùram, mar theine nan speur
Tro' bhèarnan beur nan neul;
'Éiribh grad, a chlann nan sonn,
'An tìr choigrich mu-n iadh an tonn.
Sealladh gach duim' air a sgéith,

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

Called Starno from Lodin a man of fraud,¹
 To summon Fionn to plenteous feast."
 Remembered the king the gracious maid,²
 (And) wrath raised his hand to his spear.

- 20 "Nor Gormal nor Starno shall by me be seen ;
 Death, as a dusky shadow, broods
 Over the mind of the savage chief ;
 My soul will not desert the beam from east,
 White-handed maid of highest praise.
 25 Quick from my sight, thou son of Lodin !
 To me his words are as the wind
 Which lifts, and leaves the spray
 In gloomy glen, 'neath black, unruffled cloud."

- "Du-Mac-Roin' of keen, death-dealing arms ;^b
 30 Cromglas, hardy man of shields ;
 Srumor, who wouldst always dwell
 'Neath the dark-brown mantle of war ;
 Cormar, whose barque is the tightest
 To cleave her way among the waves,
 35 Fearless as the fire of the skies
 Through jagged rifts of clouds :
 Quick uprise, ye children of the brave,
 In foreign land by waves surrounded.
 Every man look to his shield,

DUAN I.

Fingal, sus-
 pecting treach-
 ery, and re-
 membering
 his cruelty to
 Agandecca,
 (see note) in-
 dignantly re-
 fuses the invi-
 tation.

He calls on
 his warriors to
 look to their
 shields, as
 Treun-mor
 used to do.

are wind to Fingal : wind that to and fro drives the thistle, in
 autumn's dusky vale. Duth-maruno, arm of death ! Cronma-glas,
 of iron shields ! Struthmor, dweller of battle's wing ! Cormar,
 whose ships bound on seas, careless as the course of a meteor
 dark-rolling clouds ! Arise around me, children of heroes, in a land

DUAN I.

40 Mar Threunmhor, fear riaghlaidh a' chòmhraig.
 Thusa 'chòmhnha 's am measg nan clàrsach,
 A sgiath bhallach, druid-sa gu m' làimh ;
 Till an sruth mòr so o m' thaobh,
 No ri m' thaobh biodh do thuineadh fo làr."

45 Mu 'n rìgh ghrad dh'éirich triathan borb ;
 Ghlac iad uile an sleagh le colg ;^a
 Las an sùil gun fhocal 'n am beul,
 'N anam 'g éirigh àrd do na tréin.
 Air sgéith chualas screadan nan lann ;

50 Ghabh iad uil' am monadh fo 'n ceann ;^b
 Sheas na fir 'an duibhre liath,
 Air àrdaibh ciar na h-oidheche,
 'Bristeadh dùrdan nan duan ciuin^c
 Air osaigh ùir nan sliabh.

55 Làn 'us mall bha'n ré air tonn ;
 'Am màile liath thig triath nan sonn,
 Dubh mhac Ròinne o chrom nan dos,^d
 Sàr shealgair nan tore ciar.

B'e miann an fhir an t-eathar donn
 60 Ag éirigh suas air euan nan long,
 'N uair dhùisgeadh Cromthormod a choill'.
 'An talamh foill agus naimhdean
 Cha robh eagal 'an anam an Dùir.^e

^a In angry mood ; lit. with bristles, or, with hair erect.

^b The mountain's height they breasted all ; lit. they all took the mountain under their head.

^c In snatches, humming quiet tunes ; lit. breaking the murmur of quiet tunes.

^d From woody Croma ; or, from the circle or slope of woods.

^e Dùir, contracted for Du-Mac-Roin'.

unknown ! Let each look on his shield, like Trenmor, the ruler of wars. "Come down," thus Trenmor said, "thou dweller between the haps ! Thou shalt roll this stream away, or waste with me in earth."

Around the king they rise in wrath. No words come forth : they seize their spears. Each soul is rolled into itself. At length the sudden clang is waked, on all their echoing shields. Each takes his

- 40 As Treun-mor ruler of the war—
 ‘Thou which dwellest ’mid the Harps,
 Thou spotted shield, close on my arm ;
 Turn thou this torrent from my side,
 Or by my side lie under ground.’”
- 45 Around the king soon rose up leaders stern ;
 All seized their spears in angry mood ;^a
 Kindled their eyes. No word came from their lips ;
 Their warrior-souls arose on high.
 On shield was heard the gride of blades ;
- 50 The mountain’s height they breasted all ;^b
 Stood the men in darkness grey,
 On the dusky heights of night,
 In snatches, humming quiet tunes,^c
 On the fresh breeze of the mountain.
- 55 Full, and slow, the moon rose o’er the waves :
 In armour grey came the chief of the brave—
 Du-Mac-Roin’ from woody Croma^d—
 Master-hunter of the tawny boars.
 The man’s delight was the dark-brown skiff
- 60 Bounding high on the ocean of ships,
 When Crom-hormod awakened the woods.³
 In a land of fraud and of foes,
 No fear was in the soul of Dūr.^e

DUAN I.

They gather
 around him
 in their ar-
 mour, and
 ascend a
 neighbouring
 hill.

Du-Mac-
 Roin’, the
 foremost of
 them, pro-
 poses

hill, by night ; at intervals, they darkly stand. Unequal bursts the
 hum of songs, between the roaring wind !

Broad over them rose the moon !

In his arms, came tall Duth-maruno ; he from Croma of rocks,
 stern hunter of the boar ! In his dark boat he rose on waves, when
 Crumthormo awaked its woods. In the eluse he shone, among
 foes: no fear was thine, Duth-maruno !

DUAN I.

^a Shall I
stretch my
step? lit.
spread my
step.

- “ ’Mhic Chumhail, an sgaoil mi mo cheum.^a ”
- 65 Measg oidhche ? O sgiath nam beum
An seall mi mu’r naimhdean gu léir
’An sàmhchair fo fhaileas nan speur,
Mu rìgh Lochlin gun iochd, gun bhàigh,
Sàr Shuaran, nàmhaid borb nan dàimh,
- 70 ’Taomadh thall nan rann air chòmhlha
Do chlach Lòduinn nam fuar thaibhs’ ?
Cha-n ann gun fheum tha ’m focail mall
Ri Lòduinn nan Gall treun.
- Mur till mac Roinne, a thriath ;
- 75 ’Bhean bhanail tha ’triall ’n a h-aonar,
’An àite-tachairt do gharbh shruth nan sliabh,
O Chruailinn ’tha sìos a’ taomadh.
Air gach taobh tha cruach agus càrn,
Gorm-choille, beur àrd, ’us beuc cuain ;
- 80 Tha sùil mo mhic air coin nan tonn,
’Faoin-sheachran nan tòrn ’an òige.
Thoir ceann an tuire do cheann nan daoine ;
Innsear dha nach b’fhaoin mo shòlas,
’N uair thàinig neart riabhach nan enoc
- 85 Air gorm-shleagh nan tore ’an Uthorno.
Innsear dha mo ghòmh ’s a’ chòmhrag ;
Innsear air chòrr dha mar thuit mi.”

“ ’An dì-chuimhn’ air m’athrichean treun
Cha d’thàinig mi féin thar caoil :

“ Son of daring Comhal, shall my steps be forward through night ?
From this shield shall I view them, over their gleaming tribes ?
Starno, king of lakes, is before me, and Swaran, the foe of strangers.
Their words are not in vain, by Loda’s stone of power.—Should Duth-
maruno not return, his spouse is lonely, at home, where meet two
roaring streams, on Crathmoeraulo’s plain. Around are hills, with

“Son of C'u-hal, shall I stretch my step”

- 65 Through the night? Over the shield of sounds,
 Shall I look on our foemen all
 In silence, under shade of night,
 Round Lochlin's ruthless, churlish king,
 (And) Swaran strong, fierce foe to strangers,
 70 Together pouring forth their rhymes ⁴
 To Lodin's stone of spectres cold?
 And not in vain are their slow words
 To Lodin of the mighty Galls.

(But) if, O chief, Mac-Roin' shall not return,

- 75 His womanly wife walks all alone,
 At meeting of rough mountain-streams,
 Which downward fall from Crua-lin.
 On either side are peak and cairn,
 Green woods, high-pointed rock, and ocean's roar.
 80 The eye of my son is on birds of the waves,
 In youth he, thoughtless, wanders 'mid the knolls.
 The boar's head give the chief of men.⁵
 To him be told that great was my joy,
 When came the grisly strength of the hills
 85 On the blue spear of boars in U-horno.⁶
 Be told to him my deeds in war;
 Above all, be told how I fell.

“Forgetful of my fathers brave,
 I did not come across the sea:

echoing woods, the ocean is rolling near. My son looks on screaming sea-fowl, a young wanderer on 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. Tell him of my deeds in war! Tell where his father fell!”

“Not forgetful of my fathers,” said Fingal, “I have bounded

DUAN I.

to go and examine the strength of their foemen, Staruo, and Swaran his son, who were seeking counsel from their oracle, Lodin :

and in the event of his falling, he commends his widow and young boy to Fingal.

Fingal resolves that he himself

DUAN I.

a The baneful gloomy shade (of fear) closes not thickly round my youthful locks; lit. the bad, brown shadow does not close heavily round my locks of youth.

Believing fear to be meant, I have added the term, placing it within brackets, like all terms added by me.

- 90 Àm a' chumairt b'è àm am beam ;
 Cha robh iad gun fheum 'an aois.
 Cha-n'èil an dùbhra dona, domh "
 A' dùnadh trom mu chiabhan m' òige ;
 A thriath Chrùthmo-chruailim an aonaich.
 95 Is leams' an oidheche, 's leams' an cunnart."

- Shìn an rìgh gun dàil a cheum
 Thar Tùrthoir nam beuc-shruth fuar,
 'Chuir sìos a thoirn gharbh le beud,
 Raon Ghorm-mheall 'n a cheò féin gun tuar.
 100 Bha 'ghealach air eudann nan càrn,
 'S 'n am meadhon cruth àillidh 'n a snuadh ;
 Cruth àillidh nan ciar-chiabh àrd,
 Òigh Lochlin an uhd bhàin, o stuadh.
 Bu liòmhhor, 's bu ghearr a ceum,
 105 Duan briste gun bheud 's a' ghaoith.
 Dh'éirich a ruighe geal gun fheum ;
 Am bròn 'n a h-anam, 'us i baoth.

- "A Thorcuil-torno nan ciabh glas,
 Am bheil astar do chas mu Lùla,
 110 Do ghath teine mar éibhle 'dol as
 Aig sruth a tha cas fo dhùbhra ?

over the seas. Theirs were the times of danger, in the days of old. Nor settles darkness on me, before foes, though youthful in my locks. Chief of Cruthmo-craulo, the field of night is mine."

Fingal rushed, in all his arms, wide-bounding over Tùrthor's stream, that sent its sullen roar, by night, through Gormal's misty vale. A moonbeam glittered on a rock; in the midst stood a

90 The time of danger was their time to smite ;
 Strengthless they were not in their age.
 The baneful gloomy shade (of fear) "
 Closes not thickly round my youthful locks :
 Thou chief of hilly Cramo-Crnalin,
 95 Mine is the night, mine is the danger."

DUAN I.

shall under-
 take the peril-
 ous night-
 journey.

Stretched the king his step forthwith,
 O'er Turor of cold and roaring stream,
 Which, baneful, pours its bellowing noise
 On Gormal's plain in its own grey fog.
 100 The moonlight was on face of cairns,⁷
 And in the midst, a form of loveliest mould—
 A graceful form, with dark-brown hair (tossed) high—
 White-bosomed maid from Loehlin of waves,—
 Many and short were her steps, [breeze ;
 105 A broken, harmless echant (she poured) upon the
 Her white arm rose without avail ;
 Grief in her soul, and she distraught.

He sets forth,
 and meets a
 maiden

in deepest
 distress.

"Torcul-torno of dark-grey locks,⁸
 Is the tread of thy feet round Lula,
 110 Thy beam of fire like embers dying
 By rapid stream which is in gloom ?

Her distracted
 address to her
 dead father.

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 dwelling in her soul.

"Torcul-torno, of aged locks!" she said, "where now are thy steps, by Lula? Thou hast failed at thine own dark streams, father of

DUAN I.

^a *Oivana*, or
Fair-maid.

^b Darkling
and dun.
Dorcha 'us
donn—*Dark*
and *dun*. It
is worth re-
marking that
the words here
are the same
in English and
in Gaelic.

^c My form ;
*my appear-
ance, or colour.*

- C' àit' an do ghabh thu tuineas thall,
'Athair òigh bhàin nan ciar chiabh ? ^a
Chì mi triath Lùla nam beuc
115 'Cur nan cleas mu chiar chruth Lòdunn ;
'N uair a dhùineas an oidheche mu speur,
Thu 'ceileadh na ré fo sgéith mòrehuis :
Chunnaic mis' i dorcha 'us donn ; ^b
Bha teine nan tonn ann ad chiabh,
120 'S tu' 'snàmh uam mar shiubhal nan long.
C' uim' nach cuimhne do'n t-shonn air m' fhianh ? ^c
A rìgh nan tore riabhach gun ghìomh,
Seall-sa sìos o thalla Lòduinn
Air ainneir fo bhròn 'n a h-aonar."
125 " 'Co thusa, 's caoine guth fo dhùbhra ? "
Thionndaidh i 'cùl ris an t-shonn.
" 'Co thusa, 's an oidheche fo chùram ? "
Dh'aom i dlùth ri còs nan tonn.
Dh'fhùasgail an rìgh an iall o 'làimh :
130 Dh' fheadraich e le bàigh m'a sinn'sre.

" Bha 'Foreul-torno," labhair an òigh,
" Aig Lùla nan sruth mòr a' tàmh ;
Bha 'thuineas aig Lùla nan seòd—

Conban-cârglas ! 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 thy lonely daughter."

" Who art thou," said Fingal, " voice of night ? "

DUAN I.

Where, far over, hast thou dwelt,
 Father of brown-haired Oivana ?^a
 I behold the chief of roaring Lula
 115 Holding revel round dark Cru-Lodin.
 When closes the night around the sky,
 Thou hidest the moon beneath a stately shield ;
 I saw her darkling and dun—^b
 The fire of the waves was in thy locks,
 120 While, like ship a-sailing, thou didst glide away.
 Why remembers not the hero my form ?^c
 Thou dauntless king of dark-brown boars.
 Look down, from the hall of Lodin,
 On maiden mournful and forlorn.”

125 “ Who (art) thou of sweetest voice in shade ? ”
 Turned she her back to the warrior ;
 “ Who (art) thou at night, in sadness ? ”
 She glided near the cave of waves.
 The king untied the thong from off her hand,
 130 And gently questioned who her fathers were.

“ Torcul-torno,” answered the maid,
 “ Dwelt by Lula of great streams ;
 At Lula of heroes was his home.

Fingal gently asks her who she is, and takes the thongs off her hands.

She answers that her father was Torcul-torno, who dwelt near Lula.

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.

DUAN I.

a The sacred shell; lit. *the surpassing or rare shell*—i. e. Lóðin's shell.

b My eyes orb'd out. The Gaelic verb *plaoosg* signifies (1), taking off a husk or shell; (2), used intransitively—coming forth from husk or covering. I know not any one English word expressing the exact idea of *plaoosgadh* as applied to the eye.

c Lula the renowned; lit. *Lula not vain, not empty.* The word *faoin*, the same as vain and vanus, varies its meaning according to the connection in which it is used.

d Hideous in joy; lit. *with-out shape in joy.*

e *Level sails* is the literal rendering. I know not what may be the correct nautical term.

Tha 'n t-slige chòrr an diugh 'n a làimh "
 135 'An talla Lòduinn nan gruaidh ciar.
 Thachair e, 's Starno nan long
 'Am meadhon nan tom 'an còmhrag;
 B'fhada spàirn nan ciar-shuileach donn:
 Thuit m'athair, an sonn, fo dhòruinn,
 140 Toreul-torno nan gorm sgiath.

“ Air taobh na creig' aig Lùla féin
 Thuit ruadh bhoc nan leum fo m' iuthaidh.
 Mar thionail mo lamh, 's mi leth-aobhaich,
 Mo chiabhan air faondra 's a' ghaoith,
 145 Chualas toirm: mo shùile 'plaoosg';^b
 M' ùrla caoin ag éirigh ard;
 Bha mo cheum gu Lùla nach faoin^c
 Gu Toreul nan cuan 's nan càrn.

“ Co a th'ann ach Starno, an rìgh,
 150 A dhearg shùil ag iadhadh gràidh?
 Bu dorcha garbh a mbala dhubh,
 'S è 'gàire gun chruth le sòlas.^d

“ C'àite bheil m'athair 'bu mhòr,
 Triath nan tòrr, 'bu chòrr 'an còmhrag?
 155 Thréigeadh measg naimhdean an òigh,
 Nighean Thoreuil nan seòl còmhnard!^e

He met Starno of Lochlin, in war; long fought the dark-eyed kings. My father fell, in his blood, blue-shielded Toreul-torno! By a rock, at Lula's stream, I had pierced the bounding roe. My white hand gathered my hair, from off the rushing winds. I heard a noise. Mine eyes were up. My soft breast rose on high. My step was

To-day the sacred shell is in his hand, ^a
 135 In the hall of Lodin, swarthy-cheeked.
 Encountered he, and Starno of ships,
 Amid the hills in combat. [eyed (ones).
 Long strife was 'twixt the brown-(haired), dark-
 Fell my brave father in anguish—
 140 Torcul-torno of blue shields!

“ Aside the rock, and nigh to Lula,
 Fell the skipping roebuck by my dart.
 As gathered my hand, I half rejoicing,
 My locks that straggled in the wind,
 145 A noise was heard. My eyes orb'd out : ^b
 My smooth bosom rising high,
 My steps were towards Lula the renowned, ^c
 To Torcul of oceans and cairns—

“ Who is it but Starno the king,
 150 His lurid eye a-feigning love ?
 (But) dark and moody his black brow,
 While laughed he, hideous in joy. ^d

“ Where is my father who was great,
 The lord of hills, the strong in combat ?
 155 Abandoned to her foemen was the maid—
 Daughter of Torcul of the level sails ! ^e

DUAN I.

He and Starno met in combat, in which her father was slain.

She, ignorant of all this, was following the chase,

when Starno approached her. She asked for her father. Starno seized her, carried her to his boat, bound her hands, and immured her in a dark cave.

forward, at Lulan, to meet thee, Torcul-torno ! It was Starno, dreadful king ! His red eyes rolled on me in love. 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, O daughter of Torcul-torno ! He took my hand. He raised the sail.

DUAN I.

“ Ghlac e mo làmh, ’us thog e ’n seòl ;
 Chuireadh mis’ ’an còs na duibhre.
 Air uairibh thig esan, mar cheò,
 160 Togail ’am chòir sgiath m’athar.
 Gath òige ’dol seachad air uair
 Mu dhall dhorus truagh nan còs,
 Mac Starno, fear-siubhail nan cruach ;
 Tha m’anam fo luaidh do’n òg.”^a

^a My soul does
 homage to the
 youth ; lit.
my soul is
under praise
or celebration
to the youth—
i. e. always
 praising him.

165 “ A nighean Lùla nan geal làmh,”
 Thuirt Fionnghal, “ ’ainnir a’ bhròin,
 Tha nial am measg teine a’ snàmh
 Air d’anam, a ghràidh nan seòd.
 Na seall air ré fo óideadh donn,

170 No air teine nan tonn o speur ;
 Mu-n cuairt a ta stàilinn nan sonn,
 Eagal trom do d’ naimhdean, a bheus.^b
 Cha-n e stàilinn nan lag a th’ann,
 No anam càrn nam faoin fhear.^c

175 Cha chaoin òigh ’an talla nan lann,
 A ruighe bàn a’ sgaoileadh ’n a h-aonar.
 Tha i àillidh measg a trom chiabh
 Tri-bualadh clàrsaich nan triath ’an Selma ;
 Cha-n ’eil a guth a’ caoineadh air sliabh,
 180 Sinn a’ tiomachadh riamh air fonn.”

^b Thou pearl
 —Gael. *beus* ;
 lit. *virtue*,
moral quality ;
 used as here,
 it implies the
 possession of
 all excellence.

^c Braggarts ;
 lit. *vain men*.

In this cave he placed me dark. At times he comes, a gathered mist. He lifts, before me, my father's shield. But often passes a beam of youth, far distant from my cave. The son of Starno moves in my sight. He dwells lonely in my soul."

"Maid of Lulan," said Fingal, "white-handed daughter of grief! a cloud, marked with streaks of fire, is rolled along thy soul. Look

- " Seized he my hand, and raised his sail.
 Into a cave of darkness I was thrust.
 Sometimes he cometh like a mist,
 160 Raising in my view my father's shield.
 Sometimes passes a beam of youth
 By the blind wretched door of the cave—
 Starno's son—a ranger of the heights ;
 My soul does homage to the youth." "
- 165 " Daughter of Lula of white hands,"
 Said Fingal ; " Thou maiden of sorrow,
 Cloud, amid fire, is floating
 Over thy soul, thou love of heroes ;
 Look not at the moon in dusky robe,
 170 Nor at the wave-fire from the sky.
 Around thee is the steel of gallant men,
 Dire dread unto thy foes, thou pearl.^b
 It is not the steel of the feeble,
 Nor the crooked soul of braggarts.^c
- 175 No maiden weeps in the Hall of Swords,
 Spreading her white arms in loneliness ;
 She is lovely 'mid her heavy locks,
 Oft-striking the harp of chiefs in Selma ;⁹
 Her voice is not in wailing on the hill ;
 180 We ever soften to the song."

DUAN I.

Here he visits
 her from time
 to time, dis-
 playing her
 father's shield,
 and raising her
 utmost hate ;
 but he is ac-
 companied by
 his son, a
 " beam of
 youth," whom
 she loves
 deeply.

Fingal soothes
 her fears ;

promises her
 safety ; and
 describes the
 happy state of
 the maids of
 Selma, the
 " Hall of
 Swords."

not to that dark-robed moon ; look not to those meteors of heaven.
 My gleaming steel is around thee, the terror of thy foes ! It is not
 the steel of the feeble, nor of the dark in soul ! The maids are not
 shut in our caves of streams. They toss not their white arms alone.
 They bend, fair within their locks, above the harps of Selma. Their
 voice is not in the desert wild. We melt along the pleasing sound !"

DUAN I.

- Shìn an rìgh a cheum gun stad
 Tro' dhuibhre nan ciar thom ;
 Fhuair e craobh Lòduinn gu grad,
 'S i 'lùbadh fo osna gu trom ;
 185 Tri clachan le còinnich ghlais,
 Sruthan cas a' ruith ri'n taobh ;
 Os an cionn bha 'n teine 'dol as,
 Cruth Lòduinn 'an ceò 's 'an gaoith,
 Bha tannas a' coimhead gu h-àrd
 190 Leth-dheanta de dheathach 's de cheò.
 Chluinnteadh guth briste le spàirn,
 'S toirm uilld a' taomadh o'n òrd.
 Ri taobh daraig gun duille 's an fhraoch
 Chluinnt' a chòmhradh ri laoich gun bhàigh,
 195 Ri Suaran 'us Starno neo-chaoin,
 Droch naimhdean maraon do'n dàimh.
 Dh'aom iad air sgiathan dubh-dhonn
 Le sleaghan 'n an dòrn gu teann ;
 Fuaim gaoithe mu Starno nan long,
 200 'S a dhubh fhalt a' taomadh m'a cheann.

Bhuail farum a cheum an cluas ;

Fingal again advanced his steps, wide through the bosom of night, to where the trees of Loda shook amid squally winds. Three stones, with heads of moss, are there ; a stream, with foaming course ; and dreadful, rolled around them, is the dark-red cloud of Loda. High

DUAN I.

- Stretched the king his step right on,
 Through the murk of the dusky hills ;
 Soon found he the tree of Lodin
 Bending heavily beneath the blast.
- 185 Three grey moss-covered stones (were there),
 A rapid runnel rushing by their side ;
 Above them was, 'mid dying flame,
 Cru-Lodin, in mist and in wind.
 The phantom looked forth from on high,
- 190 Formed half of smoke, and half of mist.
 Heard was a broken, labouring voice,
 And brawl of burn down-falling from the height.
 Beside a leafless oak, upon the heath,
 Was heard his speech to heroes stern,
- 195 To Swaran and ungentle Starno—
 Evil foes, alike, to strangers.
 They leaned on black-brown shields,
 Withspear in fist, firm-grasped.
 The noise of wind round Starno of ships,
- 200 And his black hair streaming round his head.

Struck the clatter of his steps upon their ear :

Fingal continues his night-journey in quest of his enemies, and reaches the tree of Lodin.

Above it was Cru-Lodin, a phantom half of smoke and half of mist, who was speaking to his worshippers, Starno and Swaran.

They heard the noise of Fingal's step.

from its top looked forward a ghost, half formed of the shadowy smoke. He poured his voice, at times, amidst the roaring stream. Near, bending beneath a blasted tree, two heroes received his words: Swaran of lakes, and Starno, foe of strangers. On their dun shields they darkly leaned: their spears are forward through night. Shril sounds the blast of darkness, in Starno's floating beard.

DUAN I.

^a Ringing the war-note; or, cleaving the combat. *Beumadh* signifies cleaving, also ringing, as of a bell.
^b Luno's son—i. e. Fingal's sword of light.

- Dh'éirich iad suas 'n an airm.
 “Leag fear seachran na h-oidhche, 'Shuarain,”
 Labhair Starno 'n a àrdan mòr;
 205 “Glac-sa sgiath d'athar a'd làimh,
 'Tha cruaidh mar charraig nan còs.”
 Thilg Suaran a shleagh gu grad;
 Stad 'us chrith i 'an sean chraoibh Lòduinn.
 Tharruing na suim ri 'chéile
 210 Le'n laman a' beumadh còmhraig; “
 Bha cruaidh a' spealtadh air cruaidh,
 Lùirichean 'fuaim, agus màile;
 Ghearr mac Luim na h-iallan uallach;^b
 Thuit an sgiath bhallach 's an làraich;
 215 Chaisg an rìgh a làmh gu h-àrd,
 Le faicinn sàr Shuarain gun airm;
 Thionndaidh a shùil fhiadhaich 'n a cheann,
 Agus thilg e a lam air làr;
 Tharruing e 'cheum mall o'n t-sliabh,
 220 Fom òrain a' tùchadh 'n a chliabh.

Gun fhios do 'athair ni 'n robh Suaran :
 Thionndaidh Starno 'cheam o'n tom;
 A mhala dhubh a' cromadh trom
 Air aghaidh naibhrich an àrdain.

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. Through the thongs of Swaran's shield rushed the blade of Luno. The shield

- Sprang they up in their armour.
 "Swaran, lay low the wanderer of the night,"
 Said Starno, in his great and wrathful pride;
 205 "Grasp thou in thy hand thy father's shield;
 It is hard as the rock of caves."
 Straightway Swaran flung his spear;
 It stopped, and quivered in Lodin's aged tree.
 The warriors each other charged,
 210 Ringing the war-note with their brands."
 Steel was clanging upon steel,
 Mail and helm resounding;
 Cut *Luno's son* the firm light thongs;^b
 The bossy shield fell straight to earth.
 215 Stayed the king his arm on high,
 Seeing strong Swaran without arms;
 Turned his wild eye within his head,
 And flung he his sword on the ground.
 Withdrew he his tardy step from the hill,
 220 The song-tune stifling in his chest.

Not unobserved of his sire was Swaran.
 Turned Starno his head from the knoll,
 His black brow heavily bending
 On the haughty face of rage.

DUAN I.

Starno ordered Swaran to lay the intruder low.

He flings his spear, which struck the tree of Lodin; and, rushing forward, he charges Fingal with his sword. Fingal speedily disarms him, and generously spares him.

Starno is enraged at the defeat of his son, and strikes Lodin's tree in wrath.

fell rolling on earth. Cleft the helmet fell down. Fingal stopped the lifted steel. Wrathful stood Swaran, unarmed. He rolled his silent eyes; he threw his sword on earth. Then slowly stalking over the stream, he whistled as he went.

Nor unseen of his father is Swaran. Starno turns away in wrath. His shaggy brows wave dark, above his gathered rage. He strikes

DUAN I.

- 225 Bhuail craobh Lòduinn leis an t-sleagh :
 Shìn e 'cheum, 'us ghabh e 'chàthar.
 Thill gu Lochlin nan gorm lann
 Gach fear gu mall, 'n a astar féin.
 Mar shiùbhladh an cobhar dà alld
 230 O dhà ghleann, 'us sian 's a' bheinn.

- Gu Tùrthor thill an rìgh ;
 Glan dh'éirich dearrsa o 'n ear.
 'N a làimh 'an iomall na h-oidhche
 Shoillsich airm Lochlin nam mòr thonn.
 235 Glan araon, o charraig nan còs,
 Ghluais nighean Thoreuil nan caoin bheus,
 'Tional a ciabh trom o'n ghaoith,
 'S a' togail guth le binneas theud,
 Guth Lùlain nan slige fial,
 240 Talla còmhnuidh nan triath àrd.

- Chunnaic airm Starno 'n a làimh ;
 Las sòlas 'an anam na h-òigh :
 Chunnaic sgiath Shuarain r'a thaobh,
 'Us thionndaidh o cheannard an t-slàigh.^a
 245 " An do thuit thu aig do cheud sruth,
 A rùin ainneir nan ceud bròn ? "

^a Leader; lit.
high heart.

Loda's tree with his spear. He raises the lum of songs. They come to the host of Lochlin, each in his own dark path; like two foam-covered streams, from two rainy vales!

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-

DUAN I.

Both of them, but by separate paths, return to their army.

Fingal returned to Turor by the dawn of the following morning. Oivana came forth in great gladness to greet him.

Seeing in his hand the shield of Starno, she greatly rejoiced; but recognising at the same time the shield of Swaran, she turned away in despair, thinking that he had been slain by Fingal.

The remainder of the history of Oivana is lost.

225 He smote the tree of Lodin with his spear,
 He stretched his step across the moor.
 Returned to Lochlin of blue swords,
 Each man, slow, by path of his own,
 As glides the foam on rivers twain,
 230 From valleys twain, when storm is on the Ben.

Back to Turor came the king.
 Clear rose brightness from the east ;
 In his hand, on the skirts of night,
 Shone spoils of Lochlin of great waves.
 235 Likewise bright, from the rock of caves,
 Came Torcul's daughter of mild mien.
 Gathering her heavy locks from the wind,
 She raised a voice in melody of chords—
 The voice of Lula of the festal shells,
 240 The hall where noble chiefs abode.

Saw she in his hand the arms of Starno ;
 Joy kindled in the maiden's soul :
 Saw she, by his side, the shield of Swaran,
 And turned she from the leader of the hosts."
 245 "Hast thou fallen by thy hundred streams,
 Thou love of maiden of a hundred woes?"

torno. She gathered her hair from wind. She 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 Fingal.—"Art thou fallen, by thy hundred streams, O love of the mournful maid!"

DUAN 1.

a Dim ; lit.
brown.

- 'Uthorno a dh'èireas o uisge,
Air do thaobh tha dealain na h-oidhche.
Chi mi 'ghealach dubhach, donn,^a
250 Am measg nan tonn, air chùl do choill' ;
Ri d' mhullach tha Lòduinn 's na neoil,
Tigh mòr nan seòd a dh'aom o shean.
'An ceann an talla chithear thall
Cruth Lòduinn nan gorm lann ;
255 Chithear, mar fhaileas 'an ceò,
'Dheas làmh 'an seled air nì mar sgéith ;
'Làmh chhì air slige nach faoin,
Slige sòlais nam mòr thriath.
'An talla taibhs' 'bu ghlaise snuadh,
260 Chit' aise dealain nan stuadh.^b

b Of clouds ;
or, of waves.
Stuadh signi-
fies both, or
anything ele-
vated.

- Chruinnich sìol Lòduinn r'a chùlaobh,
Seoid as ùr, 'us suinn o shean.
Shìn esan an t-slige chùbhraidh
Dhoibhs' a shiubhladh gu còmhrag glan :
265 Eadar e 's geiltèaran dh'éirich
An sgiath bhallach, bhèarnach, dhonn,
Mar ghealach a' dubhadh 's na speuran.

- Mar thein-athair a' luidh air an tom,
Mar bhogha braoin air aghaidh stuadh
270 Thàinig òigh 'bu ghlaime snuadh.

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

- U-horno that risest from sea,
 On thy side are the lightnings of night ;
 I see the moon, dismal and dim,^a
 250 Among the waves behind thy woods.
 By thy summit is Lodin in clouds,
 The great house of the brave who were of old.
 At the end of the hall is seen afar
 Cru-Lodin of weapons blue—
 255 Is seen like a phantom in mist ;
 His right hand, in cloud, on something like a shield,
 His left hand on a mighty shell—
 The shell of joy to warriors great.
 In the hall of ghosts most wan of hue,
 260 Was seen the track of the lightning of clouds.^b

- The race of Lodin thronged behind him—
 The brave and great of new and olden times.
 Handed he the fragrant shell
 To those who sped to combat fair and free ;
 265 Betwixt it and the cowards there uprose
 The bossy, notched, and dark-brown shield,
 Like moon which in the sky grows black.

- Like sky-fire lighting on a hill,¹⁰
 Like rainbow on the face of waves,
 270 Came the maid of purest mien.

DUAN 1.

Ossian describes the hall of Lodin, situated above the lofty Uhorno. Here Cru-Lodin presides,

and here he freely hands the fragrant shell to all the truly brave ; but when cowards stretch towards it, he interposes his notched and dark-brown shield.

After another hiatus in the text, Givana's arrival in Lodin's hall is described.

roof of his dreadful hall is marked with nightly fires.

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 darkened orb. He is a setting meteor to the weak in arms. Bright, as a rainbow on streams, came Lulan's white-bosomed maid.

D U A N II.

ARGUMENT.

“Fingal, returning with day, devolves the command on Duth-maruno, who engages the enemy, and drives them over the stream of Turthor. Having recalled his people, he congratulates Duth-maruno on his success; but discovers that that hero had been mortally wounded in the action. Duth-maruno dies. Ullin, the bard, in honour of the dead, introduces the episode of Colgorm and Strina-dona, which concludes this Duan.”—M.

D U A N I I.

- “ C’ AITE bheil gaisgeach nan triath ? ”
 Thuirt Dubh mhae Ròinne nan sgiath donn.
 “ Co ’n neul a cheil anns an t-sliabh
 Òg dhearrsa o Shelma nan tom ? ”
- 5 An e an rìgh a chithear thall
 ’Tighin o chàrn fo sgéith na h-oidheche ?
 Tha ’mhaduinn air Toirne nan stuadh,
 ’S a’ ghrian air a’ chruaich ’an eòd.
 Togaibh ’am fhianuis an sgiath,
- 10 ’Mhòr ghaisgich an triath a dh’fhalbh :
 Cha tuit e mar thein’ air an t-sliabh,
 Doreha dh’ fhaicear a thrian air làr.
 Sud féin e mar iolair nan speur,
 A’ teurnadh o bheinn ’s a’ ghaoith ;
- 15 Tha faoibh a nàmbaid ’u a làmh.
 Bha m’anam, a rìgh, fo bhròn.”

“ 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 on U-thorne. In his
 mist is the sun on his hill. Warriors, lift the shields, in my pre-

D U A N I I.

- "WHERE is the hero of heroes?"
 Said Du-Mac-Roinè of brown shields;
 "What cloud on the mountain has shrouded
 The youthful beam from Selma of waves?
 5 Is it the king who is seen afar
 From height descending 'neath the wing of night?¹
 The morn is on Torno of waves,
 And the sun on the upland in mist.
 Raise, in my presence, the shield,
 10 Great warriors of the absent chief;
 Fall not shall he like fire on hill,
 Seen in dark traces as it sinks to earth:²
 There, there he is, like eagle from the sky,
 Descending from the Ben on wind;
 15 The trophies of the foe are in his hand.
 My soul, O king, was under sorrow."

Du-Mac-Roin', longing for Fingal's return, asks what had become of him. Sees him descending the mountain.

sence. 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!"

DUAN II.

“Tha na naimhdean 'teannadh r'ar làimh,
 Mar stuaidh 'tigh'n anall fo cheò,
 'N uair a chithear fo chobhar an ceann
 20 Thar smùid, nach 'eil gann, 'us seled.
 Crìthidh fear-siubhail 'n a thriall,
 Gun fhios dha eia rian a 's còir.

“Cha chrith, mar fhir-siubhail, sinn féin ;
 Tàirnibhs', a threuna bhur cruaidh.
 25 An éirich mo lanns' air a' bheinn,
 No 'm fàg mi dhuibh féin a' bhuaidh ?”

“Na gnòmhach 'dh'fhalbh,” thuirt an Dubh,
 “Tha 'tighin an diugh fo m' shùil ;
 Tha Treunmor 'bu leathan sgiath,
 30 Rì 'fhaicinn measg thriath a bh'ann.
 Cha bu lag anam an rìgh,
 'S cha robh a smaointean riamh fo ghìomh.

“O 'n ceud sruth mòr 's an fhraoch,
 Thachair sldigh 'an caol-ghleann Chòna ;
 35 Bha 'n triath' r'an taobh 's an t-sliabh.
 ‘Cò 'dh'imicheas sìos gu còmhrag ?'
 Tharruing iad gu'n leth an lainn ;
 Bha dearg-shùil 's gach ceann fo àrdan :

“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; he knows not whither to fly. No trembling travellers are we! Sons of heroes call forth the steel. Shall the sword of Fingal arise, or shall a warrior lead?”

“The enemy are pressing round us,
 Like waves surging onwards in mist,
 When their crests are seen in foam,
 20 Over smoke and haze widespread.
 The traveller trembles on his way,
 Ignorant of the proper course to take.

“Not tremble, like travellers, shall we ;
 Draw ye, ye strong ones, your steel.
 25 Shall my blade rise up on the Ben,
 Or shall I, to yourselves, the conquest leave ?”

“The deeds of the past,” replied the Du,
 “Come to-day beneath my eye :
 Treunmor of the ample shield
 30 Is to be seen 'mid chiefs of old.
 Not strengthless was the soul of the king,
 And his thoughts were never under fear.

“From their hundred great streams 'mid heath,
 Encountered hosts in Cona's narrow glen ;
 35 Their leaders were beside them on the height.³
 ‘Who will (first) go down to combat ?’
 Their brands they half unsheathed ;
 A red, wrath eye was in every head :

DUAN II.

Tells him of
 the approach
 of the enemy.

Fingal asks
 whether he
 shall lead
 the fight,
 or leave the
 victory to his
 friends.

Du-Mac-Roin'
 refers to the
 conduct of
 Treunmor,
 Fingal's
 grandfather.

At the battle
 of Cona a dis-
 pute arose as
 to who should
 command.
 Each insisted
 on the honour
 for himself.

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 Colglancrona. Their chiefs were before them. Each strove to lead the war. Their swords were often half-un-

DUAN II.

"Mighty spear; lit. rare or surpassing. This word *còrr* is very frequently used by Ossian, and often difficult to render properly.

Gach fear leis féin 's an doire thall,
 40 'S e 'mùchadh nan dàn fo 'ùrla.
 C'ar son a ghèilleadh iad d'a chéile ?
 Bu choimeas feum an sinus're.

"Bha Treunmor le 'shleagh chòrr 's an t-sliabh ;"
 Bu ghasda fo 'chiabh an t-àig-fhear ;
 45 Chunnaic e 'n nàmhaid a' triall,
 'S bha 'anam gu ciar 'am bròn.
 Dh'iarr e air gach gaisgeach treun
 Mù seach 'bhi 'riaghladh a' chòmhraig.
 Chaidh, ach thill iad fo bheud
 50 O'n nàmhaid, 'us beinn na còmh-stri.
 O 'charraig féin, fo chòinnich ghlais,
 Theiring Treunmor nan gorm sgiath :
 Tharruing gu leathan 's a' chòmhrag,
 'S ghéill anns a' charraid na dàimh.

55 "Mu-n cuairt do'n triath 'an sliabh a' bhlaìr,
 Thionail na sàir le aoibhneas mòr ;
 Mar aiteal a's taitneach 's na raoin,
 Bha guth eumhachd gu caoin o Shelma.
 Bhuail na triathan leo féin 'an còmhrag,
 60 Gus an d'éirich 's a' chòmh-stri eunnart ;
 An sin bha an t-àm do 'n rìgh
 'Chur ceann air an strì le 'chruaidh."

sheathed. Red rolled their eyes of rage. Separate they stood, and hummed their surly songs. "Why should they yield to each other? their fathers were equal in war." Treunmor was there, with his people, stately in youthful locks. He saw the advancing foe. The grief of his soul arose. He bade the chiefs to lead, by turns: they led, but they were rolled away. From his own mossy hill, blue-

Apart stood each man in the wood,
 40 And smothered songs within his breast.
 Why to his peer should any yield?
 Equal in power their sires had been.

“Treunmor, with mighty spear, was on the height;^a
 Stately the youth, beneath his waving locks; ^e
 45 He saw the enemy draw near,
 And his soul grew dark in sorrow.
 He bade each warrior bold
 In turn to rule the fight.
 Went, but turned they under scath
 50 From foemen on the mount of strife.
 From his own grey moss-grown rock,
 Down came Treunmor of blue shields;
 Widely swept he through the fight,
 And the strangers yielded in battle.

55 “Around the chief on the mount of war,
 Gathered the brave in gladness great.
 Like kindly breeze across the fields,
 Was voice of power from Selma mild.
 Alone the leaders struck in combat,
 60 Until that danger in the fray arose;
 Then was the moment for the king
 The conflict with his steel to close.”

DUAN II.

Treunmor
 rules that each
 shall lead in
 turn.

They did so,
 and were all
 defeated. At
 length he
 himself went
 forward, and
 speedily
 routed the
 enemy.

Ever after-
 wards, one of
 the chiefs com-
 manded in or-
 dinary circum-
 stances; but
 in those of
 great danger,
 Treunmor led
 the host: and
 they submit-
 ted to this
 rule in Selma.

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.

DUAN II.

a From
blackness a
spirit will
come forth ;
lit. *will come
to the bare
place, or into
view.*

- “Cha-n ann gun eòlas dhuinn féin,”
Thuir Cromghlas nan geur lann,
65 “’Chaidh sinns’re nam beann fo ùir.
Co e ’bheir còmhrag ’s an t-sliabh,
’S rìgh nam beann àrd air chùl ?
Tha ceathach thall air iomadh tom ;
Buileadh sonn ’s gach cruaidh a sgiath ;
70 Thig tannas o’n duibhre gu lom,^a
A sheòlas gu còmh-stri an triath.”

- Dh’fhalbh, ’us ghabh gach triath a thom ;
Chuir bàird nam fonn am beachd air triathan.
Bu labhra na caismeachd nan sonn
75 Toirm an Duibh o ’chopan ciar,
’S e ’togail a sgiath ’s a’ chòmhrag.

- Mar thoirm mhòr o uisge thall,
Thàinig sìol Thoirne a nall ;
Bha Starno ’an endann còmhraig.
80 ’S Suaran o innis nan stoirm.
Sheall gach laoch o ’dhonn sgiath,
Mar shamhla ciar aig cloich Lòduinn,
’N nair sheallas e o chùl na gealaich,
’S i ’dubhadh fo callaich ’s an speur,
85 ’S dealan tannais sgaoilte ’s an oidheche.

“Not unknown,” said Cromma-glass 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

“Not without (bequeathing) knowledge unto us,”
 Said Cromglas of keen-edged brands,
 65 “Did our mountain sires go down to dust.
 Who is he to lead the battle on the hill
 When the king of high Bens is away ?
 Mist rests on many a height in view ;
 On each of these let hero strike his shield ;
 70 From blackness a spirit will come forth,^{a 4}
 To guide the leader to the fight.”

Went, and took each chief his hill ;
 The bards of song close-marked the chiefs.
 Louder than war-note of the heroes
 75 Was boom from dusky boss of Du ;
 And he it is who lifts the shield in war.

Like mighty roar of water from afar,
 Onwards came the race of Torno.
 In fore-front of the fight was Starno,
 80 And Swaran from the dwelling-place of storms.
 From his dun shield each hero gazed,
 Like spectre dark by stone of Lodin,
 When he looks from behind a moon
 Which pales beneath a burden in the sky,⁵
 85 And phantom flashes spread through night.

DUAN 11.

Cromglas objects to the following of this precedent, and proposes that each leader should retire to a peak of the misty mountain before them, where a spirit would point out him who was to lead.

The proposal is acted on, and Du-Mac-Roin' is declared leader.

The enemy--the race of Torno--advance, led by Starno and Swaran.

of the shields. Loudest rung thy boss, Duth-maruno. Thou must lead in war !

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.

DUAN II.

Thachair aig Tùrthor na suinn,
 Mar bhruaillein thomh air druim a' chuain.
 Bha beuman beucach dlùth ri 'chéile ;
 Am bàs a' leum thar tréin 's an t-sliabh,
 90 Mar nial de chlach-a-meallain garbh,
 'S gaoth mhòr 'n a cearb ag éirigh ;
 Na sìantan mar thorrunn a' falbh,
 'S muir dhorecha le spàirn a' beucail.

A strì Thoinne, 's duibhe gruain,
 95 C' uim' an cuirinn 'an duan do chreuchdan ?
 Tha thu 's an àm a chaidh suas,^a
 A tha gun tuar do m' léirsinn.
 Thàinig Starn' a nall le còmhrag,
 'Us Suaran mòr le 'chearb do 'n strì.^b
 100 Cha robh do lann gun bhrìgh 's a' chòmh-stri,
 A Dhuibh mhic Ròinne o 'n Tuath thèr.
 Theich Lochlin thar an uisge thall ;
 Bha triath' nan lann air call an smaointean ;
 Thionndaidh iad an mòr rosg mall
 105 Air teicheadh o'n chàrn do'n t-sluagh.
 Chualas stoc Fhionnghail o 'n chruaich ;
 Thill sìol Alba o ruaig 's a' gheann.
 Bu lionmhor mu Thùrthor nan stuadh
 A thuit gaisgich gun tuar fo lann.

^a The time that is gone ; lit. *went upwards*. A very common expression for past time is "that which has declined," *gone downwards*.

^b With his train ; lit. *with his skirt*.

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

Strife of gloomy U-thorno, why should I mark thy wounds ! Thou art with the years that are gone ; thou fadest on my soul !

DUAN II.

They and the
Fingalians
engage at
Turor.

Ossian, re-
garding the
battle of Torno
as covered
with gloom,
and now in
the faroff time,
refuses to enter
into its details ;

but merely
states that
Lochlin fled
across the
water.

Starno and
Swaran were
bereft of
thought by
the flight of
their people.
Fingal speed-
ily recalls his
men from the
pursuit.

The warriors met at Turor,
Like writhing waves on ridge of ocean.
Cleaving, clanging strokes fell thick together ;
Death leaped o'er strong ones on the hill,⁶
90 Like a cloud of rugged hailstones,
While a great wind surges in its skirt ;
The elements like thunder careering,
And ocean dark is bellowing in throes.

Combat of Torno, blackest in gloom,
95 Why put in song thy gashing wounds ?
Thou art in the time that is gone,^a
Which has no brightness in my sight.
Over came Starno to the conflict,
And Swaran great, with his train, to the fray.^b
100 Not pithless in the fight thy spear,
Du-Mac-Roin', from northern land.
Fled Lochlin 'cross the water far.
Bereft of thought were the chiefs of spears ;
Their great, slow eyes they rolled,
105 When their people fled from the hill.
Heard was Fingal's horn from the height ;
Turned Alba's race from pursuit in the glen.
Many, around Turor of waves,
The heroes who fell wan beneath the sword.

Starno brought forward his skirt of war, and Swaran his own dark wing. Nor a harmless fire is Duth-maruno's sword. Lochlin is rolled over her streams. The wrathful kings are lost in thought. 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.

DUAN II.

- 110 “A thriath Chràthmo,” thubhairt an rìgh,
 “’Mhic Ròinne, ’shealgair nan tore ciar ;
 Gun bheud cha do thùll thu o ’n strì,
 A gharbh iolair a’ teurnadh o ’n t-sliabh.
 Bithidh Lànsùil an ùrla bhàin
- 115 Fo aoibhneas aig a h-uisge féin,
 Le Ceann-daoine, òg mhac do ghràidh,
 ’S e ’g iadhadh mu Chràthmo fo ’n bheimm.”

- “’S e Cùlghorm,” fhreagair an sonn,
 “An ceud fhear ’chaidh null do dh’Alba ;
- 120 Cùlghorm, ciar mharcach nan tonn
 Thar gleannaibh crom an t-sàile.
 Thuit a bhràthair le làimh an laoich,
 ’S dh’fhàg e faoin a thalla thall ;
 Ghabh tuimidh ’an Cruailinn an fhraoich
- 125 Am measg sàmhechair nam baoth chàrn.
 Thàinig a shìol a mach ’n an àm
 Gu còmh -stri nach gann ’s a’ bhlàr ;
 Thuit iad ’an còmh -stri nan lann ;
 ’S leamsa lot shinns’re ’bu shàr,
- 130 A rìgh innis a’s fuaineara càrn.”

Tharruing e ’n iuthaidh o ’thaobh ;
 Gun tuar thuit an laoch gu làr ;

^a He drew the arrow, &c. The word *iuthaidh* here used for arrow is, I believe, to be found in Ossian only. The modern word is *saighead*, from the root *sàth*, to transfix ; Lat., *angitta*. *Sàthach*, adj. *piereing*, said to be the root of *Sacon*.

“Chief of Crathmo,” said the king, “Duth-marumo, 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, as he wanders in Crathmo’s fields.”

“Colgorm,” replied the chief, “was the first of my race in Albion ; Colgorm, the rider of ocean, through its watery vales. He slew his

- 110 "Prince of Cramo," said the king,
 "Roinè's son, thou hunter of dark-brown boars,
 Not harmless from the fray hast thou returned,
 Thou eagle great, from mountain swooping down.
 Lan-huil of bosom white,
 115 Will joyful be by her river-side,
 With Ken-don, young son of thy love,
 As he roves round Cramo beneath the Ben."

- "Cul-gorm," answered the brave one,
 "Was the first who crossed to Alba—
 120 Cul-gorm, dark rider of the waves,
 Over the salt sea's crooked glens.
 By the warrior's hand his brother fell :
 Across (the sea) he fled his empty hall :
 He made his home on Crua-lin of heath,
 125 Amid the silence of the lonely cairns.
 His sons, in season due, went forth
 To plenteous fight in war ;
 Fell they in conflict of brands ;
 Mine is the wound of forefathers brave,
 130 King of the land of sounding cairns."

He drew the arrow from his side ;
 Strengthless, the hero fell to earth.

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.

DUAN II.

He congratulates Du-Mac-Roin' on his gallantry in winning such a fight, and speaks of the joy with which his wife and boy will hear of his prowess.

Du-Mac-Roin' gives a brief account of the passing of the first of his ancestors—Cul-gorm—to Alba.

His ancestors all were warriors, and he says that he had been wounded as they had been.

On this he draws forth an arrow which had stuck in his side (though unobserved by his friends), and he falls dead to earth.

DUAN II.

- Shiubhail 'anam gu 'shinns're nach caoin,
 Gu innis mhaol nan stoirm àrd,
 135 A' leantuinn tannais tuire de cheò
 Air sgiathan nan gaoth mòr 's a' chàrn.
 Sheas haoich gu sàmhach mu-n cuairt,
 Mar chloich Lòduinn nam fuath air sliabh,
 'N uair a ch' fear-siubhail iad shuas
 140 O astar an fheasgair tro' chiar,
 'S e 'm barail gur tannais nan aosda,
 'Tha 'suidheachadh faobh nam blàr.

Thuit an oidhche air Toirne donn :
 Sheas iadsan mu-n t-sonn fo bhròn.

- 145 Bha osag mu seach anns gach ciabh
 'An co-thional nan triath mòr.
 An sin bhris o 'n rìgh gu mall
 Na smaointean a bha thall 'n a chliabh ;^a
 Ghairm Ullin nan clàrsach 's nan dàn,
 150 'S dh'iarr moladh éirigh mu 'n triath.
 " Cha tein' e 'chaidh sìos gu leus,
 A chithear, 's a leumas o'n t-sùil ;^b
 Cha dealan, a chaillear 's an speur ;
 Chaidh esan, 'bha treun air chùl.
 155 Bu chosmhail ri gréin an aoich,
 A sheasas facl air faobhar bheann.

^a The thoughts which in his breast lay deep ; lit. *which were over or far away*. This word, *thall*, over, occurring very frequently, is one of the most troublesome which a translator of Ossian has to deal with.

^b Out of view ; lit. *from the eye*.

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, through 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 whistled, by turns, through every warrior's hair.

- Fled his soul to his fathers grim,
 In the bleak abode of tempests high,
 135 Chasing spectre-boars of mist,
 On wings of great winds on the cairn.
 Silent stood warriors around,
 Like Lodin's stone of phantoms on the hill,
 When the wayfarer sees them on high,
 140 In evening travel through the gloom,
 And deems them spirits of the aged
 Adjusting the spoils of war.

- Night fell on Torno brown ;
 Stood they round the chief in sorrow.
 145 The blast by turns blew through the locks ⁷
 Of the array of mighty chiefs ;
 Then slowly from the king broke forth
 The thoughts which in his breast lay deep."
 Called he Ullin of harps and songs,
 150 And bade praise of the chief arise.
 "No fire was he that sank without a flame,
 Now seen, now leaping out of view ;^b
 No lightning-flash lost in the sky,
 Was he the mighty one (now) gone.
 155 The warrior was like a sun
 Which standeth long on brow of Bens.

DUAN II.

The warriors
 stand around
 him in silent
 grief.

Fingal calls
 upon Ullin to
 raise his praise,
 and recount
 his family
 history.

Fingal at length broke 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 he that is laid so low. He was like the strong-beaming sun, long rejoicing on his hill. Call the names of his fathers, from their dwellings old !"

DÙAN II.

Gairm air ais a shìms's're nach b'fhaoin
O 'n tuinidh 's an àm a bh'ann."

- "Innis-Thoirne," thuirt am bàrd,
160 "A dh'éireas gu h-àrd 's na stuaidh,
Chi mi fo ghruaim do cheann thall
Measg ceathaich a' snàmh air chuan :
O do ghleannaibh thàinig na triathan
Mar fhìor iolair nan sgiath treun ;
165 Sìol Chùlguirm na màile ciar,^a
'Tha 'n Lòduinn, tigh liath nan speur."
'An àrd Thoirne, innis nan gaoth,
Dh'éireas Lurthan nan sruth-chàrn ;
A liath-cheann gun choill', 's e maol,
170 'S a chàthar faoin 'n a chaol ghleann.
Aig fuaran Churtho 's fuaimear braon,
Thuinidh Rùrmar, sealgair nan torc.
Bha 'nighean mar dhearrsa caoin,
Strì -nandaoinne an uchd bhàin.
- 175 'S lìonmhor rìgh, a b'airde triath,
'S lìonmhor triath fo sgiathan donn,
'S iomadh òg, 'bu truime ciabh,
'Ghabh talla Rùrnhair nan ciar long.
'Thàinig air ionnsuidh na h-òigh

^a *Na-maile-ciar.* This is one of a hundred instances in which ordinary grammatical usage, as now established, is ignored by Ossian, or apparently set aside for the sake of rhyme. *Céir, céire,* is the gen. of *ciar.* The instances are far too numerous to be all marked in these notes.

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

Recall his fathers great
From their abode in time which was."

- "Innis-torno," said the bard,
160 "Which risest high amid the waves,
I see thy head far off in gloom,
'Mid mist which, on the ocean, floats.
From thy glens came leaders forth
Like eagles true of powerful wing,
165 Cul-gorm's race of dusky helm,"
That dwell in Lodin, hoary mansion of the skies."
In Torno's height, abode of winds,
Rises Lur-han of streamy cairns,
Its grey head treeless and bald ;
170 And desert the moor in its narrow gorge.
By Cur-ho's spring of sounding flow
Dwelt Rurmar, hunter of boars ;
His daughter was as radiance mild,
Stri-nan-dōn' of bosom fair.

- 175 Full many a king of noblest chiefs,
Full many a chief of dark-brown shield,
Full many a youth of heaviest locks,
Sought Rurmar's hall of galleys dark.
They came to woo the maid—

DUAN II.

The bard,
addressing
Innis-torno,
says that from
its glens the
warlike race of
Cul-gorm came
forth.

In Torno, near
Curor, dwelt
Rurmar, whose
beautiful
daughter, Stri-
nan-dona, was
wooed by
hundreds.

bent its woody head over a silent vale. There, at foamy Cruruth's source, dwelt Rurmar, hunter of boars ! His daughter was fair as a sunbeam, 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

DUAN II.

- 180 Gu slìos Thoirne fhiadhaich, fhaoin ;
 'S ainnir ghasd', do'n géill na slòigh,
 Sheall i sìos o 'ceumaibh caoin,
 Strì -nandaoin nan cìoch àrd.
 Ma 's ann air siubhal an fhraoich,
 185 Bu ghile na 'n canach a cruth ;
 Ma 's ann air tràigh nan stuadh faoin,
 Na 'n cobhar air aomadh nan sruth.
 Bha 'sùilean soluis mar dhà reul ;
 Mar bhogha nan speur 'am braon
 190 A gùis àluinn fo 'ciabh féin,
 'S duibhe na nial fo ghaoith ;
 Bu tuinidh dhuit anam nan laoch,
 A Strì-nandaoin' 'bu chaoine làmh.

- Thàinig Cùlghorm 'n a loingear féin,
 195 'S Coreul-Sùran, an treun fial,
 Na bràithrean o Thoirne nam beum,
 A dh' ionnsuidh dearsa nan ceud triath.
 Chummaic i na laoich 'n an cruaidh ;
 Bha 'h-anam a' luaidh air Cùlgorm.
 200 Sheall caoin-reul Lochlin o stuaidh
 Air ainnir àluinn 'bu ghlaine ùrla.
 'Si 'togail a làmh geal, caoin,
 Strì-nandaoin' 'bu ghuirme sùil.

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 C'ana; 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

- 180 To Torno's rugged, barren slope.
 But the goodly maid to whom hosts would yield,
 Looked down in her untroubled steps,
 Stri-nan-dōn' of bosom high.
 If, on the heath she moved,
 185 Whiter than C'ana was her form ;⁸
 If, on the shore of restless waves,⁹
 Than foam on the curling flood.
 Her eyes of light were like two stars ;
 Like bow of heaven in mild shower
 190 Was her face of beauty, under locks
 Blacker than cloud in storm.
 Thy dwelling was the soul of heroes,
 Stri-nan-dōn' of smoothest hand.

- In his own galley Cul-gorm came,
 195 And Corcul-surau, generous, brave—
 Brothers from Torno of echoing sounds—
 To woo the light of hundred heroes.
 She saw the warriors in their steel ;
 Her soul was praising Cul-gorm.
 200 Lochlin's mild star from waves beheld¹⁰
 The lovely maid of purest breast,
 Tossing her smooth white arms,
 Stri-nan-dōn' of bluest eye.

DUAN 11.

Description of
 Stri-nan-dona.

At length Cul-gorm, and his brother, Corcul-surau, came to court her. She secretly loved the former ; both loved her ;

clouds. Thou wert the dweller of souls, white-handed Strina-dona !

Colgorm came, in his ship, and Corcul-surau, king of shells. The brothers came, from I-thorno, to woo the sunbeam of Tormoth wild. 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.

DUAN II.

- Bha gruaim air na bràithrean fo àrdan ;
 205 Thachair an sùilean 'an sàmhchair ;
 Thionndaidh o 'chéile na garbh thréin ;
 Bhuail iad an sgiathan 's an làraich ;
 Chrith gach làmh 'an ceann gach lainn ;
 Chaidh iad 'an carraid nan laoch ^a
 210 Mu Strì-nandaoine 'b'fhaide ciabh.

a In conflict
 they closed ;
 lit. into con-
 flict they
 went.

- Thuit Coreul-Sùran 'n a fhuil
 'An innis nan tuil 's nan càrn.
 Chuir 'athair òg Chùlgorm gu muir
 O Thoirne nam muc, a tha thall,
 215 Air seachran mar chaochla na gaoithe.
 'An raon fada Chruailinn an fhraoich
 Ghabh saoi nach robh faoin a thàmh.
 'N a aonar cha do thuinidh an laoch ;
 Bha dearrsa 'bu chaoime r'a làimh,
 220 Nighean Thoirne a b' airde fuaim,
 Strì-nandaoine nan gruaidh tlàth.

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.

Coreul-surán fell in blood. On his isle raged the strength

Gloomy and wrathful grew the brothers ;
 205 In silence met their eyes ;
 The heroes stern from other turned away ;
 Struck they their shield on battle-field ;
 Trembled each hand on the head of each sword ;
 In the conflict of warriors they closed,^a
 210 For Stri-nan-dōn' of longest hair.

Fell Corcul-suran in his blood,
 In the island of floods and of cairns.
 His father sent young Cul-gorm to sea,
 From Torno of whales, in distance far,
 215 To wander with the changes of the winds.
 On the long moor of heathy Crualin
 The valiant hero took his rest.
 Nor lonely did the brave one dwell ;
 By his side was radiance mildest,
 220 Daughter of loud-sounding Torno,
 Stri-nan-dōn' of soft, warm cheek.

DUAN II.

and, mutually estranged, they at length engage in mortal combat. Corcul-suran is slain.

The father banishes Cul-gorm, who, after many wanderings, fixed his home at Crualin, in Alba, where, in due time, Stri-nan-dona joins him.

of his father. He turned Colgorm from I-thorno, to wander on all the winds. In Crathmo-eraulo'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.

D U A N I I I .

ARGUMENT.

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

D U A N I I I.

Cia as tha sruthan na bha ann ?
 C' uin' a thaomas an t-àm 'tha 'falbh ?
 C' àit' an ceil aimsir a dà cheann
 'An ceathach 'tha mall 's nach gann,
 5 A taobh ballach le gnòmh nan seòd ?
 Tha mò shealladh air linnte 'dh' aom ;
 Cha-n fhaicear ach caol na bh' ann,
 Mar dhearrsa na gealaich 'tha faoin,
 Air lime 'tha claon 's a' ghleann :
 10 An so dh' éireas dealan a' chòmhraig ;
 An sin thuineas, gun sòlas, neo-thréin ;
 Cha chuir iad an gnòmhnan air chòmhlà
 Air aimsir 'tha mòthar 'n an déigh.

Thus', a thuineas am measg nan sgiath,
 15 'Thogas anam nan triath o bhròn,
 A chlàrsach o Chòna nan sian,

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 moonbeams, on a distant lake. Here rise the red

D U A N I I I.

WHENCE are the streams of what has been? ¹
 When will have ebb'd the age now flowing on?
 Where shrouds Time its two extremes
 In mist slow-rolling, vast of fold—
 5 Its side all starred with hero-deeds?
 I bend mine eye upon the ages fled,
 Seen, but in narrow gleams, is all that was,
 Like to the glimmer of a sickly moon
 On water winding through a glen.
 10 Here flash the lightning-gleams of war;
 There, joyless, dwell the faint of heart;
 Their deeds, together, they will not engrave
 On Time which follows them with stately tread.

O thou which hast thy dwelling 'mid the shields,
 15 Rousing the spirits of the brave from grief—
 Thou harp of Cona of storms,

The poet asks what is the origin of the past, and when the present will close. Time hides its beginning and end in darkness, which reveals nothing, but the deeds of the brave.

The past is seen but dimly; yet the light of valour shines there, while the feeble cannot inscribe their deeds, though all heaped together, on the records of time.

beams of war! There, silent, dwells a feeble race! They mark no years with their deeds, as slow they pass along. Dweller between the shields! thou that awakest the failing soul! descend from thy wall, harp of Cona, with thy voices three! Come with that which

DUAN III.

Thig sìos o 'n bhalla 'am chòir ;
 Le d' thri ghuthan thig gun stad,
 'Soillseachadh gu grad na dh'fhalbh ;
 20 Tog samhla nan laoch nach robh lag,
 Air chiar àm a chaidh fada thall.

A Thoirne nan stoirm 's nan cruach,
 Chi mi shuas mo dhream ri d' thaobh ;
 Fionnghal ag aomadh fo ghruaim,
 25 Thar uaigh mhie Ròinne nach b' fhaoin.
 Ri 'làimh tha ceuman nan triath,
 Sàr shealgairan nan ciar thore mòr.
 Aig Tùrthor a' huidhe 's an fhraoch
 Rìgh Lochlin 's a laoih 'an ceò ;
 30 An dà rìgh feargach air dà chàrn,
 A' coimhead a nall thar an sgiathan ;
 Bha 'n sealladh air reultan na h-oidhehe,
 'Tha 'saebran le soillse gu h-iar,
 Cruth Lòduinn ag aomadh gu h-àrd,
 35 Mar theine leth-chaille 'an nial ;
 'S am Fuath a' cur a mach nan gaoth
 Le dealain ri 'n taobh ro' bhàs.
 Chumnaic Starno, le còlas, nach b' fhaoin,
 Nach géilleadh an saoi 's a' bhlàr.

40 Tri uairean bhuaile 'chraobh le feirg ;

kindles the past : rear the forms of old, on their own dark-brown years !

U-thorno, hill of storms, I behold my race on thy side. Fingal is bending, in night, over Duth-marumo's tomb. Near him are the steps of his heroes, hunters of the boar. By Furthor's stream the host of Lochlin is deep in shades. The wrathful kings stood on

Come down from the wall, come near ;²
 With thy three voices come, delaying not,
 Quick to shed light on all that now is gone.
 20 The image raise of heroes brave
 On dusky Time now far away.

Torno of storms, and rugged heights,
 I see on high my kindred by thy side ;
 Fingal bending in gloom
 25 At the grave of Roinè's gallant son.
 By his side are the steps of chiefs,
 Fell hunters of great tawny boars.
 At Turor, lying on the heath,
 (Are) Lochlin's king, and warriors in mist.
 30 The two kings, wrathful, on two cairns,
 Look forth across their shields ;
 Their gaze was on the stars of night,
 Which wander westward in brightness.
 Cru-Lodin was bending on high,
 35 Like fire half-lost in cloud,
 While the spirit sends forth the winds,
 With lightning by their side, forerunning death.
 Saw Starno of knowledge profound,
 That the hero would not yield in war.
 40 Thrice, in wrath he struck the tree :

DUAN III.

He invokes
 the harp to
 reproduce the
 image of the
 heroes of old.

Fingal is seen
 on the height
 of Torno, bend-
 ing over the
 grave of Du-
 Mac-Roin'.
 The warriors
 are by his
 side.

The remnant
 of Lochlin's
 host is lying on
 the heather,
 Starno and
 Swaran, anx-
 iously consult-
 ing the stars,
 while Cru-
 Lodin bends
 over them.

From his
 knowledge of
 the stars,
 Starno under-
 stands that
 Fingal can
 not be sub-
 dued in war.

two hills ; they looked forward from their bossy shields. They looked forward to the stars of night, red-wandering in the west. Cruth-loda bends from high, like a formless meteor in clouds. He sends abroad the winds, and marks them with his signs. Starno foresaw that Morven's king was not to yield in war.

He twice struck the tree in wrath. He rushed before his son.

DUAN III.

a Straightway
he bled him :
lit. *without*
rust, &c. ; or
possibly, *with-*
out banner
or *troop* ; for
meirghe,
which, for
the sake of
rhythm here,
might be con-
tracted, signi-
fies banner, or
the band
which follows
a banner.
The meaning
then would
be, *secretly*.

- Bha 'shiubhal gu mheirg gu 'mhac,^a
'S e 'múchadh nam fonn dha féin,
'S a' clàistinn gaoith thréin 'n a chiabh.
Thionndaidh na saoi o 'chéile.
- 45 Mar dhà dharaig threun 's a' chàrn,
Gach aon diubh do ghaoith a' géilleadh,
'S ag aomadh o bheinn ther allid ;
Crithidh am mòr gheugan thall
Fo osaig, a bheucas o 'n ghleanu.
- 50 " Bha Annir," thuirt rìgh nan loch ciar,
" Mar theine 'chaidh sìos o shean ;
Thaom e o 'shùilean am bàs
'An còmhrag nam blàr 's nan sgiath ;
Bha 'shòlas 'am bàs nan laoch ;
- 55 Fuil cho caoin ri sruth an t-samhraidh,
'N uair a bheir e o'n àrd chreig fhaoin
Aoibhneas nach baoth gu gleann càthair.
Thàinig e mach o Luthcormo
'An coinneamh Chormain, an sonn treun,
- 60 Esan o Urlor nan sruth,
A thuineadh fo sgéith a' chòmhraig."

Thàinig Cormain 'n a boingear dhonn
Gu Gorm-mheall, mu -n iadh an tonn.

He hummed a surly song ; and heard his hair in wind. Turned 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

- Straightway he hied him to his son,
 While to himself he muttered songs,
 And listened to the strong wind through his hair.
 From each other turned the chiefs away,
 45 Like two strong oaks on mountain height,
 Each one yielding to the blast,
 And, from the Ben, o'erhanging a ravine ;
 Sway their great boughs on either side,
 'Neath blast loud-howling through the glen.
- 50 "Annir," said the king of dark-brown lochs,
 "Was like fire which passed away of old ;
 Death he poured from forth his eyes
 In the warring strife of shields.
 His joy was in the death of warriors ;
 55 Blood (to him) was sweet as summer stream,
 When from a high bare rock it brings
 Great gladness to a moory glen.
 From Lu-Cormo came he forth,
 To encounter Corman, warrior strong ;
 60 He (was) from Urlor of rivers ;
 Dwelt he beneath the wing of war."

Came Corman in his galleys brown
 To Gormal, girdled by the wave ;

DUAN III.

He goes to his son, who turns from him. They are like two oak-trees, one on either side of a ravine, their boughs swayed hither and thither by the wind.

Starno describes his father Annir, who delighted in shedding the blood of warriors ;

and tells that Corman, chief of Urlor, came to Gormal, Annir's dwelling ;

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 Foima-brâgal.

DUAN III.

a Warlike Annir; lit. *Annir of strokes*; or, *of cleaving strokes.*

b Set forth o'er ocean wide; lit. *took the great ocean under his head.*

c Through and through his soul I saw; lit. *I saw his soul to its back.*

d In the darkness of night I arose; lit. *I took the darkness of night.*

- Chunnaic nighean Annir nam beum,^a
 65 Fìona gun bheud nan làmh-geal:
 Chunnaic e; 's cha b' fhaoin a sùil
 Air maraich 'bu dubh-ghorm triall.
 Dh' fhalbh i gu 'luing anns an oidhehe,
 Mar ghealach a' boillsgeadh tro' ghleann.
 70 Ghabh Annir an euan mòr fo 'cheann;^b
 Ghairm e gaoth neartmhor gu 'chrann.
 Cha -n ann leis féin a bha 'n laoch;
 Bha Starno, a mhac, ri 'thaobh.
 Mar iolair Thorno fo òg sgiath
 75 Thionndaidh mo shùil air an triath.

- Thàinig sinn gu Urlor bheucaeh.
 Le 'shluagh ghluais Cormac, an treun fhear.
 Bhuail sinn, 'us thug an nàmhaid buaidh.
 'N a fheirg sheas m' athair fo 'chruidh;
 80 Ghearr e na badain le 'lainn,
 'G an sgathadh fo àrdan nach gann.
 B' fhiadhaich 'us bu dhearg a shùil.
 Chunnaic mi 'anam gu 'chul,^c
 'Us ghabh mi dùbhradh na h-oidhehe;^d
 85 Thog mi cruaidh chlogaid o 'n raon,
 Sgiath bhèarnach o bheum nach b'fhaoin;
 Agus dh' iarr mi 'n nàmhaid thall
 Le sleagh gun cheann 'am làmh.

He saw her! Nor careless rolled her eyes, on the rider of stormy waves. She tled to his ship in darkness, like a moonbeam through 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 rushed into roaring Urlor. With his people came tall Cor-

Saw he the daughter of warlike Annir^a—
 65 Feena faultless, the white-armed,
 He saw ; nor heedless was her eye
 Of the mariner of dark-blue paths.
 To his ship she hied her at night,
 Like moon when shining through a glen.
 70 Annir set forth o'er ocean wide ;^b
 He called a mighty wind unto his mast.
 Nor did the hero go alone ;
 Starno, his son, was by his side.
 Like eagle of Torno, on young wing,
 75 I turned my eye upon the chief.

Came we to high-sounding Urlor.
 Advanced brave Corman with his host.
 We struck, and the foe prevailed.³
 In wrath my father stood beneath his steel ;
 80 He hewed down bushes with his sword,
 Lopping them in boundless rage.
 Red and savage was his eye ;
 Through and through his soul I saw,^c
 And in darkness of night arose.^d
 85 A helm of steel I lifted off the field,
 A shield all hacked by heavy strokes,
 And sought the foe across the plain,
 With a headless spear in my hand.

man-trunar. We fought ; but the foe prevailed. In his wrath my father stood. 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.

DUAN III.

fell in love with his daughter Feena, who returned his love, and secretly went off in his ship at night.

Annir, accompanied by Starno, then a youth, pursues,

reaches Urlor, attacks Corman, and is defeated.

Starno, seeing his father in grief and rage, resolves to avenge him :

in the darkness of night, clothed in broken armour, he approaches Corman and Feena as a suppliant.

DUAN III.

- Air carragh shuidh Cormac, an treun,
 90 Darag a' lasadh roimhe féin ;
 Fo chraoibh, nach robh fada thall,
 Bha Fìona ghasda nan rosg mall.
 Thilg mi 'n sgiath bhrìste 'n a còir,
 'Us labhair le fòill mu shìth.
- 95 " Air taobh a mhara beucaich' féin
 Tha Annir 'n a huidhe, an treun ;
 Thuit an rìgh 's a' chòmhrag gun bhuaidh ;
 Tha Starno 'togail na h-uaigh' ;
 Chuir mise o Lòduinn a nall
- 100 Gu làmh-gheal ghasda nan rosg mall,
 A dh' iarraidh d'a h-athair a ciabh,
 "Theid mar ris an triath 's an ùir.
 Thusa, 'rìgh Urloir nan gleann,
 Caisg còmhrag, 'us taisg do lann,
- 105 Gus am faigh e 'n t-slige fhial
 O chial làimh dheing Chruth Lòduinn."

- Dh' éirich an òigh fo dheoir 's an t-sliabh,
 Tharruing i o 'leadan a' chiabh,
 'Bha 'seachran air a broilleach bàn,
 110 Fo osaig 'bha 'snàmh gu mall."
 Chuir Cormac an t-slige 'am làimh ;
 Dh' iarr e 'an aoibhneas mo thàmh.

*a Upon the
 gently-stir-
 ring breeze ;
 lit. under
 breeze which
 was swimming
 slowly.*

On a rock sat tall Cormac-trunar, beside his burning oak ; and near him, beneath a tree, sat deep-bosomed Fìona-bràgal. I threw my broken shield before her. I 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 Fìona, to bid her send a lock from her hair, to

- On a rock sat Corman, the strong.
 90 An oak-log blazing before him.
 Beneath a tree, not far away,
 Was goodly Feena of slow-moving eyes.
 I flung the broken shield before her,
 And gently I spoke of peace.
 95 "By the side of his own sounding sea
 Low lies the valiant Annir ;
 In a losing fight the king has fallen.
 (And) Starno is raising the tomb.
 He sent me from Lodin hither,
 100 To the goodly White-hand of slow-moving eyes,
 To ask for her sire a lock of her hair,
 Which, with the king, shall go beneath the sod.
 Thou, king of Urlor of the glens,
 Stay thou the war, and sheathe the sword.
 105 Till he receive the brimming shell
 From the dark red hand of Cru-Lodin."

- Tearful on the hill arose the maid ;
 From her clustering hair she drew a tress,
 Which, over her white bosom, wandered,
 110 Upon the gently-stirring breeze.^a
 Placed Corman in my hand the shell,
 Joyful, he asked me to repose.

DUAN III.

He says that Starno is slain, and asks Feena for a tress of her hair to be laid in her father's grave ; also, begs of Corman to sheathe the sword till the fallen warrior should receive the shell from Cru-Lodin.

Feena grants his request, and Corman treats him with all kindness.

rest with her father in earth. And thou, king of roaring Urlor, let the battle cease, till Annir receive the shell from fiery-eyed Cruthloda."

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

D'AN III.

- Luidh mi teann air anns an t-sliabh,
 M' aghaidh fo chlogaid 'bu chiar.
 115 Thuit eadal air an nàmhaid thall ;
 Dh' éirich mi mar thannas mall,
 Bhuail mi Corman mòr 's an taobh ;
 " 'Fhìona, bha d' fhaobh air mo lainn ; "
 Bha do bhroilleach fo fhuil 's an fhraoch.
 120 C' ar son, a nighean nan laoch a bh' ann,
 'Mhosgail thu àrdan do bhràthar ? "

a Thy life was
 on my sword ;
 lit. *thy spoil*,
 &c.

- Dh' éirich madainn ; dh' fhalbh an nàmhaid.
 Mar cheò 'tha 'snàmh air a' bheinn ;
 Bhuail Annir copan nan sgiath,
 125 Agus ghairm air a chiar mhae.
 Thàinig mi 'am fuil a nall ;
 Tri chuairt dh' éirich guth an laoch,
 Mar osag ghaoith a bhriseas thall
 O nial air càrn 's an oidhche.
 130 Tri làithean chaidh aoibhneas mu-n cuairt ;
 Cha do chuir sinn 's an uaigh na mairbh ;
 Ghairm sinn seabhag nan speur,
 'Us thàinig o 'n uile ghaoith
 Gu cuirm air faoibh nan nàmhaid.^b
 135 " A Shuarain, tha Fionnghal air tom
 'N a aonar fo chrom na h-oidhche ;

b On our ene-
 mies' flesh ;
 lit. *spoil*.

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 Foina-bràgal 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.

- Close by him on the hill I lay,
 My face beneath a dusky helm.
 115 Fell sleep on the foe beside me ;
 Rose I, like slow-moving ghost ;
 Struck I great Corman on the side.
 " Feena ! thy life was on my sword, ^a
 Thy bosom blood-stained on the heath.
 120 Wherefore, O daughter of heroic race,
 Didst thou rouse the wrath of thy brother ? "

- Morn arose ; vanished the foe
 Like mist that floats on Ben.
 Struck Annir the bossy shield,
 125 And called he for his swarthy son.
 I came, in blood, across ;
 Thrice rose the voice of the warrior,
 Like blast of wind which distant bursts,
 From cloud, on cairn at night.
 130 Three days went joy around.
 The dead we placed not in the grave.
 We called the hawks of the skies, ⁴
 And from every wind they came
 To feast on our enemies' flesh. ^b
 135 " Swaran, on a knoll is Fingal ;
 Alone, beneath the arch of night,

DUAN III.

He lies down
 beside him :
 as soon as
 Corman sleeps,
 he stabs him
 to death, and
 then kills
 Feena.

With morning
 he returned to
 his father, who
 rejoices ex-
 ceedingly.

For three days
 they feasted,
 while the
 hawks de-
 voured the
 flesh of their
 unburied ene-
 mies.
 Starno now
 calls on his
 son Swaran to
 imitate his
 conduct, to
 assassinate
 Fingal, who
 slept alone on
 the hill.

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 ! Fingal is alone, on his hill of night. Let

DUAN III.

Buail an t-sleagh 'n a thaobh 's a' bheinn,
'S biodh Starno fo aoibhneas mar Annir."

"'Mhic Annir," thuirt Swaran fial,

- 140 "Cha mharbhar fo nial leam féin ;
Le soillse bithidh m'astar 's an t-sliabh,
'S na scabhaig air sgiathan 'am dhéigh ;
'Am foill e'ùime ghluaiséadh fear treun ?
Tha mo phiuthar a' bacadh mo thriall."

a My sister—
i.e., Agan-
decca—loving
Fingal, mur-
dered by her
father.—*Vide*
Note 2, Duan
I.

- 145 Las fearg air an rìgh gun dàil,
'Us thog e gu h-àrd a shleagh ;
Tri uairean chlisg i 'n a làmh ;
Ach chlisg e o bhàs a mhic.
Bhuail e tro' oidheche gu luath
150 Gu sruth Thùrthoir 'tha shuas 's a' chòs,
'S an d' chuir e nighean Thoreuil o thuath,
'S anns an d'fhàg e 'chruaidh 'bu chòrr.
Ghairm e òigh Lùla nan triath ;
Bha ise 'an nial le Loduinn.

- 155 Dh'at àrdan 'an anam an laoich,
'S dh'aom e tro' 'n raon gu Fionnghal.
Luadh an rìgh air sgiath 's an fhraoch,
'N a aonar, gun smaoin air iorghail.

thy spear pierce the king in secret ; like Annir, my soul shall re-
joice.

"Son of Annir," said Swaran, "I 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 through war."

Burning rose the rage of the king. He thrice raised his gleaming

On the mountain ; strike the spear into his side,
And let Starno rejoice as Annir."

DUAN. III.

" Son of Annir," said Swaran, great of soul,
140 " I will not slay beneath a cloud ;
In light shall be my path on the hill,
And hawks on the wing behind me.⁴
Why should a brave man walk in guile ?
My sister forbids my journey."^a

Swaran rejects
the proposal
with scorn.

145 Straightway flamed the king in wrath,
And he lifted on high his spear.
Thrice it trembled in his hand ;
But he trembled at the death of his son.
Struck he, through night, in speed
150 To Turor's stream, on high, in the cave
Where northern Toreul's daughter he had placed,
And a sword of (temper) rare had left.
He called on Lula's maid, (daughter) of chiefs ;
She was on a cloud with Lodin.

Starno raises
his spear to
slay him, but
forbears, and
rushes off in
the dark to
the cave of
Turor, where
he had impris-
oned Oivana,
mentioned in
the first Duan.

155 Fury swelled in the soul of the warrior,
And through the moor he bent (his course) to Fionn.
On shield the king lay 'mid the heath,
Alone, without a thought of feud.

He discovered
that she was
dead ; and in
fury strode off
to the place
where Fingal
slept alone on
the moor.

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

Swelling in his rage, he strode, to where Fingal lay alone. The king was laid on his shield, on his own secret hill.

DUAN III.

- “ A bhorb shealgair nan tore ciar,
 160 Cha-n i làmh-gheal nan ciabh 'tha 'd chòir ;
 Cha ghiullan air raineach 's an t-sliabh,
 Aig sruth Thùrthoir nan toirm mòr :
 'An so féin tha còmhnaidh nan treun,
 A dh'éireas gu beum a' bhàis.
 165 A shealgair nan ciar thore 's a' bheinn,
 Na mosgail fuathas—fan thall.”

- Thàinig Starno le fuaim a nall ;
 Dh' éirich Fionnghal nan lann 's a' mhaigh.
 “ Co thusa, 'mhic oidhche 's a' ghleann ? ”
 170 Thilg esan 's an àm an t-sleagh.
 Bhuail iad anns an strè mar aon ;
 Thuit 's an raon an sgiath fo làinn,
 Sgiath sgoilte 'bh'aig Starno ri 'thaobh,
 'Us cheangladh e ri daraig thall.
 175 'N nair chunnaic Fionnghal rìgh nan long,
 Thionndaidh e gu trom a shùil ;
 Bha 'smaointean air na làith' a bh' ann,
 Mar cheòl uasal nan caoin dhàn,
 'Bha dòigh an uchd bhàin a' gluasad.
 180 Dh' fhuasgail e na h-iallan o 'làimh.

“ 'Mhic Annir nan lann, bi 'falbh.
 Gabh Gorm-mheall nan sligean mu d' cheann ; ”

^a To Gormal
 of shells de-
 part ; lit. take
 Gormal . . .
 about thy
 head.

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

- “ Fierce hunter of dark-brown boars,
 160 No white-hand of wavy locks is nigh thee ;
 No boy, fern-bedded on the moor,
 (Is) at Turor’s stream of sounding roar.
 Here is the very home of the brave,
 Who will rise to death-dealing strokes ;
 165 Thou hunter of dusk boars on Ben,
 Rouse not the terrible ! stand back ! ”

- Came Starno noisily onward ;
 Rose Fingal of swords on the plain.
 “ Son of night, who (art) thou in the glen ? ”
 170 He, instant, threw his spear.
 Struck they in fight as one.
 Fell ’neath sword, a targe upon the field—
 The cloven targe of Starno, by his side,
 And he was bound to oak-tree nigh.
 175 When Fingal saw the king of ships,
 Heavily he turned away his eye ;
 His thoughts were of days which had been,
 As noble music of sweet songs
 Which the white-bosomed maid had sung.
 180 He loosed the thongs from off his hands.⁵

“ Son of Annir of swords, begone !
 To Gormal of shells depart. ”

DUAN III.

Ossian apostrophises him, bidding him beware of his danger.

Fingal, roused by Starno’s approach, challenges him in the dark. Starno flings his spear, which misses Fingal. They instantly close in combat. Fingal strips him of his shield, and binds him to an oak.

On discovering him to be Starno, the memory of Agandecca, his early love, rises before him. He spares the life of her father ;

their gloomy strife. The shield of Starno fell, cleft in twain. He is bound to an oak. The early beam arose. It was then Fingal beheld the king. He rolled awhile his silent eyes. He thought of other days, when white-bosomed Agandecca moved like the music of songs. He loosed the thong from his hands. Son of Annir, he said, retire. Retire to Gormal of shells ; a beam that was set re-

DUAN III.

a I remember
the maid, &c.;
lit. *the maid*
. . . *is mem-*
ory to me.

- Tha dearsa na bh'ann ag éirigh ;
'S cuimhne leam òigh an uehd bhàin ;"
185 A rìgh 's fuiliche laim, bi 'falbh.
Gabh gu d' thalla 'am bruailein thall ;
A dhroch nàmhaid mo ghràidh, as m' fhianuis !
Na tigeadh an coigreach a' d' dhàil,
'Fhir a ghabhas do thàmh 'an gruaim !"
190 Sgeul air àm o shean.

turns. I remember thy white-bosomed daughter ; dreadful king,
away ! Go to thy troubled dwelling, cloudy foe of the lovely ! Let

The brightness of the past arises ;
 I remember the maid of bosom white."
 185 King of bloodthirstiest blade, away !
 Depart to thy brawling hall.
 Evil enemy of my love, begone !
 May the stranger never come nigh to thee,
 Man, who, with grimness, makest thine abode !"
 190 A tale of the time of old.

DUAN III.

and, after reproaching him for his bloodthirstiness, dismisses him to his own brawling hall.

the stranger shun thee, thou gloomy in the hall !
 A tale of the times of old !

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IN

C A - L O D I N.

Note.—Throughout the translation of Ossian's Poems I have written proper names in English in such a form as to give a Saxon tongue some chance of pronouncing them; and herein I generally, though not always, follow the spelling of Macpherson. In Gaelic, however, I write them as fully and accurately as I can. Where the derivation and meaning are obvious, I set these before the reader; where they are probable, though not certain, I subjoin the *query* mark; and where I see not even probability to lead the way to a solution, I make no attempt at it—for I have no faith in conjectural etymology.—A. C.

ALBA, or ALBUINN, once the name of the whole island of Great Britain, is still the name by which Scotland is known in the Gaelic language. Every Highlander styles himself an *Albannach*—*i. e.*, Albanman—in contradistinction to the *Sassanach*, or Saxon-man; and again, a *Gùel*, in contradistinction to the *Gall*, or Lowland Scot.

ANNIR, the father of Starno, king of Lochlin, of whom his son says (Duan III. line 55) that “blood to him was sweet as summer stream.” The name seems to have been common among the Scandinavians. It occurs in “Carrie-thura” as that of the king of Sora or Sorcha.

CA-LODIN, *Cath-Lòduinn*, “the battle of Lodin.” Lodin is generally supposed to denote the Scandinavian deity Odin; and unquestionably he is represented as exercising great, though not resistless, power over the affairs of men; but in some parts of this Duan, as well as in the title, Lodin seems to denote a locality rather than a person.—*Uile Note* at the end of this poem.

COXA, thus written both in Gaelic and in English, a name of note, and of frequent recurrence in the Ossianic poetry. In "Carri-thna," the bards are addressed as the "voices of *Cona*;" and very frequently is the "harp of *Cona*" invoked by Ossian. It is generally used as the name of a river, but in the poem before us it denotes the glen through which the river flowed (Duan II. line 34), "the narrow glen of *Cona*."

Much has been said to prove this to be the modern *Glencoe*, with which such tragical memories are associated. The Gaelic name of Glencoe is *Gleann-Comhann*, by many said to be *Gleann-Cunhann*—*i. e.*, "a narrow glen;" by others said to be "the valley of weeping," &c. I have no doubt that the glen, like so many others, is named after the river which flows through it, and this I always regarded as *Comh-anhuinn* or *Co-thonn*—*i. e.*, "conflux of streams or of waters." The extraordinary number of torrents, small and great, which are seen on a rainy day rushing down the many rifts and hollows of that rugged glen, give plausibility to this derivation; and I am quite convinced of its correctness by seeing in the Orig. Paroch. (*sub voce* "Elanmunde") that in a charter of 1343 Glencoe is called *Glen-chomyr*; in another of 1475, *Glenco-ill*. Both these names, as every Celtic scholar will recognise—*Co-bhior* and *Co-Ihuil*—refer to "confluence of waters."

CORCUL-SURAN, chief of Torno, who, for love of Strinandona, was killed by his brother Culgorm.

CORMAN, chief of Urlor in Lochlin, who, falling in love with Feena, daughter of Annir, carried her off in his ship.

CORMAR, one of Fingal's warriors, celebrated as a sailor. The second syllable of his name, *mar*, probably refers to his maritime pursuits—*mara* being the genitive of *muir*, "sea" (Lat. *mare*, Sanscrit, *vart*).

CROM-GLAS, *Croma-gldas*, "bent and grey," another of Fingal's band.

CROM-HORMOD, *Crom-thormoid*, "the circle" or "the slope of *Tormoid*," one of the islands adjoining Lochlin.

CRUALIN, *Cruaidhlim*, probably "the rock of streams," the dwelling-place of Du-Mac-Roine. It is also called "Cramo-Cruailin," *Cruadhmo* of *Cruaidhlim*.

CU-HAL, CUMHAL, or COMHAL, the father of Fingal. The name is said to mean *Cuomhail* (‡) “gentle,” “piteous,” “kindly.”

CULGORM, the husband of Strinauldona, and ancestor of Du-Mac-Roinè.

CUR-RO, *Cùrtho*, a spring in Torno, beside which Culgorm dwelt. *Cùr* (pronounced *Coor*), is still the name of places in the Highlands; and Armstrong gives *curach* as signifying a marsh. The root *cùr* is found in very many Gaelic words.

DU-MAC-ROINÈ, *Dubh-mhac-Ròinne*, “the black son of roughness,” or “black son of the hairy one,” a distinguished Fingalian, descended from Culgorm, who dwelt in Uthorno. His name is in this poem contracted into *Dùr* and *Dubh*. Macpherson smooths it into *Dumaruno*; and I have seen a translation where he is styled “The Duf.” I have retained the name in all its native roughness.

FEENA, *Fiona*, probably signifies “accomplished,” “polished.” The adjective “*finealta*” has this signification, and clearly connects itself with Lat. “*finis*,” Eng. “*fine*,” &c.

Macpherson, in entire opposition to his usual plan of smoothing down the asperities of Celtic names, calls this lady, in his translation, *Foina-bràgal*—“*Foina* of the white bosom”—and her lover’s name he makes *Corman-trumar*. In the Gaelic, however, the lady’s name is *Fiona*, pronounced as “*Feena*,” which I have retained.

FINGAL, in Gaelic *Fionnghal* or *Fionn* (*Fionn* being pronounced as one syllable, which may be represented by *Fyân* or *Fèun*).

Much has been written in explanation of this celebrated name, but its etymology is still a matter of conjecture.

Fionn is a word still in daily use, signifying “white” or “fair,” and enters very widely into the composition of names of places, terms descriptive of personal appearance, &c. The second syllable, *gal*, is said by some to mean “stranger” (*Gall*), and by others to be a mere adjunct to proper names. It is possible, however, that it may represent the common adjective *geal*, “white”—thus making *Fionnghal* “fair-white,” or “the very fair-haired one.”

This explanation was suggested to me by the following verse from a love-song in Stewart’s collection published in 1804:—

“*Fionn-ghéal* a falt air a ceann,
Mar dhreach airgid nan glan thend;
Fionn-ghéal a mala chaol chàin;
Fionn-ghéal a h-ainm ’s a mall-rosg réidh.”—P. 116.

The poet, wishing to show his love as "fairest fair," speaks of her in the preceding verse as *glé gheal*—*i. e.*, very fair—and compares her to *cana* of the mountain; but wishing to give her still higher praise, he, in this second verse, reduplicates the adjective, and says—

“ Fair, fair is the hair on her head.

Fair, fair her slender curving brow;

Fair, fair her name, and her smooth slow-moving eyelash.”

Fionn-gheal is the highest form of superlative he can use; and very probably the name of the "king of Seha" may denote nothing more than that he was remarkably fair in complexion—just "the fair one."

The two forms, *Fionnghal* and *Fionn*, are used by Ossian; and in English we have Fingal used by Barbour as early as 1375.

All that need be further said is, that Fingal was king of *Morbheann*, *i. e.*, "the great mountains," and the hero of the whole Ossianic poetry—a hero whose character is nobly drawn, uniting strength, magnanimity, and gentleness, in a degree not exemplified by any other hero of antiquity. It is thus that he generally is represented in the Highland mind to this day, as the ideal of all perfection. The more modern tales and poems, however, portray him as owing his great success to the craft of Ulysses as much as to the arm of Achilles or the grave wisdom of Nestor. It is probable that there were many leaders of the name, and possible that it may have become a name of office, after the first who bore it had signalised it.

GALL is the name of a people or race. In the present day the Highlanders of Scotland use the term to denote a Lowland Scot; while *Sassanach* is their name for an Englishman. Of old it signified, I believe, any stranger or foreigner. The outer Hebrides, inhabited by Northmen, were called *Iunse-Gall*, "the isles of the strangers." *Gäel*, or *Gaelheal*, is the name by which the Highlander distinguishes himself. The old Irish writers derive this word from *gaoth*, "wind," referring to the restless, impetuous character of the Celts; and Zeuss endorses the derivation. But a fatal objection to it is, that *Goill* (plur. of *Gall*), whose character was the very opposite of the *Gäel*, points much more clearly to the same root. I have seen no admissible analysis of either term. I have retained *Galls* in English, so that every reader may interpret it in his own way.

GORMAL, *Gorm-nheall*, "blue mountain;" but probably it should be rendered "green mountain," as *gorm* is frequently used in Gaelic

where "green" or "grey" must be understood as its equivalent in English. It is mentioned as the dwelling-place of Starno, king of Lochlin.

KENDONA, *Ceanndaoine*, "the head of men," son of Du-mac-Roinè.

LAN-HUL, *Lànshuil*, "full eye," the wife of Du-mac-Roinè.

LOCHLIN, or "LOCHANN," admitted to be the ancient Caledonian name for Scandinavia.

Mr Skene, quoting from one of the oldest MSS. in the Advocates' Library, shows that Lochlin was anciently applied to districts east of the Rhine, and thus embraced a vast extent of territory. In the present day *Lochann* is the common Gaelic name for Denmark; while Sweden and Norway are known as *Suain* or *an t-Suain*—with the article prefixed, "the Suain."

Gaelic tradition preserves many memories of fierce battles with the men of *Lochann* (or *Lochlin*, as Ossian writes it) in the olden time, and of commercial dealings with them in comparatively modern days.

LORA, *Lwath-shruth*, "rapid stream or current." The name of some water frequently mentioned in the Ossianic poetry, and said by many to be the same with the modern "Connal" (*i. e.*, "raging flood") on Loch Etive, in Argyleshire.—*Vide* Notes.

LUCORMO, *Luthcormo*, one of Annir's dwelling-places.

LULA, a river in U-horno, probably meaning "swift water." Torcul-torno dwelt beside it, and the name seems to be applied to his dwelling as well as to the river. According to Macpherson, there is a river in Sweden still known as Lulan.

LUNO, SON OF, *Mac-Luinn*.—This is the name given to Fingal's celebrated sword, which is said "never to have left a remnant" where it struck. It is also called a "sword of light," and will remind the reader alike of Prince Arthur's celebrated sword, Excalibar, and of his bright shining shield, which dazzled the eyes of all that looked at it.

Luno, *Lonn*, or *Loinn*, was a Scandinavian smith who made swords for several of the Fingalians, but none endowed with such virtue as belonged to that of the king, who, it is said, tempered his in the heart's blood of the unfortunate smith. *Duan na Cèarlach*, "The Song of the Smithy," a poem of undoubted antiquity, of which various versions

are preserved (see Mr Campbell's admirable work, 'West Highland Tales,' vol. iii.), tells of the manufacture of the Fingalian weapons. The smith was called *Lonn*, or *Loinn Mac-Liòbhaidh*—according to Dr Maclauchlan "brightness, the son of polishing"—according to Mr Campbell, "blade, the son of furbishing;" and is probably the Celtic name for *Wayland*, *Vælund*, *Golaan*, &c., the mythic discoverer of iron among all the northern nations of Europe—apparently among all the Aryan tribes. *Liòbhaidh*, pronounced "Leeva," is still in common use, denoting "polishing" or "furbishing," and is evidently from the same root with the Latin "levis."

MALVINA, *Mala-mhìn*, "smooth or gentle brow," the daughter of Toscar, a distinguished chief. She had been betrothed to Oscar, Ossian's only son. After his early death she devoted herself entirely to his aged father, and appears to have constituted his only solace and his chief inspiration. The opening of this poem gives an affecting view of the relation in which they stood towards each other. When his memory of the past was becoming painfully dim, and even the wonted sounds of the murmuring breeze, the "call of hoary streams from rocky heights," and the very "voice of the harp," failed to produce their usual effect upon him, he appeals to Malvina as his muse, and beseeches her to restore his soul: "Restore the soul of thy bard;" "Restore, thou White-hand, my soul to me."

He was specially *her* bard. It was her presence which kindled in him the stirring memories of the far past, and called forth sorrowings for the present. When we remember this—when we see the old, blind, lonely warrior-poet pouring out his soul in the ears of her who was "a daughter of chiefs," and the widow of his only son—the desolate pair forming the only survivors of a very glorious past,—we find a natural explanation alike of the deep melancholy and the highly-refined tone which pervades these remarkable poems from beginning to end.

OIVANA, *Oigh-bhàn*, "fair-maid," daughter of Torquil.—*Vide* Notes.

RURMAR, a chief of Torno, and father of Strinandona.

SELMA, said to be *Sealla-math*, "beautiful view or prospect." This was the capital or palace of Fingal, and of his ancestors. It is said by many to have occupied the site of Berigonium, in the parish of Ardchattan, in Argyleshire, and within a short distance of the north shore of Loch Etive.—*Vide* Notes.

SRU-MOR, *Sruth-mòr*, "great stream," a Fingalian hero, distinguished for his love of war.

STARNO, king of Lochlin. He showed the bitterest enmity to Fingal throughout his life. His character is far more savage and bloodthirsty than any other portrayed by Ossian. The name *Stàrn* is still used in the Highlands as the symbol of rudeness and ferocity.

STRINANDONA, *Stri-nan-daoine*, "strife of men" (the same as Andromache), the wife of Culgorm, who followed him from Torno to Alba.

SWARAN, *Suaran*, son of Starno, king of Lochlin,—spoken of in the poems occasionally as being himself king—this term being used loosely to denote one possessing power or authority, though not the highest in the land. Swaran, while stern, and a stranger to the chivalrous honour and courtesy of the Fingalian heroes, was, as compared with his father, a noble character.

TORCUL-TORNO. *Torcùl*—now written as *Torquìl* in English—is still common in the Hebrides as a man's name. The Macleods of Raasay were known as *Sìol Thorcuill*, "the race of Torquìl." *Torno* is a contraction of Uthorno, explained below. *Torcùl-torno* is "Torquìl of Torno." He was slain by Starno.

TREUN-MÒR, "brave (and) great," or "strong (and) great." The father of Cu-hal, and grandfather of Fingal, reigning in his own day at Selma, which continued to be the capital in his grandson's days.

TUROR, *Turthor*, another river of U-horno, probably signifying "murmuring stream." By its side was fought the battle which gives its name to this poem.

ULLIN, *Uilebhinn* (?) "all-melodious." The chief bard and harper among the Fingalians, and said also to have been the author of some poems still preserved, which are scarcely if at all inferior to the compositions of the "Prince of the Bards."

URLOR, *Urtar*, is a Gaelic word in common use, signifying "the floor of a house," or "the strath of a glen;" here the name of a place.

UTHORNO, ITHORNO, or INNIS-THÒIRNE—probably meaning "isle of storms or sounds"—an island of Lochlin. Over its summit, as said at line 251 of Duan I., was Lodin's house or hall. Uthorno is by many identified with Drontheim.

NOTES TO CA-LODIN.

DUAN I.

¹ "Called Starno from Lodin a man of fraud."

Macpherson makes this line, "Starno sent a dweller of Loda;" and Macfarlan has "vocavit . . . e Loda"—both regarding Lodin as the name of a place. They may be right, and at lines 251, 252 it certainly denotes a locality:—

"By thy summit is *Lodin* in clouds,
The great house of the brave who were of old."

Generally, however, Lodin, and always Cru-Lodin (*i. e.*, the form of Lodin), denotes a spirit of great power worshipped by the Scandinavians, and hostile to the Caledonians. This appears to be the Celtic name for Odin, the great god of the Teutonic races; and seeing that, according to Grimm, they themselves write it in such a variety of forms—as Vodans, Wuodan, Guodan, Woden, and even Weda and Orvin—the wonder is, not that the Celts should have prefixed one letter to it, but that they have not changed it much more.

Whatever may be said about the name, it is evident that the accounts given in the Ossianic poems of this formidable spirit correspond in many respects with the northern ideas of Odin. He is worshipped at "the stone of spectres cold," or at "Lodin's tree"—which, probably, has reference to the great ash-tree, Ygdrassil; and he answers the rhymes (runes?) of his votaries. In his own hall (line 256 *et seq.*), illumined by the lightning, where he sits amid spectres "of hue most wan," with "his right hand, in cloud, on something like a shield," he

is sufficiently terrible ; while his occupation, in handing "the fragrant shell" (skull of foes?) to the brave, agrees well with Scandinavian descriptions. I cannot make the same assertion regarding his treatment of those of weaker nerve—interposing his notched dim shield between them and the drink which they coveted so eagerly; for I do not see any authority for admitting "cowards" to any place in Walhalla, "the hall of the chosen."

In the poem of "Carric-thura" (line 258 *et seq.*) Lodin claims entire power over the lives of men, who "fall like ashes" before his glance ; and in Fingal (Duan III. lines 36-40), in a somewhat obscure passage. Snivan, Starno's augur, is said to raise the tune at the Crom-Lec, or "worshipping stone" of Lodin, and when the spectre-stone hears him, the warriors, though in flight, renew the combat.

With all this, however, not only does Fingal, with his sword of light, utterly rout Lodin ("Carric-thura," line 298 *et seq.*), but in "*Dàn an Deiry,*" in Dr Smith's collection, the spirit of Tremmor, Fingal's grandfather, is represented as able to rescue the soul of Dargo from all the spirits of Lochlin—an inconsistency of opinion regarding supernatural beings to be seen in the northern mythology as well as in the Celtic ; for in many places the Scandinavian heroes are said to be able to "defeat the gods." I need hardly refer to the Homeric heroes, who defeated gods and goddesses when their wrath was roused. It has been well said of Pagan mythology generally, that "its gods were immortal men, while its men were mortal gods."

Lodin, or Cru-Lodin, seems, then, to represent Odin as seen through the Celtic imagination.

² "Remembered the king the gracious maid."

The third book of the poem of Fingal explains this line. There we are told that Starno, who from the first was a bitter enemy to Fingal, resolved to destroy him in his youth. In order to get him into his power, he invited him to his palace with the pretended view of his marrying Agandecca, Starno's daughter. Fingal accepted the invitation, speedily fell in love with her, and she returned his affection. After a short time Starno sent Fingal to a hunting-party, where an ambush was laid for him. Agandecca contrived to give a hint of this to her lover. He took his warriors with him to the hunt, and with their aid cut the assassins to pieces. He returned to Starno's hall, who, on hearing how matters had turned out, sent for his daughter. She came trembling, and immediately he plunged his sword into her heart. Fingal remem-

hered his youthful love to the close of his days. Some of the noblest traits in a nobly depicted character are brought out in his wonderful forbearance towards the treacherous and savage Starno, because he was the father of Agandeecca, and in his genuine kindness to all who had shown kindness to her.

³ "When Crom-hormod awakened the woods,"

i. e., when the woods of Crom-hormod resounded with the storm.

⁴ "Together pouring forth their rhymes."

Rann is the Gaelic word. Its original meaning is "division," and, applied to poetical composition, denotes stanza. I might probably, without much error, render it here by *runes*, for I have seen the two words traced to the same root; but being anxious to receive a meaning from, not to give a meaning to, the old bard, I have used a term which can give no rise to dispute. I think it possible that *rune*, instead of being identical with *rann*, may be the same with the Gaelic *ràn*, "intention," "wish," "*secret*."

⁵ "The boar's head give the chief of men."

I know not in the least what is meant by this ceremony, unless it might be devoting the youth to the hunting of boars as his special vocation. It seemed to form the principal occupation of his relatives.

Ceanu-daoine, "head of men," is preserved by Macpherson as a proper name, and written "Kan-dona," which I use in Duan II. He tells us that he lived long, and was as celebrated a hunter as his father or any of his kin.

⁶ "When came the grisly strength of the hills
On the blue spear of boars in U-horno."

The meaning seems to be, "When a strong band of his enemies, from the hills of U-horno, came upon him (Du Mac-Roin') whose chief weapon was the boar-spear."

⁷ "The moonlight was on face of *cairns*."

Cairn, in common speech, is used in the present day to denote only a comparatively small heap of stones, and generally a monumental heap. But any one who will think of the names of our Highland

mountains, will see that it was not so restricted in meaning of old. The *Cairn-gorm* range of mountains is known to embrace peaks yielding in height only to Ben Nevis amid all the mountains of Britain; and Ben Nevis has immediately to the east of it a *Càrn-dearg* little inferior to itself in height. I therefore use the word, as it is used in Gaelic, to denote rocky mountains, whether high or low; and I think I need make no apology for retaining the word *ben*, which is gradually establishing its place in the English vocabulary.

⁸ It is not easy (if possible) to assign any connected meaning to this "harmless chant." It seems intended to represent the broken utterances of a mind "distracted;" but the subsequent conversation with Fingal is rational. The chant is said by Macpherson to have been set to music, "such as few could hear without tears." The remainder of Oivana's history is lost, as seen by the hiatus in the poem at line 181; but it is evident, from what is said at the close of the Duan, that her woes were ended by an early death.

⁹ Selma is said to have been the modern Berigonium (Rerigonium?) in the district of Benderloch and parish of Ardehattan, Argyleshire. I do not see any satisfying proof of this, but I think it may interest the reader to learn the following facts. On a low rocky hill close by the road which leads from Connal to Shian there are traces of a vitrified fort, said to have been the stronghold of Berigonium and of Selma. The natives still call this fort *Dùn-mac-Suitheachain*, which Mr Skene shows to be a strange inversion of *Dùn-mhac-Uisneachain* = "the fort of the sons of Usnoth." This Usnoth and his sons—*Nàthos*, &c.—are very well known in Ossianic poetry both in Ireland and in the Highlands. Now, in Loch Etive, which lies within two miles or so of Selma, there is an island which still retains the name of *Eilean-Uisneachain* = "the isle of Usnoth;" and a farm within a mile of the shore of the loch is still known as *Coille-Nàthois* = "the wood of Nathos." Further, a rock of some height, commanding Berigonium or Selma, is still called "Dunvalary," *Dùn-bhuil-an-rìgh* = "the fort of king's town;" and a stretch of level road leading from the greater to the less fort is known as *Sràid-a'-mhargaidh* = "Market Street." These facts I am personally cognisant of; and while they do not prove the identity of Berigonium and Selma, they clearly show that some king lived there of old, as well as that the banks of Loch Etive belong to the classical land of Ossian.

¹⁰ The last few lines of the poem are given continuously in Gaelic and in English. It is evident, however, that this, like some other parts of the poem, is fragmentary—that there is no connection between the striking scene in the hall of Lodin and the arrival of the “maid of purest mien.” I believe the concluding lines are placed here by mistake. I have joined the simile of the “sky-fire lighting on a hill” to the beautiful one of the “rainbow on the face of waves.” It is possible that the first of these should be joined to the preceding one of the “moon which in the sky grows black,” and is intended to illustrate the appearance and effect of Lodin’s black-brown shield. The reader must judge for himself.

DUAN II.

¹ “‘Neath the wing of night,”

i.e., as night was flying away and the morning advancing, as shown by the following line.

² “Seen in dark traces as it sinks to earth.”

This is a difficult line, of which I have given what appears to be the meaning, though not a literal rendering. In the Society’s edition, “*dh’ fhuiccar*” is given apparently as the future of the verb, a form not recognised by any grammarian. In E. MacLachlan’s, as in Dr MacLachlan’s, *chil’* is given, contracted for *chiteadh*, “would have been seen.” I have retained the word as it is, regarding it as a form of future with a present meaning. Every Gaelic scholar is aware that the future must be frequently translated thus, as the Gaelic verb has no separate form to denote the present. I have further to observe, that from the various uses made of the future, it should be called an aorist tense, for we have repeated instances of its indicating past as well as present time. Thus, in Duan I. line 56—

“ ‘Am màile liath *thig* triath nan somn ”—

“ In armour grey *came* the chief of the brave ”—

the future *thig* is clearly used instead of the past, for the chief has

actually come, and Macfarlan properly translates the word "venit." Many similar instances might be given.

In Irish the present and future tenses are distinguished in form; but neither the British, nor the Gaelic, has a present. In Cornish and Armoric, the two tenses are, according to Zeuss, frequently mixed together; so that the Celtic language, like the Hebrew and other Semitic dialects, seems to have been originally destitute of a form of verb to mark time present—a fact which I have seen some one refer, rather fancifully, to the deep observation of the Easterns, who saw that time flies so quickly that the "present," before you can pronounce its name, has gone into the "past."

³ "Their leaders were beside them on the height."

In Gaelic, *triath* is given in the singular, and so translated by Macfarlan. The context clearly shows that the word is used in a plural signification; and I have so marked it, according to a form of plural given at line 105 of this Duan—a form to be tolerated on account of the exigencies of verse, but not to be commended.

⁴ "From blackness a spirit will come forth,
To guide the leader to the fight."

The Spirit of the Mist seems, from the context, to have indicated his choice of a leader by making his shield more resonant than that of his rivals—a mode of election of which I can give no explanation. The poet does not entertain the idea that vigour of mortal arm could have had anything to do with the matter.

⁵ "A moon
Which pales beneath a *burden* in the sky."

It is still a common meteorological expression in Gaelic, that "there is a heavy burden on the moon" when she is seen through a dense hazy atmosphere; and this appearance is regarded as indicative of storm.

⁶ "Death leaped o'er strong ones on the hill," &c.

The reference seems to be to showers of arrows—"the winged messengers of death"—which fell thickly in this combat of Torno, described with so much vividness and power by the bard.

7 "The blast by turns blew through the locks
Of the array of mighty chiefs."

"Bha osag mu seach anns gach ciabh
'An co-thional nan triath mòr."

I do not see any connection between the grief of the warriors described previously, and the fact of the "wind blowing through their hair." I believe this is an entirely wrong reading, due to the carelessness of reciter or scribe. A very slight alteration will bring the line into harmony with the context :—

"Bha osna mu seach o gach cliabh," &c.

"Alternate sighs rose from each breast
Of the array of mighty chiefs."

8 "Whiter than *Cana* was her form."

Cana, or *canach*, is a strong grass growing abundantly on the moors and bogs of the Highlands, and when in flower extremely beautiful, from a downy tuft of snowy whiteness on its head. It is commonly known as cotton-grass; and Macpherson says that true cotton was known in Ossian's day as *canach*, a name which has since been erroneously transferred to cotton-grass. I believe the botanical name of the *cana* is *Eriophorum angustifolium*. I need hardly say that *cana*, as denoting whiteness, connects itself with the Latin "canus, -a, -um."

9 "If, on the shore of *restless* waves."

I have translated the oft-recurring *faoin* here by "restless;" and at line 180 I have rendered it "barren," as applied to "Torno's wild slope." It is worth mentioning that the common acceptance of the word now is "foolish," "weak-minded;" and the expression at line 125, which I have made "the silence of the *lonely* cairns," might literally be rendered "the silence of the *foolish* cairns," *baath* used there also signifying "foolish," or "mad." Bold as the imagery of Ossian is, however, I have not ventured to represent him as speaking of "witless waves" and "raving cairns"—expressions quite justifiable, according to the dictionary. It would be interesting to know whether these words had in his day attained the moral meaning which they now bear; but, from the absence of materials whereon to found a judgment, this, like many other questions regarding the bard of Selma, must remain hidden in the "mist of the years that are gone."

¹⁰ “Lochlin’s star . . . beheld the maid tossing her smooth white arms.”—A remarkably beautiful expression for the secrecy of her grief, witnessed only by the mild star of night, and entirely in keeping with the previous expression, “Her soul was praising Cul-gorm.” She had given no outward sign of her love of him.

I add a portion of a note given by Macpherson regarding the latter part of this Duan, beginning at line 159—

“‘Innis-torno,’ said the bard,” &c. :—

“This episode is in the original extremely beautiful. It is set to that wild kind of music which some of the Highlanders distinguish by the title of *Fon Oi-marrá* [properly, *Fonn òigh-mara*], 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.” He thinks the air is Scandinavian, and says that the mermaids were reputed the authoresses of it.

DUAN III.

¹ The beginning of this Duan is among the most difficult passages in Ossian, and forms, I believe, the only instance of direct philosophising which we have throughout his works. I subjoin a short paraphrase of what appears to me to be the meaning of it; but I am by no means confident of understanding it fully, and I am quite aware that my translation is obscure, from my desire to be literal.

“What is the origin of the past? and when will the course of events now around us cease? All is obscure—shrouded in mist. One thing only we really see—the impressions made by the deeds of the brave on the present—‘the side of time.’ But where does time, only thus visible to us, conceal its beginning and its close (‘its two ends’)?

“Dim as the past is, the ‘light of valour’ is seen to shine on it. But the weak and cowardly are joyless while they live; and though they were to heap all their actions together, they will leave no mark or record on time, which in its majestic course sweeps them resistlessly onwards.”

We see that the "mystery of being" kindled "questionings" in the mind of the old Celtic bard, as it has done in so many minds since his day. And if we take his summing-up to be—as it appears to be—that there is nothing substantial, or really enduring, except brave or good deeds, we must admit his teaching to be far sounder and better than that of many of the "thinking men" of recent days who treat of the same subject.

The coincidence between Ossian's "hero-deeds marking the side of time" and Longfellow's oft-quoted "footprints on the sands of time," must occur to every reader; and as necessarily, I think, Solomon's saying, that "there is no new thing under the sun."

The invocation to the harp, lines 14-21, to project on dusky time the images of departed heroes, is easily understood, and quite in accordance with a beautiful saying in another poem ("Conloch," &c., line 41), where, after a similar address to the harp, he says, "Let the light of memory be on the mountain."

The "three voices of the harp" may refer to its festal, its warlike, and its sorrowful tones. I think it more probable, however, that this expression is meant to describe the perfect character of the music of the harp; for there are several indications in the Ossianic poetry of the number three being held significant of completeness or perfection.

On line 13 I have to remark that the adjective *mòthar* is frequently understood as meaning "calm," "silent," &c. Macfarlan here translates it "honorificum." In several parts of the Highlands it signifies this, and something more. It includes the two ideas of "statelyness" and "slowness," though not mentioned in the dictionaries. The provincial, and consequently defective, character of our Gaelic dictionaries is grievously felt by every translator. A comprehensive one, giving the meaning of words in all districts of the Gaelic area, is much needed.

² "Come down," *Thig sìos*.—This differs from present Gaelic usage. *Thig anuas* is what would be used alike in writing and in conversation throughout the Highlands generally. I have heard it said that in the Isle of Skye *sìos* is still used for *anuas*; but however this may be, I leave the reading unchanged, believing that it may contain an old use of the word.

I have a similar remark to make regarding line 21, *A chaidh fada thall*. Mr MacLachlan substitutes *null*, according to modern usage; but, for the reason stated above, I retain the reading of the Society's edition.

³ “We struck, and the foe prevailed.”

“Thug an nàmhaid buaidh.”

Lit., “The foe took victory.” It is worthy of remark that the verb *toir* or *tubhair*—past *thug*—signifies either to “give” or to “take;” and the context alone can decide in which of these opposite significations it is to be received.

⁴ “We called the hawks of the skies,

And from every wind they came

To feast on our enemies’ flesh.

In light shall be my path on the hill,

And hawks on the wing behind me.”

These expressions are very characteristic of the old northern warrior, as every reader of Norse history or tales is aware. The celebrated Ragnar Lodbrog thus laments the death of his son: “I lost my son. The birds of prey bewailed his fall; they mourned him that prepared their banquets.” And he himself died singing, in the midst of torments, of the pleasure he had derived from preparing ample food for the ravenous wolves and the yellow-footed eagle.—‘Scandinavia’ (edition 1838), vol. i. p. 169.

⁵ “He loosed the thongs from off his hands.”

The scene here presented, from line 175 to the close, is very beautifully and touchingly described. Fingal had his treacherous and unrelenting enemy in his power; but the memory of his youthful and undying love for Agandecca—

“The thoughts of days which had been

As noble music of sweet songs

Which the white-bosomed maid had sung”—

stayed his hand and softened his heart; and he dismissed the truculent Starno unharmed.

C O V A L A

A D R A M A T I C P O E M

A R G U M E N T.

“This poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Ossian’s compositions. The Caracul mentioned here is the same with Caracalla, the son of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition against the Caledonians. The variety of the measure shows that the poem was originally set to music, and perhaps presented before the chiefs upon solemn occasions. Tradition has handed down the story more complete than it is in the poem. ‘Comala, the daughter of Sarno, king of Inistore or Orkney Islands, fell in love with Fingal the son of Comhal at a feast, to which her father had invited him [Fingal, B. III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her passion was so violent that she followed him, disguised like a youth, who wanted to be employed in his wars. She was soon discovered by Hidallan, the son of Lamor, one of Fingal’s heroes, whose love she had slighted some time before. Her romantic passion and beauty recommended her so much to the king, that he had resolved to make her his wife, when news was brought him of Caracul’s expedition. He marched to stop the progress of the enemy, and Comala attended him. He left her on a hill, within sight of Caracul’s army, when he himself went to battle, having previously promised, if he survived, to return that night.’ The sequel of the story may be gathered from the poem itself.”—M.

CAOMH-MHALA
DÀN DEALBHCHLUICH.

NA PEARSA.

FIONNGHAL, CAOMH-MHALA. DEARRSA-GRÉINE,	HIDEALAN, MEALLSHÙIL-CHAOMH, BÀIRD.	}	<i>Nigheanan Mhorni.</i>
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DEARRSA-GRÉINE.

DH'FHALBH an t-sealg, gun fhuaim 'an Àrdbheinn,
Ach sruith a tha 'gàirich o chàrn.
A nighean Mhorni, a's gile làmh,
Thig-sa nall o bhruachan Chròna ;
5 Thigeadh an oidhech le dàin ;
Biodh sòlas air àrd na Mòrbheinn.

MEALLSHÙIL-CHAOMH.

'S i 'n oidhech' i, 'digh a's guirme sùil,
A' chiar oidhech' o chùl nan càrn.
Chunnacas leamsa fiadh 's a' bheinn
10 Aig sruth Chròna mòthar, mall ;

DERSAGRENA.—The chase is over. No noise on Ardyen but the torrent's roar! Daughter of Morni, come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow and take the harp. Let the night come on with songs,

C O V A L A
A D R A M A T I C P O E M .¹

P E R S O N S .

FINGAL.	HIDALLAN.
COVALA.	MELHUL-COVA.
DARSA-GRAINÈ.	BARDS.

DARSA-GRAINÈ.

THE chase is passed. No sound on Ardven,
Save of the torrent brawling from the cairn.
Morni's daughter of whitest hand,
Hither come, from the banks of Crona ;
5 Let night approach with songs ;
Be joy on the heights of Morven.

MELHUL-COVA.

It is the night, maid of bluest eye,
The sable night from beyond the peaks.
A stag was seen by me on the Ben,
10 By Crona's slow, soft-murmuring stream ;

Darsa-grainè, after the close of the chase, invites her sister to join in song and rejoicing.

Melhul-cova describes an ominous appearance which she had just witnessed

let our joy be great on Ardven.

MELILCOMA.—Night comes apace, thou blue-eyed maid ! grey night grows dim along the plain. I saw a deer at Crona's stream ;

- Mar bhruaich bha e anns an duibhre ;
 'S grad a leum e sìos tro' 'n ghleann :
 Mu 'chabar bha dealan na h-oidheche,
 Chithear soills' air taobh nan sliabh ;
 15 Bha samhla na bha, a' boillsgeadh
 Leth-fhaicte o Chròna nan nial.

DEARRSA-GRÉINE.

- 'S e fuathas a' bhàis a bh' ann ;
 Thuit rìgh nan lann, 's nan sgiath 's a' chòmhrag.
 Éirich, a Chaomh-mhal' air a' chàrn ;
 20 Fhuair Caracul buaidh 's a' chòmh-stri ;
 Éirich, a nighean Sharno fo dheoir ;
 Thuit òg do ghràidh, am fear treun ;
 Chithear tannas an t-sàir 's a' bheinn.

MEALLSHÙIL-CHAOMH.

- Shuidh Caomh-mhal' an sud 'n a h-aonar,
 25 Dà chaol chù, a's léithe colg,
 A' glacadh an aiteil 's an aonach,
 'S a' crathadh an cluas gu tric.
 Tha 'gruaidh air a làimh a's àillidh,
 Agus gaoth nan càrn 'n a cialh,
 30 A gorm-shùil a' sealladh gu farasd
 Gu raon, 's an robh gealladh a triath.

a mossy bank he seemed through the gloom, but soon he bounded away. A meteor played round his branching horns! the awful faces of other times looked from the clouds of Crona!

DERSAGRENA.—*These are the signs of Fingal's death. The king of shields is fallen! and Caracul prevails. Rise, Comala, from thy

- Like a mound he seemed in the dusk.
 Swift he bounded through the glen ;
 His antlers were wreathed in lightning of night.
 Brightness was seen on the mountain-side ;
 15 Shone the forms of those who once had been,
 Half seen from Crona of clouds.

DARSA-GRAINÈ.

- The phantom of death it was.
 Fallen in combat is the king of swords and shields.
 Arise, Covala, on the rocky height ;
 20 Caracul has conquered in the war ;²
 Thou tearful daughter of Sarno, rise.
 Fallen has the youth of thy love, the strong one ;
 Seen on Ben is the shade of the hero.

MELHUL-COVA.

- Yonder Covala has sat alone ;
 25 Two slender hounds, of greyest pile,
 Are sniffing the breeze of the mountain,
 And oft are pricking their ears.
 Her cheek on her most lovely hand,
 And the wind of the cairns through her hair ;
 30 Her blue eye calmly gazing
 On plain (of meeting) promised by her lord.

— a stag with his antlers wreathed in flame, and the forms of the dead seen in light on the mountain.

The other interprets it as a sign of the death of Fingal, and calls to Covala that Caracul had prevailed —that Fingal, her lover, had fallen.

Melhul-cova describes Covala's appearance as she sat alone intently gazing on the plain where Fingal had promised to meet her; and arouses her by asking where Fingal was.

rock; daughter of Sarno, rise in tears! The youth of thy love is low; his ghost is on our hills.

MELILCOMA.—There Comala sits forlorn! two grey dogs near shake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze. Her red cheek rests upon her arm, the mountain wind is in her hair. She turns her

C' àite bheil Fionnghal, do rùn,
'S an oidheche 'dubhradh dlùth mu-n cuairt ?

CAOMH-MHALA.

- A Charuinn, a Charuinn nan sruth,
35 C' uim' a chitheadh 'am fuil do bhùrn ?
Cha chluinneam fuaim còmhraig, no guth
Ag iadhadh do thuil 'us do chùirn.
'N do chaidil rìgh Mhòrbheinn, au treun ?
Éirich, a nighean na h-oidheche ;^a
40 Amhaire a nuas o neoil nan speur :
Éirich grad, gu-m faiceam 'an soillse
Caol dhearrsa o 'mhàile 's o 'chruaidh
Air raon 's an robh 'ghealladh o'n ruaig.
No thusa, 'dhealain uaine 'bhàis,^b
45 'Bu sholas do'r sinns're nach beò
Fo dhuibhre 'us seled na-h-oidheche,
Thigs' ann ad chaoir o 'n Àrbheinn,
'S feuch dhomh mo threun 'an soillse
'N a luidhe, 's mi deurach, 's a' bhàr.
50 Co 'sheasas eadar mi 's bròn ?
Co cadar mi 's rùn mo nàmhaid ?
'S fada sheallas Caomh-mhala fo dheoir,
Mu-m faicear leath' a mòr thriath
A' tilleadh am measg a shluaigh

^a Daughter of
night — *i. e.*
the moon.

^b Blue light-
ning; *lit.*
green light-
ning.

blue eyes toward the field of his promise. Where art thou, O Fingal? The night is gathering around!

COMALA.—O Carun of the streams! why do I behold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noise of the battle been heard; and sleeps the king of Morven? Rise, moon, thou daughter of the sky! look from between thy clouds. Rise, that I may behold the gleam of his

Where is Fingal, thy love, ³
 When night close-darkens all around ?

COVALA.

Carron, O Carron of streams !

- 35 Why see I thy waters in blood ?
 I hear no sound of war, or voice,
 Around thy flood or height.
 Has Morven's king, the brave one, slept ?
 Rise, thou daughter of night, ^a
- 40 Look down from heaven's clouds ;
 Quickly rise, that in light I may see
 A feeble glimmer from his mail and steel,
 On plain (of meeting) promised after rout (of foes).
 Or thou, blue lightning of death, ^b
- 45 Which, to our sires now gone, wert light
 In blackness and cloud of night ;
 Come, in thy hissing flash, from Ardven,
 And show me my brave one in light,
 Stretched on the field, while I am full of tears.
- 50 Who will stand 'twixt me and woe ?
 Who 'twixt me and foe's design ?
 Long shall Covala look in tears,
 Ere she'll behold her mighty chief
 Return amid his people —

Covala, awakened from her reverie, describes the vision which the gloomy forebodings of her friends had probably raised up before her imagination—the streams of Carron in blood, and Fingal slain. She calls on the moon, or even the lightning of heaven, to shine, so that she may obtain one glimpse of her brave one.

She bemoans her own desolate state, now that he is gone.

steel on the field of his promise. Or rather let the meteor, that lights our fathers through the night, come, with its red beam, to show me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from sorrow? who from the love of Hidallan? Long shall Comala look before she can behold Fingal in the midst of his host; bright as the coming forth of the morning, in the cloud of an early shower.

- 55 Soilleir mar mhaduinn o nial,
'Us am braon a' triall o stuaidh.

HIDEALAN.

- Luidheadh ceò 'us gruaim air Cròna ;
Luidheadh iad air siubhal an rìgh ;
Ceilibh anis o m' shùil a cheuman,
60 Gun chuimhn' air treun-fhear a chaoidh.
Tha triath' nan sgiath gun cheann air réidh.^a
Cha chluinnear an ceuman mu 'chruaidh.
A Charuinn, a Charuinn nan sruth,
Iadhsa ann am fuil do bhùrn ;
65 Tha ceannard an t-sluaigh fo seled.

^a Leaderless ;
lit. *without a*
head.

CAOMH-MHALA.

- Co 'thuit aig Carunn nam bruach,
A mhic duibhre na fuar oidheche ?
An robh e geal mar shneachd nan cruach ?
Mar bhogha braoin air stuaidh a' soillseadh ?
70 An robh 'chiabh mar an ceò 's a' bheinn
Ag iadhadh caoin fo ghréin air tòrr ?^b
An robh e mar thorrann nan speur ?
Cho luath ri féidh nam fàs ghleann mòr ?

^b *Tor*, applied
to any emi-
nence, small
or great—pro-
bably same as
tår, "turris,"
"tower."

HIDALAN. — Dwell, thou mist of gloomy Crona, dwell on the path of the king ! Hide his steps from mine eyes ; let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are scattered ; no crowding tread is round the noise of his steel. O Carun ! roll thy streams of blood ; the chief of the people is low.

- 55 Bright as morn come forth from cloud,
When the shower has fled from the wave.

HIDALLAN.⁴

- May mist and gloom on Crona dwell—
Dwell they on the path of the king.
Shroud now from my eye his step ;
60 Forgotten be the brave one evermore.
The chiefs of shields are leaderless on field ;^a
Around his steel their steps shall ne'er be heard.
Carron, O Carron of streams !
Roll thou thy waters in blood ;
65 The leader of the host is under cloud.

COVALA.

- Who has fallen at Carron of banks,⁵
Son of the darkness of night which is cold ?
Was he white as the snow of the peaks ?
Like bow of shower on great waves gleaming ?
70 Was his hair like mist on Ben
Waving soft, in sunshine, on the *Tor* ?^b
Was he like the thunder of the skies ?
Swift as the deer of great and desert glens ?

Hidallan approaches, proclaiming the death of Fingal ; and uses language which may be understood either as lamenting that event, or as rejoicing over it.

Covala, recoiling from belief in the reality of the dark vision which she had beheld, eagerly asks the son of the dark cold night who had fallen at Carron, and she describes Fingal under various similes.

COMALA.—Who fell on Carun's sounding banks, son of the cloudy night ? Was he white as the snow of Ardyen ? Blooming as the bow of the shower ? Was his hair like the mist of the hill, soft and curling in the day of the sun ? Was he like the thunder of heaven in battle ? Fleet as the roe of the desert ?

HIDEALAN.

C'ar son nach fhaiceam a rùn féin
 75 'S i 'g aomadh o 'n bheinn le 'h-àille,
 A dearg-shùil fo dheoir mu 'n treun,
 A ciabh gun bheud mu 'gruaidh fharasq ?
 Éirich, éirich, a chaoim ghaoth,
 Togsa gu caomh a leadan trom ;
 80 Faiceam a lùmh gheal a's caoine,
 'S a gruaidh, a tha gaolach 'am bròn.

CAOMH-MHALA.

'N do thuit mac Chumhail féin 's an t-sliabh ?
 'N do thuit, a thriath, a's duibhe sgeul ?
 A thorruinn a' siubhal nan aonach ciar,
 85 A dhealain air sgiath theine nan speur,
 Cha-n eagal do Chaomh-mhal' 'ur triall,
 O-n a thuit an triath fo sclèd.
 Innis, 'fhir a's dubhaiche sgeul,
 Am bheil gaisgeach nan sgiath gun deò ?

HIDEALAN.

90 Tha 'shluagh nis sgaoilte air a' bheinn ;
 Cha chluinn iad guth an tréin na 's mò !

HIDALLAN.—O that I might behold his love, fair-leaning from her rock ! Her red eye dim in tears, her blushing cheek half hid in her locks ! Blow, O gentle breeze ! lift thou the heavy locks of the maid, that I may behold her white arm, her lovely cheek in her grief.

COMALA.—And is the son of Comhal fallen, chief of the mournful

HIDALLAN.

Why may I not behold his love
 75 Descending, in her beauty, from the hill ;
 Her eye red-weeping for the brave one ;
 Her flowing locks around her winsome face ?
 Awake, awake, O kindly breeze !
 Softly raise her heavy locks,
 80 That I may see her smooth, white hand,
 And her cheek which is lovely in sorrow.

Hidallan, renewing the expression of his love towards her, asks her to descend from the hill ; and calls on the breeze to blow aside her hair, that he may see her white hand and lovely cheek.

COVALA.

Has the son of Cu-hal fallen on the hill ?
 Has he fallen, thou chief of blackest tale ?
 Thou thunder traversing the mountains dusk,
 85 Thou lightning on the welkin's fiery wing,
 No dread to Coval' is your course,
 Since the chief has fallen under cloud !
 Tell, thou man of woofullest tale,
 Is the hero of shields without breath ?

Covala asks passionately again if her chief has indeed fallen ; she no longer fears the course of the thunder or lightning since he is gone ; but once more asks if he be indeed dead.

HIDALLAN.

90 Scattered on the hill is now his host ;
 The strong one's voice they shall hear no more.

Hidallan declares that he is.

tale ? The thunder rolls on the hill ! The lightning flies on wings of fire ! They frighten not Comala ; for Fingal is low. Say, chief of the mournful tale, fell the breaker of the shields ?

HIDALLAN.—The nations are scattered on their hills ! they shall hear the voice of the king no more.

CAOMH-MHALA.

^a Great king
—i. e. the king
of the world—
the Roman
Emperor.—M.

- Bruaillean air an raon a'd' dhéigh,
Cunnart dhuit féin, a rìgh mhòir ;^a
Do 'n uaigh na biodh liumhor do cheum,
95 Biodh aon òigh a'd' dhéigh fo bhròn ;
Biodh i mar Chaomh-mhala fo cheò,
Làn de dheoir 'an làithean a h-òige.
C' ar son a dh'inuis thu dhomb féin,
Gu-n d' thuit mo ghaisgeach treun 's a' bhlàr ?
100 Bhiodh mo dhùil r'a thilleadh o 'n bheinn ;
Chithinn e féin air creig, no còmhnard ;
Shaoilinn gu-m b'i 'chraobh mo laoch,
A' tighin le faoibh o 'n bhlàr ;
Chluinninn a stoc anns a' ghaoith
105 'Bhiodh 'siubhal baoth air taobh nam beann.
Tha mise deurach gun bli thall
Air bruaich Charuinn nan sruth mall ;
An sin bhiodh mo dheoir gu tlàth
Air gruidh an t-sàir a tha gun tuar.

HIDEALAN.

- 110 Air bruaich cha-n'cil an laoch :
Air àrd an fhraoich nis togar 'uaigh.
Seall, a ghealach, o neul caoin ;

COMALA.—Confusion pursue thee over thy plains ! Ruin overtake thee, thou king of the world ! Few be thy steps to thy grave ; and let one virgin mourn thee ! Let her be like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth ! Why hast thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell ? I might have hoped a little while his return ; I might have thought I saw him on the distant rock. A tree might have

COVALA.

- Trouble track thee on the field ;
 May danger aye be thine, great king.^a
 Unto the grave not many be thy steps.
 95 One maid be left behind in sorrow ;
 Be she as Covala, under gloom,
 Full of tears in her days of youth.
 Why didst thou tell unto me
 That my warrior brave in battle fell ?
 100 I still would hope for his return from Ben ;
 Himself I would behold on rock or plain :
 I would believe a tree to be my hero,
 Coming back with trophies from the war ;
 I would hear his horn in the wind
 105 Which roves at random on the mountain-side.
 Tearful am I that I was not
 On Carron's bank of sluggish stream ;
 Then would my tears fall soft and warm
 On the cheek of the great one who is pale.

Covala prays that trouble and evil may ever follow the king of the world whose army had destroyed Fingal. With the wayward inconsistency of a great grief, she now reproaches Hidallan for telling her what she had been so eager to know, saying that, if left in ignorance, she could still live on the hope of Fingal's return.

HIDALLAN.

- 110 The hero is not on the (river) bank :
 His tomb they build upon the heathy height.
 Look forth, O moon, from kindly cloud ;

Hidallan wishes that the moon may shine forth to show Covala her love in his armour.

deceived me with his appearance ; the wind of the hill might have been the sound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun ! that my tears might be warm on his cheek !

HIDALLAN.—He lies not on the banks of Carun : on Ardven heroes raise his tomb. Look on them, O moon ! from thy clouds ; be thy beam bright on his breast, that Covala may behold him in

Biodh do sholus caol air cruaidh,
 Gu-m faic an Làmh-gheal a gaol
 115 'Am boillsge faoin a' mhàile chruaidh.

CAOMH-MHALA.

Na cuiribhse, a shìol na h-uaigh ;
 Na cuiribhse mo luaidh air chùl.^a
 Dh'fhàg e mi 's an t-seilg air cruaidh ;
 Gun fhios chaidh e suas gun chliù.
 120 "Tilleam ri oidhche," thuirt an triath ;
 'S thill rìgh Mhòrbheinn fìor ri oidhch'.
 C' ar son nach d'innis thu, 'fhir léith,
 'Tha 'n cromadh nan sliabh gun soills',
 Gu-n tuiteadh ceannard nan sgiath marbh ?
 125 Chumnaie thu 'n a fhuil an t-òig-fhear ;
 'S cha d' innis thu 'm bròn do Chaomh-mhala.

MEALLSHÙIL-CHAOMH.

C'iod an fhuaim 'tha shuas 's a' bheinn ?
 C'iod a tha 'boillsgeadh 's a' ghleann ?
 Co 'tha 'tighin mar shruth treun,
 130 'N uair chritheas fo 'n ré nach gann
 Mòr-uisge 'taomadh o chàrn ?

the light of his armour !

COMALA.—Stop, ye sons of the grave, till I behold my love ! He left me at the chase alone. I knew not that he went to war. He said he would return with the night ; the king of Morven is returned ! Why didst thou not tell me that he would fall ! O tremb-

Be thy "paley radiance" on the height,
 That the White-hand may behold her love
 115 In the dim sheening of his iron mail.

COVALA.

Lay not, ye race of the grave,
 Lay ye not my love aside.^a
 He left me hunting on the height.
 Unnoticed and unsung he went to war.
 120 "With night will I return," said the chief;
 And true, with night the king of Morven has re-
 Why not to me reveal, thou hoary one, [turned.
 Dwelling in rayless mountain-cave,
 That the king of shields would fall in death?
 125 Thou sawest, in his blood, the youth,
 And to Covala didst not tell the woe.

She beseeches those who are to build his tomb not to place him out of her sight; says that his promise to return "with night" had been too truly fulfilled; and reproaches some Druid or seer for not forewarning her of this great woe.

MELHUL-COVA.

What sound is on high on the Ben?
 What is it in the glen that gleameth?
 Who comes like a torrent strong,
 130 When shimmer 'neath the shining moon
 Great waters rolling from the rocky height?

Melhul-cova, bearing the noise of people advancing towards them, asks who they are.

ling dweller of the rock! Thou sawest him in the blood of his youth; but thou didst not tell Comala.

MELILCOMA.—What sound is that on ArIVEN? Who is that bright in the vale? Who comes like the strength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?

CAOMH-MHALA.

- Co ach an nàmhaid aig Caomh-mhal' ;
 Mae rìgh an domhain, 's a shluagh.
 A thannais Fhinn air neoil a' sgaoileadh,
 135 Greas iuthaidh Caomh-mhal' sìos gu luath ;
 Tuiteadh e mar fhiadh 's an aonach.—
 'S e Fionn a th'ann, measg tannais a shluaigh !
 C' uime thigeadh tu, mo luaidh,
 A chur sòlais 'us fuath orm féin ?

FIONNGHAL.

- 140 Togaibhse 'bheula nan dàn ;
 Togaibh gu h-àrd am blàr aig Carunn ;
 Theich Caracul, 's a shluagh o m' laimn ;
 Theich e thall thar raoin an àrdain.
 A ghaisgich, mar dhealain air sliabh,
 145 'Tha 'sgeadaachadh tannais na h-oidheche,
 'S e 'g aomadh ro' ghaoith o'n iar,
 'S a' choille chior mu-n cuairt a' boillsgeadh.
 Chualam guth nan aiteal thall
 O thaobh nan càrn 's am fiar-ghlinn féin.
 150 Ban-shealgair Ardbheinn, an i' th' ann,
 Nighean làmh-ghéal Sharno thréin ?
 Amhaire o d' charraig, mo rùn ;
 Chuinneam do ghuth ciuin, a Chaomh-mhal'.

COMALA.—Who is it but the foe of Comala, the son of the king of the world ! Ghost of Fingal ! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow. Let him fall like the hart of the desert. It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghosts. Why dost thou come, my love, to frighten and please my soul ?

FINGAL.—Raise, ye bards, the song ; raise the wars of the streamy

COVALA.

- Who but he that is Covala's foe ;
 The world-king's son, and his host !
 Thou shade of Fionn, reclining on the clouds,
 135 Speed Coval's arrow quickly down ;
 Fall he as a deer on the mountain.
 'Tis Fionn himself, 'mid the shades of his people.
 Why comest thou, my loved one,
 To bring to me both joy and fear ?⁶

FINGAL.

- 140 Raise ye, ye mouths of song,
 Raise on high the war at Carron !
 Fled Caracul and his hosts from my sword ;
 Fled he across the fields of pride ;
 His warriors like flashes on the heights,
 145 Which robe a spirit of night,
 As it yields to the western wind,
 And the darksome wood around is gleaming.
 The voice of breezes heard I far away,
 From side of cairns and their winding glens.
 150 The huntress of ArIVEN ! Is it she,
 White-handed daughter of Sarno brave ?
 Look down from thy rock, my love ;
 Let me hear thy low, sweet voice, Covala.

Covala, anticipating every woe, says it must be Caracul, her enemy. She prays for his death ; but recognising the form of Fingal, concludes it to be his spirit.

Fingal, ignorant of all that had taken place, calls on his bards to celebrate his victory at Carron.

He looks upwards, recognises Covala, and entreats her to speak to him.

Caru ! Caracul has fled from our arms along the fields of his pride. He sets far distant like a meteor, that encloses a spirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around. I heard a voice, or was it the breeze of my hills ? Is it the huntress of Ariven, the white-handed daughter of Sarno ? Look from thy rocks, my love ; let me hear the voice of Comala !

CAOMH-MHALA.

Tog mise gu còs do shuaine,
155 'Òg ghaisgich, a fhuair mo ghràdh.

FIONNGHAL.

Thig-sa féin gu còs mo shuaine ;
Sgaoil na stoirm, tha griau air an raou.
Thig-sa, 'digh, gu còs mo shuaine,
'Bhan-shealgair nam fuar-bheann faoin.

CAOMH-MHALA.

160 Thill e féin, 'us thill a chliu !
'S e làmh mo rùin 's mo thréin a th' ann :
Luidheamsa sìos air a' chùl,^a
Gus an till m' anam a nall
O eagal 'tha 'suàmh mu-n cuairt.
165 Buailibh clàrsach, togaibh dàn,
'Òighe nan rosg mall aig Morni.

^a *Cùl*—
“back,”
“support”—
here probably
meaning
“bank,” on
which she was
to lean.

DEARRSA-GRÉINE.

Le Caomh-mhala thuit trì féidh 's an fhraoch ;
Fo ghaoith tha teine 'g éirigh àrd.

COMALA.—Take me to the cave of thy rest, O lovely son of death !

FIONNGAL.—Come to the cave of my rest. The storm is past, the sun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my rest, huntress of echoing Ardvén !

COVALA.

Raise me to the eave of thy repose,
155 Young hero who hast gained my love.

FINGAL.

Come thou thyself to my eave of rest :
The storms are fled ; the sun is on the lea.
Come, thou maiden, to my cave of slumber,
Huntress of the cold (and) desert Bens.

COVALA.

160 He has returned. His fame has returned ;
The hand of my love and my brave one it is !
Let me recline upon the bank,^a
Until my soul again return
From the fearfulness which swims around (me).
165 Strike the harp, raise the song,
Maidens of Morni, of slow-moving eyelash !

DARSA-GRAINÈ.

Three deer have fallen to Covala on the heath ;
A wind-fanned fire is rising high.

COMALA.—He is returned with his fame ! I feel the right hand of his wars ! But I must rest beside the rock, till my soul returns from my fear ! O let the harp be near ! raise the song, ye daughters of Morni !

DERSAGRENA.—Comala has slain three deer on Ardven ; the fire

She, in the belief that it was his spirit which addressed her, begs of him to raise her to the cave of his rest.

He, misunderstanding her, invites her to come.

She, for a moment, rejoices in the return even of his spirit ; but finding "fearfulness" approaching her heart, calls on her companions to strike the harp.

Darsa-grainè, ignorant of the state of matters, tells Fingal that Covala had killed

a Of craggy
cairns ; lit.
of cairns not
smooth or
bald.

Gabh gu fleagh na h-òigh a's caoine,
170 A rìgh Mhòrbheinn nach maol càrn.^a

FIONNGHAL.

Togaibh guth, a shìol nam fonn,
Mu chòmh-stri nan sonn air Carunn ;
Biodh aoibhneas air làmh-gheal nan tom,
Nuair a chi mis' a fleagh air Àrdbeinn.

NA BÀIRD.

- 175 Taom, a Charuinn, taom do shruth ;
'An aoibhneas an diugh, siubhail sìos ;
Theich coigrich, a b' àirde guth ;
Cha-n fhaicear an steud-each s' an t-sliabh :
Tha sgaoileadh an sgiath 'an tìr thall.
- 180 Éiridh grian 'an sìth o nial,
'Us teuraidh an oidhch' 'au aoibhneas ;
Cluinnear guth na seilg air càrn ;
Ri balla thall bithidh sgiath nam fuaim ;
B'ìdh ar còmh-stri ri dàimh 'thig a nall
- 185 O thalamh nan Gall o thuath,
'S ar làmhan gu dearg 'am fuil Lochlin.
Taom, a Charuinn, taom do shruth ;
'An aoibhneas an diugh, siubhail sìos ;
Theich coigrich, a b' àirde guth.

ascends on the rock : go to the feast of Comala, king of the woolly Morven !

FINGAL.—Raise, ye sons of song, the wars of the streamy Carun ;
that my white-handed maid may rejoice : while I behold the feast of
my love !

BARDS.—Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled !

Go to the feast of the gentlest maid,
170 King of Morven of the craggy cairns.^a

FINGAL.

Raise a voice, ye race of tunes,
On the conflict of strong ones at Carron !
Be joy to the White-hand of hills,
When I behold her feast on Ardden.

THE BARDS.

175 Roll, O Carron, roll thy stream ;
In joy to-day do thou flow onward !
Fled have the strangers of haughtiest voice.
No more shall their war-horse be seen on the hill ;
The spread of their wings is in far-off land.
180 The sun will shine, in peace, from the cloud,
And night will come down in gladness.
The call of the chase will be heard on the cairn ;
Against the wall will hang the sounding shield.
Our strife will be with foes who come across
185 From the land of *Galls* in the north,
And our hands shall redden in blood of Lochlin.
Roll, O Carron, roll thy stream ;
In joy to-day do thou flow onward !
Fled have the strangers of haughtiest voice.

three deer; and invites him to the feast which she had prepared for him.

He, charging his bards as before, expresses his joy in going to her feast.

The bards celebrate the defeat of his enemies ; predict peace and joy in the land ;

anticipate war from the North only, which they did not, in the least, dread.

The steed is not seen on our fields ; the wings of their pride spread in other lands. The sun will now rise in peace, and the shadows descend in joy. The voice of the chase will be heard ; the shields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, our hands shall grow red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled !

MEALLSHÙIL-CHAOMH.

- 190 Teirinn, a cheò, o 'n tir àird ;
 A ghatha gealaich, togaibh suas
 Ciuin anam na h-dìgh, a b' àillidh,
 'Tha ri carraig 'n a luidhe gun tuar !
 Caomh-mhala, 's i fuar gun deò.

FIONNGHAL.

- 195 Am bheil nighean Sharno gun deò,
 Làmh-gheal do-m bu mhòr mo rùn ?
 Tachair rium, a Chaomh-mhal', fo seòd
 Air fraoch, fo cheò, 'us mi air chùl,
 'N uair shuidheam air sruth nam beamn,
 200 'S mi 'm aonar 'an àm na h-oidheche.

HIDEALAN.

An d'fhalbh guth na seilg o Àrdbheinn ?
 C' uime 'chuir mi 'm bruailleam air dìgh ?
 C' uine chi mi fo aoibhneas an làmh-gheal,
 'Am faoghaid fàsaich, mu-n iadh slòigh ?

FIONNGHAL.

- 205 'Òig, a's duibhe gnè 'us tuar,
 Cha-n fhaic o so suas am fleagh ;

MELILCOMA.—Descend, ye light mists from high ! Ye moon-beams, lift her soul ! Pale lies the maid at the rock ! Comala is no more !

FINGAL.—Is the daughter of Sarno dead ; the white-bosomed maid of my love ? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I sit

MELHUL-COVA.

190 Come down, O mist, from the land that is high ;
 Ye beams of the moon, raise aloft
 The gentle soul of the maid who was fairest,
 Now lying 'neath the rock in paleness !
 Covala, cold in death

Melhul-cova discovers that Covala had yielded in the trying scene, and calls on the moon-beams to raise the soul of her who now was cold in death.

FINGAL.

195 Is Sarno's daughter in death—
 White-hand, for whom my love was great ?
 Meet me, Covala, in (thy) cloud—
 On the heath in mist, and I alone,
 When I sit by the torrent of the Bens,
 200 Lonely, in the hour of night.

Fingal, in great grief, prays that her spirit may meet him when alone on the heath.

HIDALLAN.

Has the voice of the chase forsaken Arlven ?
 O why did I affray the maid ?
 When shall I see in joy the White-hand,
 Round whom the people crowd, in forest chase ?

Hidallan reproaches himself with the evil which he had wrought.

FINGAL.

205 Youth of blackest mood and hue,
 The feast thou henceforth ne'er shalt see ;

Fingal denounces him, and banishes

alone at the streams of my hills !

HIDALLAN.—Ceased the voice of the huntress of Arlven ? Why did I trouble the soul of the maid ? When shall I see thee, with joy, in the chase of the dark-brown hinds ?

FINGAL.—Youth of the gloomy brow ! no more shalt thou feast in

- Cha chuir leam an t-sleagh fo ruaig ;
 Cha togar leat buaidh air magh.
 As m' fhianuis, 'òig a's doireche snuadh.
- 210 Feuchar dhomh 'n a suain an òigh ;
 Faiccam ise 'b 'àillidh tuar.
 'S glas mo luaidh air taobh nan seòrr !
 Tha gaoth na h-oidhche fuar 'n a ciabh ;
 Tha 'taifeid 's an osaig a' fuaim ;
- 215 Bhris a saighead ri 'tuiteam air sliabh.
 Tog moladh na h-ainnir gun ghruaim,^a
 Nighean Sharno nan stuadh àrd ;
 Togar a h-ainm air gaoith nan speur.

^a Sunny maid ;
 lit. *the maid*
without gloom.

NA BÀIRD.

- Faic dealain a' lasadh mu 'n òigh !
- 220 Gathan na gealaich a' togail suas
 Caoim anama ainneir nan slògh !^b
 O na neoil 'tha dlùth mu-n cuairt
 Chithear tannais nan sonn a dh'fhalbh ;
 An sin tha Sàirn na mala donn,
- 225 'Us dearg-shùil Fhìdealain an laoch.
 C' uine dh' éireas an làmh-gheal o 'n tom ?
 C' uine chluinnear a guth 's an fhraoch ?
 Thig òighean g'a h-iarraidh 's an t-sliabh :
 Cha-n fhaigh iad ciabh a's àillidh snuadh.

^b The maid
 beloved of all ;
 lit. *the maid*
of the peoples,
or, of the hosts.

my halls. Thou shalt not pursue my chase, my foes shall not fall by thy sword. Lead me to the place of her rest, that I may behold her beauty. Pale she lies at the rock, the cold winds lift her hair. Her bow-string sounds in the blast, her arrow was broken in her fall. Raise the praise of the daughter of Sarno ! give her name to the winds of heaven !

- The spear with me thou ne'er shalt throw ;
 Conquest on field thou'lt never gain :
 Out of my sight, thou youth of darkest look !
- 210 Show me in her sleep the maid ;
 Behold I her of fairest mien.
 Wan is my love beside the rocks,
 Cold is the night-wind through her hair ;
 Her bow-string sounds in the breeze ;
- 215 Broke her arrow, as on the hill she fell.
 Raise the praise of the sunny maid,^a—
 Daughter of Sarno of the towering waves ;
 Let her name be raised on the wind of heaven.

THE BARDS.

- See, lightnings gleam around the maid !
- 220 The moonbeams raise on high
 The soul of the maid beloved of all.^b
 From the clouds that are dense around,
 Seen are the shades of the brave that are gone ;
 Sarno of dark-brown brow is there,
- 225 And the red eye of Fidallan the brave.^c
 When shall the White-hand arise from the mound ?
 When shall her voice be heard on the heath ?
 Maidens will come to seek her on the hill ;
 They shall not find the locks of loveliest hue.

him for ever
 from his pre-
 sence.

He goes to see
 Covala; de-
 scribes her
 appearance ;
 and calls on
 the bards to
 raise her name
 on the winds
 of heaven.

The Bards de-
 scribe the
 play of light-
 ning around
 her, and the
 moonbeams
 raising her
 spirit on high.
 The spirits of
 her father and
 of his friend
 Fidallan, are
 seen in the
 light.

The Bards de-
 scribe the
 soothing in-
 fluence which
 she would

BARDS.—See! meteors gleam around the maid! See! moon-
 beams lift her soul! Around her, from their clouds, bend the
 awful faces of her fathers; Sarno of the gloomy brow! the red-
 rolling eyes of Fidallan! When shall thy white hand arise?
 When shall thy voice be heard on our rocks? The maids shall
 seek thee on the heath, but they shall not find thee. Thou shalt

-
- 230 Chithear thu 'n aisling gu d' thrian,
'Chur sìth air an anam fo ghruaim.
Bithidh do ghuth 'n an chuais gu mall ;
Bi'dh an smaointean aoibhneach 's an t-shuain,
'Dh aisigeas an luaidh gu 'm beachd.
- 235 Faic dealain a' lasadh mu 'n òigh ;
Gathan na gealaich a' togail suas
Caoin anama ainnir nan slògh !
-

come at times to their dreams, to settle peace in their soul. Thy voice shall remain in their ears, they shall think with joy on the

- 230 In dream thou clearly shalt be seen,
 To give peace to the soul in gloom.
 Thy voice, in their ear, will be soft ;
 Their thoughts will be glad in the sleep
 Which, to their view, restores their loved one.
- 235 See, lightnings gleam around the maid !^s
 The moonbeams raise on high
 The gentle soul of the maid of the people.

exert on the
 minds of her
 companions
 when present
 in their
 dreams ; and
 conclude by
 again declar-
 ing that the
 moonbeams
 raised on high
 her gentle
 soul.

dreams of their rest. Meteors gleam around the maid, and moon-
 beams lift her soul !

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IN

C O V A L A.

ARD-VEN, *Àrd-bheinn*, "high mountain."

CARACUL, now written *garg-shùil*—of old, *carg* or *karg-shùil*, "fierce eye"—said, as in the "Argument," to have been the same with Caracalla, the son of Severus, the Roman emperor.—*Vide* Note.

CARRON, *Car-amhuinn*, or *Car-thoun*, "winding stream," a name still attached to a small river, well known in Scotland, near the town of Stirling. It formed, for a time, the boundary of the Roman province; and at a later period, of the territory of *Calutros*, inhabited by Britons, between whom and the men of Argyle frequent battles were fought.

COVALA, *Caomh-mhala*, "mild eyebrow," daughter of Sarno, king of *Innistore* or *Innistore*, one of the Orkney Islands, loving Fingal, and beloved by him. She is referred to in "Carriethura" as the love of Fro-hal, king of Sora.

CROXA, the name of a river; and probably refers to the murmuring sound of its waters. *Crònan* (Scotch, *croon*) signifies "a low, murmuring chant or song."

DARSA-GRAINÈ, *Dearrsa-gréine*, "sunshine," or "sunbeam."

FIDALLAN, *Fidealan*, one of the Fingalian heroes, whose ghost is seen along with that of Sarno, when the "moonbeams were raising on high" the spirit of Covala. He is called the first king of Innistore.

HIDALLAN, *Hiidealan*, son of Lamor (*Lámh-mhor*, "large hand"), loving Covala, rejected by her, and the cause of her death. The latter portion of his name, *dealan*, signifies "lightning."

MELHUL-COVA, *Meallshúil-chaomh*, "winning and mild eye," or "prominent and mild eye." She and Darsa-grainé were daughters of Morni, and companions of Covala.

MORVEN, *Mòr-bheinn*, or *Mòr-bheann*, "great mountains." With the very wonderful tact and taste which Macpherson shows in adapting Gaelic names to English tongues, he has given the name of Morven to the territories of Fingal, and the word has become now in a measure classical among the readers of Macpherson's translation. I have retained it in some instances, both because I am unwilling to break up associations so firmly established as those connecting Fingal with the kingdom of Morven, and also because Morven is a much more manageable word in a line than "the great mountains." At the same time I generally render the words literally "great mountains," or "great Bens," for unquestionably this is the true meaning; and the Gaelic gives not the slightest authority for confining Fingal's dominions to the district now known as Morven. Their only acknowledged boundaries were "the great Bens."

SARNO, father of Covala.

NOTES TO COVALA.

¹ "Covala, a Dramatic Poem."

Laing, the most inveterate opponent of Macpherson, is roused to absolute indignation by this title. He denounces the idea of "a Celtic drama performed in the Highlands in the third century," as "an outrageous fiction," &c., &c. And if we imagine the "Celtic drama" to imply all the complicated machinery of modern theatrical representation, we shall not feel inclined to dissent from his verdict.

But here, as in very many other instances, he fights with a mere shadow. He quarrels with words of Macpherson's invention—not with the subject-matter of the Ossianic poetry. Let any one look to the true character of this very plain little poem of less than two hundred and fifty lines, which pretends to nothing more than presenting a few incidents in the words of the various persons concerned in them, instead of giving them in an unbroken narrative spoken by one person, and he will see nothing in it inconsistent with the very simplest state of society—nothing whatever, but what is characteristic of our old Scotch, and English ballads as well.

It may not be uninteresting to show that in modern times, at least, Highlanders were familiar with the elements of the "drama" so far as the "acting of characters" for amusement was concerned. Mr John Clarke, an able writer on the Ossianic controversy, says, in a letter to Sir John Sinclair (July 27, 1806), "I remember when I was at Ruthven school with Mr Macpherson (when he was collecting the original Gaelic poems), to have gone with him to several *late wakes* in Badenoch, when it was customary for one person to represent one character, another a second, and so on, each person repeating their respective parts, just as our players do upon the stage."—Sir J. Sinclair's Dissertation, App., p. 232.

Testimony to the same effect is given by Mr Macleod, minister of

Glenelg, 'Highland Society's Report,' App., p. 29. And the late Rev. Dr Macleod of Glasgow, in describing the customs of the New Year in his youthful days, speaks of similar representations being common in Morven—*vide* 'Highland Parish,' by his son, the Rev. Dr Macleod of Glasgow, second edition, p. 333-355. Nay, to this day traces of the same habit may be seen throughout the country.

I must add to this long note, that Laing calls this unpretending little poem "an ambitious imitation of the Song of Solomon, with a chorus of bards from Caractacus"! Farther, he traces the simple question, "Who fell on Carun's sounding banks?" &c., to Song of Solomon, viii. 5, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness?" and *id.*, vi. 10, "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners?" Again, "Was he white as the snows of Arden?" to Song, v. 10, "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand."—(Laing's 'Ossian,' p. 219. The italics are his own.) In view of scores of similar proofs of plagiarism, Fluellen's arguments for the identity of Macedon and Monmouth appear rational and conclusive!

² "Caracul has conquered in the war."

A great deal has been made of Macpherson's applying this name to the son of the Roman emperor, Severus. "The absurdity," says Laing, "was remarked by Gibbon, that the Highland bard should describe the son of Severus by a nickname invented four years afterwards (*i. e.*, after the battle of Carron), scarcely used by the Romans themselves till after the death of that emperor, and seldom employed by the most ancient historians." Now there is a considerable amount of "absurdity" in this objection, formidable as it seems.

The battle of Carron was fought before Ossian was born. He was old when he wrote these poems. We must suppose an interval of seventy or eighty years between the battle and the description of it by him. Is it not most likely that a nickname given to the emperor would, during that period, travel across the Roman wall to the neighbouring Caledonians? The objection supposes the description to have been written before the author was born.

But it is said, in further proof of the spuriousness of this passage, that it speaks of *Caracul*, "fierce eye;" whereas the emperor's actual nickname was "Caracalla," which referred to a "short tunic adopted by him from the Gauls." Here also the charge rests on mere ignorance. Macpherson translates *Caracul* by "fierce eye," and it is the most obvi-

ous explanation. At the same time it may be translated "short tunic" or "dress." The word now written *gearr* was of old written with a hard *c* or *k*—*kearr* or *curr*—and signifies "short," while *culaidh* (pronounced *kull*), signifies "dress" or "covering." *A* and *u* were, and are still, constantly interchanged in Celtic. Thus the two names seem to be in reality the same, and all that can be said is, that Macpherson may have erred in translating the words into English.

Other answers could be given to this very frivolous objection; but I hasten to conclude by saying that I do not for a moment suppose that the mere mention in this poem, whether of Caracul or Caracalla, affords by itself any historic ground for maintaining that Fingal fought with the son of Severus either at Carron or elsewhere. But I think it of importance to show that very many of the objections brought against the genuineness and antiquity of these poems are altogether inconclusive, and unworthy of any fair criticism.

³ "Where is Fingal, *thy* love?"

In the Gaelic of the three editions before me, and also in the Latin of Macfarlan, it is "*my* love." This is, however, an obvious error, substituting *my* for *thy*. In the preceding part of the poem, 'Melhul-cova,' the speaker here, recognises Fingal as Covala's love. She could not then speak of him as her own. I have changed the *m* into *d* to free the line from inconsistency with the rest of the poem. The line immediately preceding this is, in the original, very elliptical and obscure—

"On the plain where was the promise of her lord."

I have given what seems to be the full meaning:

"On plain of *meeting* promised by her lord;"

and I have to make a similar remark regarding line 43, literally—

"The plain where was his promise after rout;"

which I have rendered—

"The plain of promised *meeting* after rout of *foes*."

⁴ Macpherson says that Hidallan was sent by Fingal to give notice to Covala of his return; but that, out of revenge for her having slighted his love, he told that the king had been killed in battle.

⁵ "Carron of banks."—This description is frequently applied to rivers, but, though it is sanctioned by Homeric precedent, I must, with

all reverence, say that it does not appear in any way graphic or distinctive, as all rivers have banks.

⁶ "To bring to me both joy and fear."

"A chur sòlais, 'us fuath orm féin."

Fuath, in modern Gaelic, signifies "hatred." Of old it seems to have signified "terror," and the two emotions are closely allied. We have the derivative *fuathus*, "terror," which, by a natural transition, is applied to what inspires terror. Thus in Ossian and the old tales we have both *fuathas* and *fuath* applied to "spectres" and "goblins." In the line before us, "fear" is evidently the meaning.

⁷ "The red eye of Fidallan the brave ;"

and line 229—

"They shall not find *the locks of loveliest hue*,"

instead of

"The *maid of the locks*," &c.

Such instances of synecdoche as this are very frequent, not only in Celtic poetry, but in the ordinary everyday conversation of Highlanders. Thus, speaking of a generous, open-handed man, the common expression is, "B'e sin làmh na faoilte"—"that was the *hand* of generosity ;" or of a fine singer, "B'e sin beul a' bhinneis"—"that was the *mouth* of melody."

⁸ "See lightnings gleam around the maid ;

The moonbeams raise on high

The gentle soul of the maid of the people."

I can give no explanation of the truly beautiful scene here described ; but I may remark that, to the present day, the meteors known as "shooting-stars" are called by the name of *dreag*—*i.e.*, *druì-eug*, "Druid's death,"—implying the belief that the souls of that once powerful priesthood were borne on high in chariots of heavenly light ; and possibly the same distinction may have been considered due to souls as gentle and pure as was that of Covala.

CARRIC - THURA

A R G U M E N T.

“Fingal, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, resolved to visit Cathulla, King of Inistore, and brother to Comala, whose story is related at large in the preceding dramatic poem. Upon his coming in sight of Carric-thura, the palace of Cathulla, he observed a flame on its top, which, in those days, was a signal of distress. The wind drove him into a bay, at some distance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to pass the night on the shore. Next day he attacked the army of Frothal, King of Sora, who had besieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Frothal himself prisoner, after he had engaged him in a single combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the subject of the poem ; but several other episodes are interwoven with it. It appears from tradition that this poem was addressed to a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries, and that the story of the *Spirit of Loda*, supposed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Ossian in opposition to the Culdee’s doctrine. Be this as it will, it lets us into Ossian’s notions of a superior being ; and shows that he was not addicted to the superstition which prevailed, all the world over, before the introduction of Christianity.”—M.

CARRAIG-THURA.

- AN d' fhàg thu gorm-astar nan speur,
 A mhic gun bheud, a 's òr-bhuidh ciabh ?
 Tha dorsan na h-oidheche dhuit féin,
 Agus pàilliuin do chlos 's an iar.
 5 Thig na stuaidh mu-n cuairt gu mall,
 A choimhead fir a's glaine gruaidh ;
 A' togail fo eagal an ceann :
 Ri d' fhaicinn cho àillidh 'n ad shuain,
 Theich iadsan gun tuar o d' thaobh.^a
 10 Gabhsa cadal ann ad chòs,
 A ghrian ! 'us till o d' chlos le h-aoibhneas.

- “ Togar mìle solus suas,
 Ri fuaim 'tha sèimh o chlàrsaich ghrim ;
 Dìisg sòlas 'an talla nan stuadh ;
 15 Thill rìgh nam buadh le 'shluagh gu 'thìr.
 Tha còmh-stri Charuinn fada uainn,
 Mar fhuaim nach chuinnear na 's mò ;
 Togadh bàird a' chiuil an duain ;
 Thill gaisgeach nam buadh le 'chliù.”^b

^a Wan ; lit.
 without col-
 our.

^b Peerless ;
 lit. of victories,
 of virtues, or,
 of high quali-
 ties.

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

CARRIC-THURA.

- HAST thou left the blue sweep of the heavens,
 Son without blemish, of gold-yellow hair? ¹
 The gates of the night are thine own,
 And in the west the tent of thy repose.
- 5 The waves come slowly around,
 To gaze on him of purest face,
 Raising, in awe, their heads ;
 At seeing thee, so beautiful in thy slumber,
 Fled they, all wan, from thy side. ^a ²
- 10 Take thou sleep in thy cave,
 O Sun ! and return from thy rest in joy.

- “Lifted up be a thousand lights
 To the sweet sound of the pleasant harp ;
 Awaken joy in the hall of towers, [his land.
- 15 Returned has the matchless king with his host to
 The conflict of Carron is far away,
 Like a sound which shall be heard no more.
 Let bards of music raise their lays ;
 Returned has the conquering hero with his fame.” ^b

Address to the
 Sun.

Ullin bids
 them celebrate
 the victorious
 return of Fin-
 gal.

be in joy.

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

- 20 Mar sin bha focail Uilin chaoin,
 'N uair thill an rìgh o raon nan triath,
 Le 'leadan trom a b' àillidh ciabh.
 Bha 'mhàile ghorm mu cheann an t-suinn,
 Mar neul nach trom air agbaidh gréin',
 25 'N uair ghluaiseas e 'n a éideadh donn,
 A' feuchainn leth a shoills' 's an speur.
 Bha 'ghaisgich threun 'an déigh an rìgh ;
 Bha fleagh na slige fial an àird.^a
 Thionndaidh Fionn ri luchd 'bu bhinn,
 30 'Us dh'iarr am fonn o shonn nam bàrd.

^a Freely ; lit.
 on high.

- “ A glutha Chòna, 's àirde fuaim,
 A bhàrda, 'tha 'luaidh mu aois,
 Do-n éirich, air ur n-anam suas,
 Feachda mòr nan gòrm-chruaidh laoch.
 35 'S taitneach leam aoibhneas a' bhròin,
 Mar dhrùchd mòthar carraich chaoin,
 Fo-n lùb geug dharaig nan tòrr,
 'S an duilleach òg ag éiridh maoth.
 Togailbhse, mo bhàird, an fonn ;
 40 Am màireach bithidh long fo sheòl ;
 Bithidh m' astar 'an gorm-ghleann nan tonn,^b
 Gu carraig nan sonn, 's nan seòd,
 Baile uaine Sharno fhial,
 A Chaomhmhala nan ciabh, do chòmhnuidh,

^b Green or
 blue.

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

- 20 Such were the words of Ullin bland,
 When the king returned from the field of chiefs,
 With his heavy hair of graceful curl.
 His blue helm was on the warrior's head,
 Like a light cloud on face of the sun,
 25 When he moves in his dusky raiment,
 Showing but half his light in the sky.
 His men of might were behind the king ;
 The feast of the shell was freely (spread).^a
 Turned Fionn to the tuneful choir,
 30 And asked a strain from the chief of bards.

Description of
 Fingal.

- “Voices of Cona of highest sound,
 Ye bards who discourse of Eld,
 Before whose souls arise
 The great hosts of blue-mailed warriors,
 35 Pleasing to me is the joy of grief,
 Like the soft rich dew of balmy spring,
 Under which bends the oak-branch on the knolls,
 When the young leaves are softly unfolding.
 Raise ye, my bards, the song ;
 40 To-morrow a ship will be under sail ;
 My path will be in the green glen of waves,^b
 To the rock of the strong and the brave,
 The dwelling green of generous Sarno,
 Thy home, Covala of wavy locks,

Fingal calls on
 his bards to
 sing.

Voices of echoing Cona ! he said : O bards of other times ! Ye, on whose souls the blue hosts of our fathers rise ! strike the harp in my hall ; and let me hear the song. Pleasant is the joy of grief ! it is like the shower of spring, when it softens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf rears its green head. Sing on, O bards ! to-morrow we lift the sail. My blue course is through the ocean,

45 Far an sgaoileadh Cathul, an triath,
 A' chuirn air an t-sliabh le mòr-chuis ;
 'S lionmhor 'n a choille tuire chiar :
 Cluinnidh doire nan sian an t-sealg.

“ A Chrònain, a mhie nan caoin fhonn,
 50 A Mhìn -fhonn nach trom air clàrsaich,
 Togaibh sgeul air Silrie donn,
 Do rìgh nam mòr thom, 's nam fàsach.
 Thigeadh a' Bhinnbheul a's àillidh,
 Mar bhogha braoin, a nall 's a' ghleann,
 55 'N uair dh'fhuchas e 'cheann 's an àirde,
 'S a' ghrian a' dol air chùl nam beann.”
 “ 'Sud an òigh, a rìgh nan lann,
 Le guth fann, 'us i fo bhròn.”

BINNBEUL.

“Tha mo rùn de shinn's're nan sliabh ;
 60 'S e sàr shealgair nan ciar àrd ;
 Tha 'mhiol-choin a' plogadh r'a thaobh,
 A thaifeid chaol 's a' ghaoith a' fuaim.
 'N do shuidh thu aig fuaran nan càrn,
 No aig mòr-shruth àrd an aonaich ?
 65 Tha 'n luachair ag aomadh fo osaig,
 An ceathach a' mosgladh 's an t-sliabh ;

to Carrië-thura's walls ; the mossy walls of Sarno, where Comala dwelt. There the noble Cathulla spreads the feast of shells. The boars of his woods are many ; the sound of the chase shall arise !

Cronan, son of the song ! said Ullin ; Minona, graceful at the harp ! raise the tale of Silrie, to please the king of Morven. Let Vinvela come in her beauty, like the showery bow, when it shows

45 Where spreads Ca-hul, the hero,
 His feast on the hill with bounty.
 Many, in his woods, are the tawny boars ;
 The copse of storms will hear the chase.

“ Cronan, thou son of sweet songs,
 50 Minona, who lightly sweepest the harp,
 Raise ye a tale of brown-haired Silric,
 For the king of great hills and deserts :
 Let Binvela, the beautiful, come
 Like a rainbow over the glen,
 55 When it shows its head on high,
 And the sun goes behind the mountains.”
 “ There is the maiden, king of swords,
 With feeble voice and sorrow-laden.”

BINVELA.

“ My love is from forefathers of the hills ;³
 60 True hunter is he of the dark-brown heights ;
 His stag-hounds are panting by his side,
 His slender bow-string sounding in the wind.
 Hast thou sat by the cold spring of cairns,
 Or at the great stream high on the mountain ?
 65 The rushes are bending under the blast ;
 The mist is wakening on the hill.

Calls on Cronan and Minona to sing the tale of Silric and Binvela.

Minona, personifying Binvela, declares her admiration of Silric.

its lovely head on the lake, and the setting sun is bright. She comes, O Fingal ! her voice is soft but sad.

VINVELA.—My love is a son of the hill. He pursues the flying deer. His grey dogs are panting around him ; his bow-string sounds in the wind. Dost thou rest by the fount of the rock, or by the noise of the mountain-stream ? The rushes are nodding to the wind,

Tàirneam air mo rùn fo seled,
 'Us chitheam an seòd o 'n chruaich.
 'N uair chunnam na h-àig-fhìr shuas
 70 Aig daraig Bhràno, 's fuaimear sruth,
 Thill thu 'n sin gu mòr o 'n bheinn;
 'S mòr a b' àillidh thu féin na d' shluagh!"

SILRIC.

"C' e 'n guth so 'tha caoin 'am chluais,
 An guth caoin mar fhuaim an t-sambraidh?
 75 Cha suidh mi aig luachair nan cruach.
 No aig tobar fuar nan càrn.
 Fada, 'Bhinnbheul, fada thall,
 Tha m' astar gu blàr le Fionnghal;
 Cha-n 'eil mo choin féin ri m' thaobh,
 80 No mo cheum air fraoeh nan gleann.
 Cha-n fhaic mi o àird nan sliabh
 Sàr ainmhir nan ciabh air an raon,
 Aig aomadh nan sruth, leatha féin,
 Mar bhogha 'lùbadh 's an speur,
 85 No gealach air tuinn 's an iar."

BINNBHEUL.

"Dh'fhalbh thu, 'Shilric, dh'fhalbh thu féin,
 'S tha mise 's a' bheinn 'am aonar!"

the mist flies over the hill. I will approach my love unseen; I will behold him from the rock. Lovely I saw thee first by the aged oak of Branno; thou wert returning tall from the chase; the fairest among thy friends.

SILRIC.—What voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer wind! I sit not by the nodding rushes; I hear not

Under the wreath draw I near my love,
 And I shall see the hero from the peak.
 When I beheld the young men on high,
 70 At Brano's oak of sounding streams,
 Thou didst return then stately from the Ben.
 Fairer than thy people far wert thou."

SILRIC.

"What voice is this, sweet in my ear—
 Voice sweet as the sound of summer?
 75 I shall not sit 'mong rushes on the heights,
 Nor at the cold spring of cairns;
 Far, Binvela, far away
 With Fingal is my path to battle.
 My own dogs are not by my side,
 80 Nor my step on the heath of the glens.
 I will not behold, from height of hills,
 The peerless wavy-haired maiden on the plain,
 By the fall of the streams all alone,
 Like the bow that bends in the sky,
 85 Or the moon on wave of the west."

BINVELA.

"Thou hast gone, Silric, thou hast gone,
 And I, in the mountain, am all alone.

Cronan, personifying Silric, answers that he must depart to distant wars with Fingal, and laments his separation from Binvela.

She describes her own loneliness after his departure.

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 Silric! I am alone on the

- Chithear am fiadh air a' chruaich
 Gun duine 'g a ruaig o 'n fheur ;
 90 Cha-n 'eil eagal na 's mò anns a' ghaoith,
 'S cha-n 'eil fuaim nan craobh r'a chluais.
 O 'n doire tha sealgair nach faoin ;
 Tha esan 'an raon nan uaigh.
 A choigrich, a shìol nan tomn,
 95 Caomhnaibhs' an sonn 's a' bhlàr !”

SILRIC.

- “ Ma thuiteas mi 's a' mhagh, a Bhinnbheul,
 Togsa dìleas gu h-àrd m' uaigh ;
 Clachan glas, 'us meall de 'n iùr,
 'N an comhara do d' rùn, a Bhinnbheul.
 100 'N uair shuidheas an sealgair ri m' thaobh,^a
 'Us cuirm, 's e faoin, 'n a làimh,
 ‘Tha gaisgeach,’ their e, ‘s an fhraoch,
 Fear-clìù, nach robh baoh 's a' bhlàr.’
 Cuimhnich, a Bhinnbheul, do laoch,
 105 'Us e 'an tigh caol a' bhàis !”

BINNBHEUL.

- “ 'S ceart gu-n cuimhnichear thu féin :
 Tuitidh Silric, mo threun, 's a' bhlàr.
 C' ait am faighear mi, 'rùn, 's a' bheinn,
 'S nach till thu o bheum a' bhàis ?

hill ! The deer are seen on the brow ; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind ; no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed ; he is in the field of graves. Strangers ! sons of the waves ! spare my lovely Silric !

SILRIC.—If fall I must in the field, raise high my grave, Vin-vela. Grey stones, and heaped-up earth, shall mark me to future

^a By my side
 —i. e. by my
 grave.

The deer is seen on the height,
 And none to scare him from the grass ;
 90 Fear is no longer in the wind,
 Nor rustling of trees in his ear.
 From the wood is the crafty hunter gone,
 He is now in the field of graves.
 Ye strangers of the race of waves,
 95 Spare ye the hero in battle !”

SILRIC.

“ If I fall in the field, Binvela,
 Build thou faithfully on high my tomb ;
 Grey stones and a mound of earth
 Be the marks of thy love, Binvela.
 100 When the hunter sits by my side,^a
 His food, all idly, in his hand—
 ‘ A hero,’ he will say, ‘ is in the heath ;
 A man of fame, who was not slack in battle.’
 Remember, Binvela, thy brave one,
 105 And him in the narrow house of death.”

BINVELA.

“ In sooth remembered thou shalt be.
 Fall shall Silric, my brave one, in battle.
 Where shall I be found, O love, in the mountain,
 Since thou wilt not return from the stroke of death ?

and prays that
 the foe may
 spare him in
 battle.

He, foresee-
 ing his fall,
 charges her to
 build on high
 his tomb.

She promises
 to keep him
 in remem-
 brance.

times. When the hunter shall sit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, “ Some warrior rests here,” he will say ; and my fame shall live in his praise. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie !

VINVELA.—Yes ! I will remember thee. Alas ! my Shilric will fall ! What shall I do, my love ! when thou art for ever gone ?

- 110 Bithidh m' astar 'an gleannaibh nan cruach,
 'N uair dh' islicheas shuas a' ghrian ;
 Bithidh mo cheum o aistridh an t-sluaigh ;
 Gu dìomhair 's gun tuar 's an t-sliabh ;
 Chithear leam àite do shuain
- 115 'An àm tionndaidh o ruaig na seilg.
 'S eart gu-n tuit Silric 's a' bhlàr ;
 Ach cuimhuichear an sàr leam féin."

- “'S cuimhne leamsa féin an triath,”
 Thuirt rìgh nan coill' àrd 's nan sliabh :
- 120 “Chaitheadh leis còmhrag 'n a fheirg ;
 Cha-n 'eil e 's an t-seilg fo m' shùil.
 Chunnacas e aon uair 's a' bhlàr ;
 Bha gruaidh an tréin fo smal gun tuar,
 A mhala dorch', 'us spàirn a chléibh
- 125 Gu luath, 's a cheum gu h-àird nan cruach.
 Cha-n fhaiccar e am measg nan triath,
 'N uair dh'éireas air an sgiath am fuaim.
 'N do luadh e 'n tigh caol 'tha ciar,
 Sàr cheannard shliabh a's duibhe gruaim ?”
- 130 “A Chrònain,” thuirt Ullin aosda,
 “Togsa dàn nach faoin air Silric,
 'N uair thill e le buaidh o 'n raon,
 An déigh Binnbheul, a ghaol, 'bhi ìosal.

Through these hills I will go at noon : I will go through the silent heath. There I will see the place of thy rest, returning from the chase. Alas ! my Shilric will fall ; but I will remember Shilric.

And I remember the chief, said the king of woody Morven ; he consumed the battle in his rage. But now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day, on the hill ; his cheek was pale ; his brow was

- 110 My path shall be in glens of the heights,
 When the sun shall go down from on high ;
 My step shall be far from the path of the crowd ;
 In secret, and paleness, on the hill ;
 I shall see the place of thy slumber,
- 115 When returning from following the chase.
 It is certain that Silric in battle shall fall :
 But remembered by me shall be the noble one."

" Full well do I remember the chief,"
 Said the king of lofty woods and hills.

- 120 " He devoured the combat in his wrath ;
 He is not in the hunt beneath my eye.
 Once was he seen in the conflict ;
 Clouded and pale was the face of the brave ;
 Dark was his brow ; the labouring of his chest
- 125 Was quick, and his step (was) to the mountain-height.
 He will not be seen among the chiefs,
 When from their shield shall rise the sound.
 Has he lain in the narrow dusky house,
 The great mountain chief of darkest frown ?"

- 130 " Cronan," says Ullin, the agèd,
 " For Silric do thou raise a worthy song.
 When he returned with conquest from the field,
 After his love Binvela was laid low,

Fingal gives
 his own recol-
 lections of the
 hero, Silric.

Ullin calls
 upon Cronan
 to relate the
 fate of Silric
 after the death
 of Binvela.

dark. The sigh was frequent in his breast : his steps were towards the desert. But now he is not in the crowd of my chiefs, when the sounds of my shields arise. Dwells he in the narrow house, the chief of high Carmora ?

Cronan ! said Ullin of other times, raise the song of Silric ; when he returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned

a Full in view ;
lit. *to her*
back.

- Dh'aom e ri cloich ghlais a rùin ;
135 Bha Binnbheul 'n a smaointean bed.
Chunnaic e 'n ainnir gu 'eùl,^a
'S a' ghleannan chiuim, 's b' àluinn a seled ;
Ach shiubhail, mar cheò, an sàmhla.
Dh' fhalbh dearrsa na gréine o 'n raon,
140 Cha-n fhaicear a cruth faoin na 's mò."

b Waves of
shadow, &c. ;
lit. *dark*
waves in their
chase over the
heath.

- " Tha mi 'm shuidh' aig fuaran fuar
Air mullach na cruaiiche fo ghaoith,
Aona chraobh 's an osaig a' fuaim,
Tuinn dhoreh' 'n an ruaig 's an fhraoch.^b
145 Tha bruailleam air an liune thall,
Féidh a' tighin o chàrn gu raon.
Cha-n fhaicear ceum sealgair, 's e mall ;
Tha sàmhchair 's a' ghleann, 's e faoin.
'S trom an osna, 's truime smaoin.

c Floating ;
lit. *swimming.*

- 150 Na-m faicinn mo ghaol 's an t-sliabh
Air seachran 'an astar an fhraoich,
A' snàmh air a' ghaoith a ciabh,^c
A broilleach bàn ag éirigh àrd,
A sùil ghorm mu 'càirdean làn,

d Hid, &c.—
i.e. dead.

- 155 A cheileadh le ceò nan càrn :^d
Ghabhainn thu, a rùin, 'am chòir,
'S bheirinn thu gu còmhnuidh d'athar.
An i féin a chi mi fada thall,

on her grey mossy stone ; he thought Vinvela lived. He saw her fair moving on the plain : but the bright form lasted not : the sun-beam fled from the field, and she was seen no more. Hear the song of Shilrie ; it is soft but sad !

I sit by the mossy fountain ; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descend from the hill. No

He leaned against the grey stone of his love ;
 135 Binvela was, in his thoughts, alive.
 He saw the maiden full in view ^a
 In the peaceful glen, and lovely was her form ;
 But vanished, like mist, the vision.
 The sunshine forsook the plain ;
 140 Her empty shade shall be seen no more."

" I sit at the cold, cold spring,
 On the crest of the hill in the wind ;
 One tree (is) sounding in the blast ;
 Waves of shadow are coursing over the heath.^b
 145 Yonder there is tumult on the lake ;
 Deer pass on from cairn to plain ;
 The step of the wary hunter is not seen ;
 Silence is in the empty glen.
 Heavy the sigh, and heavier is the thought.
 150 Were I to see my love on the mountain,
 Wandering midst the range of the heather,
 Floating on wind her waving hair,^c
 Her white bosom heaving high,
 Her blue eye filled for her friends,
 155 Who are hid by the mist of the heights^d—
 I would take thee, O love, close unto me !
 I would bring thee to thy father's home.
 Is it herself I see afar,

Cronan does
 so, speaking
 in the name of
 Silric.

hunter at a distance is seen. It is mid-day, but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love ! a wanderer on the heath ! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee ; thy bosom heaving on the sight ; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill 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

- Mar dhearrsa air càrn an fhraoich ?
 160 Mar ghealach an fhoghair 's i làn ;
 Mar ghréin 'an stoirm an t-sùmhraidh, caoin ?
 An tig thu, 'òigh a's àillidh ciabh,
 Thar carraig 'us sliabh 'am dhàil ?
 'S fann do ghuth, 'ainnir nan triath,
 165 Mar chuisseig, 's a' ghaoth m' a ceann."

"N do thill mo ghaisgeach o 'n bhàr ?
 C' àit' an d' fhàg do chàird', a rùn ?
 Chualam mu d' bhàs air a' chàrn ;
 Chuala, 's bha m' anam fo mhùig."

- 170 "Thill mi, 'ainnir nan rosg mall ;
 Thill mise de thréith 'am aon ;^a
 Cha-n fhaicear o so iad 's an t-sliabh ;
 Thogadh leam an uaigh 's a' bhàr.
 C' arson tha thu 'd aonar shuas ;
 175 Air iomall nan cruach leat féin ?"

"'Am aonar tha mis', a Shilrie ;
 'Am aonar, Ìosal 'an tigh gearbraidh ;
 Le bròn thuit mi mu mo luaidh,
 Gun tuar anns an uaigh, a Shilrie !"

- 180 Dh'fhalbh i mar fhailcus fo ghaoith,
 Mar cheò air an fhraoch 'an gruaim.

^a Alone ; lit.
in my one.

heath ; bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer storm ? Comest thou, O maid ! over rocks, over mountains to me ? She speaks ; but how weak her voice ! like the breeze in the reeds of the lake.

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

Like sunbeam on the heathy cairn ;
 160 Like the moon of harvest when full ;
 Like the sun smiling through a summer storm ?
 Wilt thou come, O maid of loveliest hair !
 Over rocks and hills to my side ?
 Faint is thy voice, daughter of chiefs,
 165 Like mountain-grass with wind around its head."

"Has my brave one returned from the battle ?
 Where hast thou left thy friends, my love ?
 I heard of thy death on the mountain ;
 I heard, and my soul was under sadness."

170 "Returned have I, maid of slow-moving eyelids ;⁴
 Returned I am, of the chiefs, alone."⁵
 No more on the hill shall they be seen ;
 Raised by me was their tomb on the field.
 Why art thou lonely on the heights ;
 175 On the skirts of the mountains, alone ?"

"Alone I am, O Silric !
 Alone, and lowly, in the house of winter.
 With grief for my love I fell,
 Fading into the grave, O Silric !"

180 She passed like a shadow before the wind,
 Like mist that darkens over the heath.

He sees Bin-
 vela's form,
 and calls her
 to his side.

She asks if he
 has returned
 from the war,
 and says that
 she had
 mourned for
 his death.

He tells that
 he alone of
 the chiefs had
 returned, and
 asks why she
 is alone on the
 mountains.

She answers
 that she had
 died from love
 to him, and
 passes away
 as a shadow.

thee, Silric ! 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 Silric ! alone in the winter-house. With grief
 for thee I fell. Silric, I am pale in the tomb.

She fleets, she sails away ; as mist before the wind ! And wilt

- “ Nach fan thu, 'Bhinnbheul, 's tu faoin ?
 Fan, 'us faic mo dheoir, 's mi truagh.
 Is àluinn do chruth ann an ceò,
 185 B' àluinn thu ri d' bheò, a Binnbheul.
 Suidhidh mi aig fuaran fuar
 Air mullach na cruaiche 'an gaoith
 'Am meadhon là, 'us e gun fhuaim,
 Labhair-sa, mo luaidh, 's an fhraoich.
 190 Thig-sa 'Binnbheul, air an osaig,
 Air aiteal 'an dosan nan càrn ;
 Cluinneam do ghuth, 'us tu 'm fhochar,
 Air meadhon là 'an sàmhchair thall.”

- Measg aoibhneis 'an talla nam fear,
 195 Mar so thog Crònna an fonn ;
 Dh'éirich maduinn a' soills' o 'n ear ;
 Bu ghorm air an lear an tonn.
 Ghairm an rìgh a shiùil gu erann ;
 Thàinig gaoth a nall o 'n chruaich ;
 200 Dh'éirich Innis-thore gu mall,
 'Us Carraig-Thùra, iùil nan stuadh.
 Bha comhara beud gu h-àrd,
 Teine dall, 's a thaobh 'an smùid !
 Bhual an rìgh a chliabh air ball ;
 205 Gun dàil bha 'gharbh shleagh o 'chùil ;
 Chummaic e gun chlàth a' ghaoth ;

thou not stay, Vinvela? stay and behold my tears! Fair thou appearest, Vinvela! fair thou wast, when alive!

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

- “ Wilt thou not stay, Binvela, all faint ?
 Stay, see my tears, and me forlorn.
 Beautiful is thy form in the mist,
 185 Beautiful wert thou in thy life, Binvela.
 I will sit by the cold, cold spring,
 On the crown of the crag in the wind.
 At noon of day, when sound is none,
 Speak thou, my love, in the heath.
 190 Come thou, Binvela, on the breeze ;
 On a breath in the wood of cairns ;
 Let me hear thy voice by my side,
 At noon of day, and silence around.”

- Amid joy in the hall of men,
 195 Thus Cronan raised the song.
 Morning rose, in brightness, from the east ;
 Blue on the plain (of ocean) was the wave.
 Called the king his sails to the mast ;
 A wind came over from the height ;
 200 Rose Innis-Tore up slowly (from the sea),
 And Carric-Thura, landmark of the waves.
 A sign of evil was on high—
 A murky fire, and wreathed in smoke.
 Smote the king his breast at the sight,
 205 Straightway brought his great spear from his back.
 He saw the wind devoid of strength ;

He calls on her to stay, and prays her to speak to him in the silence of noon.

The night was passed in song ; morn arose ; Fingal set sail with his army for Carric-Thura. Coming in sight of it, a beacon-fire was seen on the summit of the rock—a sign of distress. The wind failed.

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

Bha 'leadan air a chùl a' strì ;
 Cha robh sàmhchair an rìgh faoin.

- Thuit oidhch' air Rotha nan stuadh ;
- 210 Ghabh cala nan cruach an long ;
 Bha carraig mu iomall a' chuain ;
 Dh' aom coille thar fuaim nan tonn.
 Air mullach bha cròm Chruth-Lòduinn,
 'Us clachan mòr' nan iomadh buadh ;
- 215 Air ìosal bha raon gun mhòrchuis,^a
 Agus fear 'us craobh ri euan—
 Craobh a bluain a' ghaoth, 's i àrd,
 O iomall nan càrn gu raon ;
 Bha gorm-shiubhal nan sruthan thall,
- 220 'Us osag mhall o chuan 'bha faoin.
 Dh' éirich gath o dharaig léith ;
 Bha fleagh nan triath air an flraoch ;
 Bha bròn air anam rìgh nan sgiath,
 Mu cheannard charraig chiar nan laoch.
- 225 Dh' éirich ré gu mall 'us fann ;
 Thuit suain nach gann mu cheann nan triath ;
 Bha 'n elogaidean a' boillsgeadh thall ;
 Bha 'n teine 'call a neart 's an t-sliabh.
 Cha robh cadal mu shùil an rìgh ;
- 230 Dh' éirich e 'am farum a chruaidh,
 A shealladh air carraig nan stuagh.

^a A narrow plain ; lit. plain without grandeur.

he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is disordered on his back. The silence of the king is terrible !

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

His hair behind his shoulders strove ;
Not causeless was the silence of the king.

- Fell night on Rotha of the waves :
210 The cliff-girt bay received the ship.
There was a rock at the marge of ocean ;
A wood leaned over the sound of the waves ;
On the summit was the circle of Cru-Lodin,
And the great stones of many powers ;
215 Beneath was a narrow plain,^a
Grass, and a tree by ocean's side—
A tree which the blast had reaped when high,
From the edge of the rocks to the plain ;
Beyond was the blue moving of streams,
220 And a breeze slow and faint from ocean.
Arose a light from an oak-log grey ;
The feast of chiefs was on the heath ;
(But) grief was on the soul of the king of shields,
For the chief of dark Carrick of heroes.
- 225 Slow the moon arose, and feeble ;
Fell sleep abundant on the warriors' heads ;
Their helmets gleamed against the light ;
The fire was losing its strength on the hill.
No sleep was on the eye of the king ;
230 He rose 'mid the clang of his armour ;
His eye on Carrick of the waves.

He was obliged
to pass the
night at
Rotha.

Here was a
circle of stones
sacred to Lo-
din, or Odin.

The place
described.

Fingal's war-
riors feasted,
and slept on
the heath ;

He was sleep-
less, and arose
during the
night ;

the thistle's beard. The flame of three oaks arose : the feast is spread around : but the soul of the king is sad, for Carric-thura's chief distrest.

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

a A fire descended ; or, the fire lowered, or smouldered.

- Dh'islich teine fada thall,^a
 A' ghealach dearg 'us mall 's an ear.
 Thàinig osna nuas o 'n chàrn,
 235 Air a sgiathan bha sàmhla fir,
 Cruth-Lòduinn 's an lear gun tuar—
 Thàinig e gu 'chòmhnuidh féin,
 A dhubh-shleagh gun fheum 'n a làimh,
 A dhearg-shùil mar theine nan speur,
 240 Mar thorrann an t-sléibh a ghuth
 'An dùbhra dubh fada thall.
 Thog Fiomghal 's an oidhch' a shleagh ;
 Chualas anns a' mhagh a ghairm.
 “ A mhic na h-oidhche, o mo thaobh ;
 245 Gabh a' ghaoth, agus bi 'falbh.
 C' uim' thigeadh tu 'm fhianuis, 'fhir fhaoin ;
 Do shàmhla cho baoth ri d'airm ?
 An eagal dhomhsa do chruth donn,
 'Fhuathais nan cròim 'th' aig Lòduinn ?
 250 'S lag do sgiath, 's do nial nach trom,
 Do chladheamh lom mar thein' air mòr-thuinn.
 Cuiridh osag iads' as a chéile,
 Agus sgaoilear thu féin gun dàil.
 As m' fhianuis, a dhubh-mhic nan speur ;
 255 Gairm d'osag dhuit féin, 's bi 'falbh !”
 “ An cuireadh tu mi féin o m' chròm ?”
 Thuirt an guth trom a's fasa fuaim.

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

Son of night, retire : call thy winds, and fly ! Why dost thou

A fire descended far away ;^a
 The moon was red and dull in the east.
 Came down a blast from the height,
 235 On its wings was semblance of a man ;
 Cru-Lodin wan, upon the plain⁶—
 He came unto his own abode,
 His black spear useless in his hand ;
 His red eye like fire of the skies ;
 240 Like thunder on the hill, his voice,
 In darkness black (and) far away.
 Raised Fionn, amid the night, his spear ;
 Heard on the plain was his shout.

“ Son of the night, from my side !
 245 Take the wind, and be thou gone.
 Why to my presence come, thou shadowy one,
 Thy semblance vain as are thine arms ?
 Is thy dusky form a terror unto me,
 Thou phantom of the circles at Lodin ?
 250 Weak is thy shield, weightless thy cloud ;
 Thy bare sword like fire on the great wave ;
 A blast will drive them asunder,
 And scattered thyself wilt be without delay.
 Out of my presence, dark son of the skies ;
 255 Call thy blast to thyself, and begone !”

“ Wouldst thou send me away from my circle ?”
 Said the heavy voice of hollowest sound.

He saw the form of Lodin — Cru-Lodin — descending from the heights, and standing beside him on the plain.

Fingal commands him to depart, and expresses his contempt for his weakness.

Cru-Lodin remonstrates, boasts of his

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

Dost thou force me from my place? replied the hollow voice.

- “ Dhomhsa dh' aomas feaclul nan sonn ;
 Seallam o m' thom air an t-sluagh,
 260 'Us tuitidh iad mar luath 'am fhianuis ;
 O m' anail thig osag a' bhàis ;
 Thig mi mach gu h-àrd air gaoith ;
 Tha na stoirm a' taomadh shuas
 Mu m' mhala fhuair fo ghruaim gun tuar.
 265 'S ciuin mo chòmhnuidh anns na neoil,
 Is taitneach raoin mhòr mo shuain.”

- “ Gabhsa còmhnuidh ann ad raoin,”
 Thuirt rìgh nach b' fhaoin, 's a làmh air beairt ;
 “ No cuimhnich mac Chumhail air raon ;
 270 'S lag do thannas—'s mòr mo neart.
 'N do ghluais mi mo cheum o 'n bheinn
 Gu d' thalla féin, air raon a's ciuin ?
 'N do thachair mo shleagh, 'am bheil feum,
 'An truscan nan speur rì guth
 275 Fuathais dhuibh aig eròrn Chruth-Lòduinn ?
 C' uim' thog thu do mhala le gruaim ?
 C' uim' chrathadh tu shuas do shleagh ?
 'S beag ur' eagal ri d' chòmhra, 'fhir fhaoin.
 Cha do theich mi o shluagh 's a' m'ghaigh ;
 280 C' uim' theicheadh o shìol nan gaoth
 Sàr ghaisgeach nach faoin, rìgh Mhòr-bheinn ?
 Cha teich ! Tha 'fhios, gun 'bhi dall,
 Air laigse do làimhe 'an cath.”

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

Dwell in thy pleasant fields, said the king: let Comhal's son be

"To me it is that the host of warriors yield ;
 I look from my height on the people,
 260 And they fall like ashes before me.
 From my breath comes blast of death ;
 I come out aloft on the wind ;
 The storms pour forth themselves above
 Around my brow, cold, gloomy, and pale.
 265 (But) peaceful is my abode in the clouds,
 Pleasant the great plains of my repose."

"Go, and dwell then in thy plains,"
 Said the king of might, his hand on hilt,⁷
 "Else remember Cu-hal's son on the field ;⁸
 270 Weak is thy phantom—great is my strength.
 Did I turn my step from the hill
 To thy hall on the plain which is peaceful ?
 Did my spear of might ever clash,
 'Mid garment of the skies, against the voice
 275 Of the black spectre of the circle of Cru-Lodin ?
 Wherefore hast thou raised thy brow with a scowl ?
 Wherefore shakest thou, on high, thy spear ?
 Slight is my fear of thy words, thou phantom !
 I fled not from a host in the field ;
 280 Why should flee, from the offspring of winds,
 The hero without flaw, king of the great Bens ?
 He flees not ! He knows, and he's not blind,⁹
 The weakness of thine arm in war."

power over
 men's lives,
 and over the
 tempests of
 the air.

Fingal again
 bids him be-
 gone ;

asks if he had
 ever done him
 any injury ;

and he again
 defies him.

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

“Teich gu d’ thìr,” fbreagair an cruth
 285 “Teich air a’ ghaoith dhuibh ; bi ’falbh !
 Tha ’n osag ’an crodhan mo làimh’ ;
 ’S leam astar ’us spàirn nan stoirm ;
 ’S e rìgh na Soruch’ mo mhae fein ;
 Tha ’aomadh ’s a’ bheinn do m’ thuar ;
 290 Tha a’ eharraid aig carraig nan ceud,
 ’Us coisnidh gun bheud a’ bhuaidh.
 Teich gu d’ thìr féin, a mhic Chumhail,
 No fairich gu dubhach m’ fhearg.”

Thog e gu h-àrd a shleagh dhoreh’ ;
 295 Dh’aom e gu borb a cheann àrd ;
 Ghabh Fionnghal ’n a aghaidh le colg,^a
 A chladheamh glan, gorm ’n a làimh,
 Mac an Luinn, ’bu chiar-dhubh gruaidh—
 Ghluais solus na cruaidhe troi’ ’n taibhs’ ;
 300 Fuathas dona ’bhàis fo gbruaim ;
 Thuit esan gun chruth, ’s e thall,
 Air gaoith nan dubh chàrn ; mar smùid
 ’Bhriseas òg, ’us bioran ’n a làimh,
 Mu theallach na spàirn, ’s na mùig.

305 Seread fuathas Chruth-Lòduinn ’s a’ bheinn,
 ’G a thional ann féin ’s a’ ghaoith.
 Chual’ Innis nan tore an fhuaim ;
 Chaisg astar nan stuadh le fiamh ;

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

He lifted high his shadowy spear ! He bent forward his dreadful
 height. Fingal, advancing, drew his sword ; the blade of dark-

^a In wrath ;
 lit. with bris-
 tles.

“Flee to thy country,” answered the form ;
 285 “Flee on the black wind ; gone !
 The blast is in the hollow of my hand ;
 Mine are the speed and strength of storms.
 The king of Sora is son of mine ;¹⁰
 He bows in the mountain to my form ;
 290 His battle is (now) at the rock of hundreds,
 And scathless he shall victory win.
 Flee to thine own land, son of Cu-hal,
 Or feel to thy sorrow my wrath.”

He raised aloft his spear of darkness,
 295 Stooped fiercely his lofty head.
 Fingal went against him in wrath,^a
 His bright blue sword in his hand—
 Son of Luno of swarthiest cheek.
 Moved the light of the steel through the spectre ;¹¹
 300 The evil wraith of death (went) under gloom.
 He fell without shape, and away
 On wind of the black cairns, like smoke¹²
 Which a boy, with stick in hand, raises
 Around a hearth of discord and of gloom.
 305 Shrieked the wraith of Cru-Lodin on the Ben,
 Gathering himself into himself in the wind ;¹³
 Heard Innis-Torca the sound ;
 Ceased the travel of the waves in fear ;

Cru-Lodin counsels Fingal to flee to his own country ; boasts that Fro-hal, king of Sora, is his son, or worshipper ; and promises him speedy victory over Carric-Thura, then besieged by him.

The two engage in combat ; Fingal's sword of light flashes through the spectre, and scatters him on the wind.

The spectre flies away shrieking, so as to waken the slumbering warriors.

brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Innis-Torca shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep. They stopped, in their course, with fear : the friends of Fin-

Dh'èirich gaisgich mhie Chumhail nam buadh ;
 310 Bha sleagh 's gach làimh shuas 's an t-sliabh.
 "C' àite 'bheil e?" 'S am fearg fo ghruaim,
 Gach màile ri fuaim m' a thriath.

Thàinig ré a mach 's an ear ;
 Thill ceannard nam fear 'n a airm ;
 315 Bha aoibhneas air òigridh 's an lear ;
 Shòlaidh an anam, mar mhuir o stoirm.
 Thog Ullin gu subhaeh an dàn ;
 Chual' innis nan èarn an eòl ;
 Bha lasair o 'n daraig làn ;
 320 Chualas sgeul air clann nan seòd.

Shuidh Frothal na Sorucha fo fheirg,
 Aig eraoibh a bh' air leirg nam frith ;
 A mhòr-fheachd mu charraig an deirg,
 'S a shealladh mu'n cuairt gun ehlì ;
 325 A bhorb-intinn air Cathul 's air 'fhuil,
 "Thug dheth cìs air chur nan laoch.

Do Annir air Soruch 'n a thriath,
 Athair Fhrothail nan ciar stuadh,
 Air muir dh'èirich gailleann nan sian ;
 330 Bhuail Frothal àrd innis a' chuain.
 Trì làithean bha cuirm nach gann
 'An talla Shàrn' nan lann gun mhùig ;
 Chunnaeas leis geug nan rosg mall,

gal started, at once ; and took their heavy spears. They missed the king : they rose in rage ; all their arms resound !

The moon came forth in the east. Fingal returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youth was great ; their souls settled, as a sea from a storm. Ullin raised the song of gladness. The hills of Inistore rejoiced. The flame of the oak arose ; and the tales of heroes are told.

Arose the heroes of Cu-hal's great son ;
 310 A spear was up in each hand on the hill.
 " Where is he ?"—their wrath darkening,
 And each man's mail loud-rattling round its lord.

Forth came the moon in the east ;
 Returned the leader of men in his armour ;
 315 There was joy 'mong the youth on the plain ;
 Calm grew their soul as, after storm, the sea.
 Raised Ullin, with gladness, the song ;
 Heard the island of cairns the strain ;
 The flame from the oak (blazed) full ;
 320 Heard was the tale of the sons of the brave.

Sat Fro-hal of Sora under wrath,
 By a tree on the slope of the forest ;
 His great host about the rock of red (deer) ;
 His gaze around was aimless ;
 325 His fierce mind on Ca-hul and his blood,
 Who had overthrown him in warrior strife.¹⁴

To Annir, of Sora the lord,
 Father of Fro-hal of dark waves,
 At sea arose the fitful storm ;
 330 Fro-hal reached a lofty isle of ocean.
 Three days was feast without a stint
 In the house of joyous Sarno of swords.
 He (there) saw the branch of gentle eyelids¹⁵—

The moon
 arose ; the
 warriors re-
 ceived Fingal
 with joy, and
 passed the re-
 mainder of the
 night in list-
 ening to tales
 of the brave.

Fro-hal sits
 under a tree,
 brooding
 wrathfully
 over the in-
 dignity to
 which he had
 been subjected
 by Ca-hul,
 king of Carric-
 Thura, the
 occasion of
 which is now
 told.

Fro-hal
 sailing with his
 father Annir,
 is separated
 from him by a
 storm, driven
 to Carric-
 Thura, kindly
 received by
 Sarno, then

But Frothal, Sora's wrathful king, sits in sadness beneath a tree. The host spreads around Carric-thura. He looks towards the walls with rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who once overcame him in war. When Annir reigned in Sora, the father of sea-borne Frothal, a storm arose on the sea, and carried Frothal to Inistore. Three days he feasted in Sarno's halls, and saw the slow-

a Matchless ;
lit. *rare*.
Under thong
—i. e. was
bound.

- Sàr Chaomhmal', a b' àillidh cùl.
335 Bha 'ghaol di mar ghaol na h-dìge ;
Mar theine 'g a còir bha a thriall.
Eadar Frothal, 'us làmh-gheal nan scòd,
Dh'éirich Cathul, 's bu mhòr an triath :
Las còmh-stri 'am meadhon an t-sluaigh ;
340 Chuireadh Frothal, 'bu chòrr, fo iall.^a
Trì làithean bha esan 'n a aon,
'An ceangal neo-mhaoth, fo nial ;
An ceathramh, chuir Sarno nan long
'Ard cheannard nan sonn gu 'thìr.
345 Dhorchaich eud anam an laoiach ;
Ri Cathul las fraoch na feirg'.
'N uair dh'éirich clach Annir le cliù,
Thàinig Frothal fo mhùig 'n a neart ;
Bha 'n còmhrag mu charraig na smùid,
350 Balla Sharno do 'n lùb am feachd.

Dh'éirich maduinn air innis nan stuadh ;
Bhual Frothal le cruaidh a sgiath ;
Ghluais gaisgich fo bhriseadh na fuaim ;
Bha 'n sealladh gu luath air triall
355 Gu muir liath nan iomadh stuadh ;
Chunnaic iad Fionnghal 'n a neart ;
Thuirt Tùbar nam feachd, an triath,

“Co sud mar ruadhaig an fhìrìch,
Le 'uile ghreigh bhioraich 'n a dhéigh ?

rolling eyes of Comala. He loved her in the flame of youth, and rushed to seize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle rose. Frothal was bound in the hall ; three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno sent him to his ship, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his soul against the noble Cathulla. When Annir's stone of fame arose, Frothal came

- The peerless Covala of lovely hair.
 335 His love for her was as the love of youth ;
 Like a fire was its path towards her.
 Between Fro-hal and (this) White-hand of heroes,
 Ca-hul arose, and a great prince was he ;
 Contention kindled 'mid the people ;
 340 Fro-hal, the matchless, was put under thong.^a
 Three days was he all lone,
 In fetter rough beneath a cloud.
 On the fourth, sent Sarno of ships
 The high chief of strong ones home to his land.
 345 Jealousy darkened the soul of the hero ;
 'Gainst Ca-hul burned the fury of wrath.¹⁶
 When Annir's stone was raised with fame,
 Came Fro-hal, under gloom, in might ;
 They fought around Carrick of smoke,
 350 The wall of Sarno to whom yields the host.

Rose the morning on the isle of waves ;
 Fro-hal struck, with steel, the shield ;
 Heroes moved at breaking forth of the sound ;
 Quickly travelled their sight

- 355 To the hoary sea of many waves ;
 Fingal they beheld in his might.
 Said Tubar of the hosts, the prince,

“ Who is yonder, like red-deer of the forest
 With his whole antlered herd behind him ?

in his strength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's mossy walls.

Morning rose on Inistore. Frothal struck his dark-brown shield. His chiefs started at the sound ; they stood, but their eyes were turned to the sea. They saw Fingal coming in his strength ; and first the noble Thubar spoke. “ Who comes like the stag of the

king, falls in love with Covala his daughter.

Ca-hul, her brother, opposes him : they fight. Fro-hal is overpowered, bound, and left three days in a dungeon. Sarno releases him. He returned home, but as soon as he succeeded to the kingdom of Sora through Annir's death, he sets forth with an army to Carric-Thura to be avenged on Ca-hul—now its king—and attacks him in Carrick.

On the following morning he sees Fingal, who had come to aid his friend Ca-hul.

Tubar, Fro-hal's chief warrior and friend, proposes to sue for peace.

- 360 A Fhrothail, 's e nàmhaid gun ghiorraig,
 A shleagh roinne air ìomall an t-sléibh.
 'S e an gaisgeach, rìgh Mhòr-bheim, a th' ann,
 Mac Chumhail nan lann 's nam fear.
 'An Lochlin tha 'ghnìomhan nach gann ;
- 365 'An talla àrd a' chuain o 'n car
 Thaom e fuil mhear nan laoch.
 An iarr mi sìth o cheann nan treun ?
 Tha 'chlaidheamh mar dhealan nan speur."

"A mhie gun mheas, a's laige làmh,"

- 370 Thuirt Frothal nan lann, le feirg,
 "An gluais m' òige fo neul nach gann ?
 An géill mi roi' m' àm 's an leirg ?
 An géill mi mu-n d' fhuairleadh leam càs,
 'Fhaoim cheannaird gun bhrìgh, o Thòra ?
- 375 C' uim' a theireadh, 'an Soruch', an sluagh,
 'Ghluais Frothal mar thuar nan speur ;
 Thuit smal air a theine gu luath ;
 Cha chluinnear air duan 'n a dhéigh' ?
 A Thùbair, cha ghéill mi ri m' bheò ;
- 380 Bithidh cliù mar sholus mòr mu m' chuairt ;
 Cha ghéill gu m' thuiteam fo seicè,^a
 A thriath Thòra nan sruth fuar."

^a The cloud—
i.e. of death.

Ghluais an triath le neart a shluaigh ;
 Ach thachair iad shuas ri carraig ;

desert, with all his herd behind him ? Frothal, it is a foe ! I see his forward spear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal the first of men. His deeds are well known in Lochlin ; the blood of his foes is in Starno's halls. Shall I ask the peace of kings ? His sword is the bolt of heaven !"

Son of the feeble hand, said Frothal, shall my days begin in a

- 360 Fro-hal, it is a foe without fear,
 His spear (is) before him on the edge of the hill.
 It is the hero, king of great Bens, who is there—
 Cu-hal's son, of swords and men.
 In Lochlin are his deeds not few ;
- 365 In the lofty hall of ocean to the east
 He spilled the bounding blood of heroes.
 Shall I ask peace from the chief of the strong ?
 His sword is like lightning of the skies."

"Thou son of shame, of feeblest hand,"

- 370 Said Fro-hal of swords, in wrath,
 "Shall my youth go under heavy cloud ?
 Shall I yield before my time on the field ?
 Shall I yield before I have taken tribute,
 Thou useless, nerveless leader from Tora ?
- 375 Why should the people in Sora say,
 'Fro-hal moved forth like flash of the skies ;
 (But) fell darkness on his fire full speedily ;
 Not heard of him shall song be in the after-time' ?
 Tubar, I will not yield me while I live ;
- 380 Renown shall be, as a great light, around me.
 Not yield shall I until my fall beneath the cloud,
 Chief of Tora of the rivers cold."

Advanced the hero with the strength of his host,
 But they met with a rock before them ;

Fro-hal spurns
 the proposal.

He attacks
 Fingal, but is
 speedily de-
 feated.

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

He went forth from the stream of his people, but they met a rock:

- 385 Gu daingean sheas Fionnghal nam buadh ;
 Theich iadsan brist' o chruaidh an laoiach ;
 Cha do theich iad gun bleud o 'làimh,
 'S a shleagh 'n a deann aims an ruaig ;
 Bha 'n raon fo thuiteam nan triath ;
- 390 Ghabh cruach nan sian na mhair.

Chunnaic Frothal sàmhach an ruaig ;
 Dh'at 'anam fo bhuaireadh feirg' ;
 Dh' aom e 'shùil reachdmhor 'an gruaim ;
 Ghairm thuige Tùbar nach mairg.

- 395 “ A Thùbair, theich mo shluagh 's an strì ;
 Tha mise gun chhl, 's gun chliù ;
 Buileam 's a' charraid an rìgh ;
 Las m' anam le brìgh gun mhùig.
 Cuir-sa bàrd g'a ghairm gu còmhrag :
- 400 Na labhair an aghaidh mo mhiann.

“ A Thùbair, air ainneir gun mhòr-chùis,
 Geug òg, tha m' anam gun ghìomh.
 Tha 'còmhnuidh aig Tàine nan sruth,
 Nighean 's gile cruth, aig Hermin,

- 405 Utha àluinn nan rosg mall.

Bha 'h-cagal mu Chaomhmal 'tha fuar ;
 A h-osna gu dìomhair 'us truagh,
 'N uair a thog mi suas mo shiùil.
 Aithris do dh' Utha na cruic ghrinn,

- 410 Gu-n robh m' anam de 'u mhùn-gheal làn.”

a Now cold—
i. e. dead.

Fingal stood unmoved ; broken they rolled back from his side. Nor did they safely fly ; the spear of the king pursued their steps. The field is covered with heroes. A rising hill preserved the foe.

Frothal saw their flight. The rage of his bosom rose. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar. Thubar ! my people are fled. My fame has ceased to arise. I will fight the

385 Firmly stood Fingal of victories ;
 Back fled they, broken, from the hard steel of heroes.
 They fled not without scath from his hand,
 And his spear in its speed pursuing ;
 The plain was (covered) under fall of warriors ;
 390 The hill of storms received the remnant.

Beheld Fro-hal, in silence, the rout ;
 Swelled his soul in heaving of wrath ;
 He bent his haughty eye in scowl.
 He called unto him Tubar, good at need.¹⁷

395 " Tubar, fled have my hosts in the battle ;
 I am reft of power and renown.
 Let me strike in battle the king—
 Kindled (is) my soul in purpose clear.
 Send thou a bard to summon him to fight ;
 400 Speak not against my resolve.

" Tubar, on a maiden without proudness—
 A tender branch—is all my soul.
 Her dwelling is by Tana of streams,
 Hermin's daughter of whitest form—
 405 The lovely Uha of slow-moving eyes.
 Her fear was of Covala, now cold ;^a
 Her sigh (was) secret and sad
 When I raised aloft my sails.
 Declare to Uha of the pleasant harp
 410 That my soul was full of her smooth white (form)."¹⁸

king. I feel my burning soul ! Send a bard to demand the combat. Speak not against Frothal's words ! But, Thubar, I love a maid ; she dwells by Thano's stream, the white-bosomed daughter of Hermin, Utha with soft-rolling eyes. She feared the low-laid Comala ; her secret sighs rose, when I spread the sail. Tell to Utha of harps, that my soul delighted in her.

He resolves
 to challenge
 Fingal to sin-
 gle combat ;

tells Tubar
 of his love
 for Uha, and
 charges him,
 in the event of
 his death, to
 tell her of his
 love.

- Mar sin bha focail an tréith,
 'S e 'càramh a sgéithe r'a thaobh.
 Bha osna chaoin-Utha 's an t-sliabh ;
 Lean ise o chian an laoch,
 415 Fo mhàile 's fo àrmaibh òig-fhìr ;
 Bha 'sùil gu dìomhair air an t-sonn,
 'S i 'coimhead gu trom o 'cruaidh.
 Chunnaic ise am bàrd a' triall ;
 Thuit 's an t-sliabh a sleagh o 'làimh ;
 420 Bha 'leadan air gaoith nan sian ;
 Air osna dh' éirich a h-uehd bàn ;
 A' sealladh suas air rìgh nan long,
 Thòisich 'us thosd i tri chuairt.

- Chuala Fionnghal guth a' bhàird :
 425 Ghrad-thàinig e nall 'n a chruaidh ;
 Bha 'shleagh, 'an eumart nach mall,
 'Us dealan a làinn mu'n cuairt.
 O Fhionnghal thuit beum neo-fhaoin ;
 Chaill Frothal, an laoch, a sgiath :
 430 'N uair nochdadh gun mhàil' a thaobh,
 Dh' aom bàs thar smaointean an triath.

Chuairtich dorchadas air ball
 Anam Utha nan rosg mall ;
 Shil na dedòir air a gruaidh chaoin ;

Such were his words, resolved to fight. The soft sigh of Utha was near ! She had followed her hero, in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in secret, from beneath her steel. She saw the bard as he went ; the spear fell thrice from her hand ! Her loose hair flew on the wind. Her white breast rose, with sighs. She raised her eyes to the king. She would speak,

- Such were the words of the chief,
 As he fitted his shield to his side.
 The gentle Uha's sigh was on the hill ;
 She had followed, from afar, the hero,
 415 Under helm and armour of a youth.
 Secretly her eye was on the chief,
 Looking sadly from under her steel helm.
 She beheld the bard on his way.
 Fell, on the hill, her spear from her hand ;
 420 Her hair was on the stormy wind.
 With a sigh rose her white bosom ;
 Looking upwards to the king of ships,
 She began, and ceased three times.

- Heard Fingal the voice of the bard ;
 425 Quickly came he in his mail ;
 His spear—in danger not slack—
 And the flash of his sword (were) around.
 From Fingal fell a blow of might ;
 Lost Fro-hal, the brave, his shield ;
 430 When stripped of mail was exposed his side,
 Death bent over the thoughts of the chief.

Darkness surrounded, all at once,
 The soul of Uha of slow-moving eyelids.
 Rained the tears over her smooth cheek ;

Uha, who had followed him in the disguise of a youthful warrior, overhears the message.

Fingal receiving the challenge, accepts it, and disarms Fro-hal.

Uha, witnessing the combat, on seeing Fro-hal deprived of his

but thrice she failed.

Fingal heard the words of the bard ; he came in the strength of his steel. They mixed their deathful spears : they raised the gleam of their arms. But the sword of Fingal descended and cut Frothal's shield in twain. His fair side is exposed ; half bent he foresees his death. Darkness gathered on Uha's soul. The tear rolled down

435 Ghrad-ghluais i gu 'n laoch le 'sgiath.

Ghabh darag a ceum 's i 'triall ;

Thuit i sìos air a ruigh bhàin ;

Leum a clogaid air an t-sliabh ;

A broilleach geal ag éiridh thall ;

440 A ciabh nach gann air làr, 's i truagh !

Ghluais tiomachd air anam an rìgh,

Mu òigh mhìn 'bu ghile làmh ;

Chaisg e 'chlaidheamh anns an strì ;

Thuit deòir neo-chlì o rìgh nan lann : "

445 " A thriath na Sorucha 's fuaimear sruth,"

'S e 'togail a ghuth le spàirn,

" Cha-n eagal duit mo chruaidh an diugh ;

Cha robh riamh fuil air mo lainn,

'N uair ghéilleadh an dàimh 's a' chòmhrag.

450 Biodh aoibhneas air anam do shlùigh,

Aig sruthan mòr do thalamh féim ;

Biodh aoibhneas ortsa, 'ainnir chòrr,

C' uim' thuiteadh an t-òg 's a' bheinn,

A rìgh na Sorucha nan tuil làn ? "

455 Chuala Frothal guth an laoch ;

Chunnaic òigh 'bu chaoin ag éirigh.

Sheas iad 'n an sgèimh 's an fhraoch,

'An sàmhehair nach b' fhaoin, le 'chéile,

^a Large tears :
lit. tears un-
weak.

her cheek. She rushed to cover the chief with her shield ; but a fallen oak met her steps. She fell on her arm of snow ; her shield, her helmet, flew wide. Her white bosom heaved to the sight ; her dark-brown hair is spread on earth.

Fingal pitied the white-armed maid ! He stayed the uplifted sword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward,

- 435 Sprang she to the chief with her shield.
 An oak caught her step as she went ;
 Fell she down on her white arm ;
 Leaped her helmet on the hill,
 Her white bosom heaving high,
 440 Her flowing curls on the ground, and she in misery.

shield, springs forward to offer him her own, but falls to the ground and is discovered.

- Moved softness over the soul of the king,
 For the gentle maid of whitest hand.
 He stayed his sword in the battle ;
 Fell large tears from the king of arms.^a
 445 " Chief of Sora of sounding stream,"
 While he raised his voice with pain—
 " No fear is my steel to thee to-day ;
 Never was blood on my blade,
 When the stranger would yield in combat.¹⁹
 450 Be joy on the soul of thy people,
 By the great streams of thine own land—
 Be joy to thee, maiden peerless ;
 Why should fall the youth on the hill,
 King of Sora of the swelling floods ? "

Fingal, moved with compassion for the lovers, spares Fro-hal.

- 455 Heard Fro-hal the voice of the hero,
 Saw he a gentle maid arise ;
 Stood they in their beauty on the heath,
 In utter silence, side by side,

Description of Fro-hal and Uha.

he spoke : " King of streamy Sora ! fear not the sword of Fingal. It was never stained with the blood of the vanquished ; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice by thy native streams ; let the maids of thy love be glad. Why shouldst thou fall in thy youth, king of streamy Sora ? " Frothal heard the words of Fingal, and saw the rising maid : they stood in silence, in their beauty,

Mar dhà chraoibh òig araon fo bhlàth,
 460 'An iomall fàsaich thlàth, 's iad gorm,
 Drùchd carraich a' sileadh o 'm bàrr,
 'S a' ghaoth 'n a luidhe thall 's an òrd.

“ 'Nighean Hermin o thìr nan stuadh,”
 Thuirt Frothal nam buadh gun dàil,
 465 “ C' nìm' thàinig 'n ad àille thar enain,
 Gu m' fhaicinn gun chruaidh air làr ?
 Ach tha mì gun chruaidh aig treun,
 'Oigh gun bheud nan réidh rosg mall ;
 Cha laigse a bhuadhaich, a gheug,
 470 Thar mac Annir, 'bu treun làmh.

“ 'S garbh, 's is mòr thu féin, a rìgh,
 'An carraid, 's 'an strì nan sleagh ;
 Ach 's caoin thu, 'ghaisgich, 'an sìth,
 Mar a' ghrian air drùchd mìn 's a' mhaigh ;
 475 Togaidh dìthein ùr a cheann ;
 Crathaidh osag mhall a sgiath.
 O b' fhearr gu-m biodh tusa féin
 'An Sorucha nan teud 's nam fleagh,
 Gu-m faiceadh tréith Shoruch' 'am dhéigh
 480 D' airm, 'n uair bhiodh aoibhneas 's a' mhaigh ;
 Bhiodh aoibhneas mu chliù an sinns're,
 A chunnaic 's an strì rìgh Mhòr-bheinn !”

like two young trees of the plain, when the shower of spring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

Daughter of Herman, said Frothal, didst thou come from Tora's streams ; didst thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low ? But he was low before the mighty, maid of the slow-rolling eye ! The feeble did not overcome the son of ear-borne Annir ! Terrible

Like two young trees, alike in bloom,
 460 On marge of sheltered forest green,
 The dew of spring from their boughs down dropping,
 And the wind at rest on the height.

“Daughter of Hermin, from the land of waves,”
 Spake valiant Fro-hal, without delay ;
 465 “Why camest thou, in thy beauty, over ocean,
 To see me without arms on the ground ?
 But by a hero am I stripped of arms,
 Faultless maid of the smooth, slow-moving eyelid ;
 Not weakness has triumphed, O branch !
 470 Over Annir’s son of stalwart arm.

“Rough and great art thou, O king !
 In the strife and clash of shields ;
 But mild art thou, O hero ! in peace,
 Like sun ’mid tender dew on field ;
 475 Lifts the daisy fresh its head,
 Shakes the gentle breeze its wing.
 Would that in very deed thou wert
 In Sora of harps and of feasts,
 That the great ones of Sora might see, as I,
 480 Thine arms, when joy was in the field ;
 Then (sons) would rejoice in the fame of their sires,
 Who had seen in combat the king of great Bens !”

Fro-hal complains of Uha's having come to witness his defeat ; but praising both the prowess and clemency of Fingal, shows defeat by him was no disgrace.

art thou, O king of Morven ! in battles of the spear. But in peace thou art like the sun, when he looks through a silent shower : the flowers lift their fair heads before him ; the gales shake their rustling wings. O that thou wert in Sora ! that my feast were spread ! The future kings of Sora would see thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal !

- “ ‘Mhic Annir,’ fhreagair an rìgh,
 “ Cluinnidh aimsir sìos ar cliù ;
 485 ‘N uair sheasas na gaisgich ‘s an strì,
 ‘Èiridh neart nan dàn gun mhùig ;
 Ma shìnceas iad air laigs’ an cruaidh,
 ‘Us fuil nan truagh mu’n cuairt do ‘n lainn,
 Cha togar le bàird an duan,
 490 Cha-n fhaicear an uaigh, no ‘n càrn.
 Thig coigrich a fhogail tùir,
 ‘Us cuiridh iad an ùir thar làimh ;
 Chithear claidheamh meirg ‘s an smùr,^a
 Fear ag aomadh o ‘chùl ag ràdh,
 495 ‘Bhuin na h-airm do sheoid ‘tha fuar ;
 Cha chualas an luaidh ‘s na dàin.’
 Thig-sa, ‘Fhrothail, thar an t-sliabh,
 Gu fleagh nan triath ‘an innis nan stuadh ;
 Thig-sa, ‘ainnir an fhuilt chhair,
 500 ‘Ghaoil gaisgich nan sgiath o thuath ;
 Thigibhse gu cuirm nan laoch,
 ‘S bithidh aoibhneas a’ glanadh ar gnùis.”

^a A rusty sword ; lit. a sword of rust.

- A shleagh ‘n a làimh, ‘s a cheum treun,
 Ghabh Fionnghal dha féin an sliabh.
 505 Dh’ fhosgail dorsan Charraig nan ceud ;
 Fhuaradh cuirm nan sligean fial ;
 Dh’ éirich suas fuaim mhaoth nam fonn ;

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Som's race shall be heard ! When chiefs are strong in war, then does the song arise ! But if their swords are stretched over the feeble ; if the blood of the weak has stained their arms ; the bard shall forget them in the song, and their tombs shall not be known. The stranger shall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn sword

"Son of Annir," answered the king,
 "Time downwards will hear our praise :
 485 When the brave stand firm in fight,
 The strength of song will cloudless rise ;
 If they stretch against weakness their steel,
 And blood of the helpless be on their brand,
 For them no songs shall be raised by bards,
 490 Nor grave be seen, nor cairn.
 Strangers will come to build a tower,
 And will throw their dust aside ;
 A rusty sword shall be seen in the ground ;^a
 One, stooping forward, shall say,
 495 'Belonged the arms to men now cold ;
 Unheard has been their praise in songs.'
 Come thou, Fro-hal, over the hill,
 To feast of chiefs in the isle of waves ;
 Come thou, maid of the dark-brown hair,
 500 Love of the shield-bearing hero from north :
 Come ye to the feast of warriors,
 And gladness will make bright your countenance."

With spear in hand, and stalwart step,
 Took Fingal to himself the hill ;²⁰
 505 Opened wide the doors of spacious Carrick,
 And generous was the feast of shells ;
 Rose up the dulcet voice of melodies ;

shall rise before him ; bending above it, he will say, "These are the arms of the chiefs of old, but their names are not in song." Come thou, O Frothal ! to the feast of Inistore ; let the maid of thy love be there ; let our faces brighten with joy !

Fingal took his spear, moving in the steps of his might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened wide. The feast of shells is spread.

Fingal, addressing Fro-hal, declares that the truly brave and generous shall live in song ; but that the oppressors of the weak shall die unhonoured and unsung.

He takes both Fro-hal and Uha with him to a feast at Carric-Thura.

- Bha sòlas 'an talla nan sonn.
 Chualas guth Ullin nan duan,
 510 'Us cruit Shelma, mu-n cromadh an euan.
 Bha Utha fo aoibhneas 'n a chòir ;
 Dh' iarr i ùan tùirseach a' bhròin ;
 Deoir ag iadhadh mu 'rosg mall,
 'N uair labhair Crìdh-mòr nan caomh-dhàn,
 515 Nighean Rinnhail nan geur lann,
 'Ghabh tunaidh aig sruth na Lòtha.
 Ge b' fhada, bu chaoin an duan ;
 'S bha 'gheug ghasd' o thuath fo aoibhneas.

CRIDH-MÒR.

- “ Co 'thig cho sàmhach o 'n aonach,
 520 Mar neul o 'n iar, 's a thaobh 's a' ghréin ?
 Co do 'm bheil an guth cho caoin,
 Cho labhara ri gaoith 's a' bheinn,
 'S e taitneach mar chaol-chruit Charuill ?
 'S e mo sheòd, 'n a shoills' a th'ann,
 525 Sàr ghaisgeach nan lam fo bhròin.
 'S dorcha tuar do mhala thall ;
 Am bheil Fionnghal an triath gun deò ?
 C' nime tha do ghruaim 's do bhròin, a 'Chonail ? ”

CONALL.

“ 'S beò an triath o iùl na seilg ;

The soft sound of music arose. Gladness brightened in the hall. The voice of Ullin was heard ; the harp of Selma was strung. Utha rejoiced in his presence, and demanded the song of grief ; the big tear hung in her eye, when the soft Crimora spoke. Crimora, the daughter of Rinval, who dwelt at Lotha's roaring stream ! The tale was long, but lovely ; and pleased the blushing Utha.

Joy was in the hall of heroes ;
 Heard was the voice of Ullin of songs,
 510 And harp of Selma, round which ocean bends.
 Uha was, in gladness, by his side ;
 She asked a mournful song of sorrow,
 Tears rolling down her gentle eyelash,
 When speaks Cri-mora of the pleasant strains,
 515 The daughter of Rinvel of the keen-edged sword,
 Who abode by the stream of Lotha.
 Though long, yet pleasant was the song,
 And the fair branch of the north rejoiced.

CRI-MORA.

“ Who comes, so silent, from the hill,
 520 Like cloud from west, and its side in the sun ?
 Whose is the voice so sweet,
 Clear as the wind in the mountain,
 And pleasant as the slender harp of Carol ?
 ’Tis my hero who is there in his brightness,
 525 The great chief of spears, in sorrow.
 Dark is the look of thy brow ;
 Is Fingal the prince without breath ?
 Wherefore thy gloom and thy grief, O Connal ? ”

CONNAL.

“ Alive is the Prince from leading the chase.

CRIMORA.—Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the west ? Whose voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of Carril ? It is my love in the light of steel ; but sad is his darkened brow ! Live the mighty race of Fingal ? or what darkens in Connal’s soul ?

CONNAL.—They live. They return from the chase, like a stream

Ullin relates, in the form of a dialogue between Cri-mora and Connal, the sad tale of their love.

Cri-mora, seeing Connal advancing towards her with a troubled countenance, asks if Fingal has fallen.

- 530 Thill laoch na feirg' mar sholus còrr ;
 Tha 'ghrian air sgiath nan cop gun mheirg,
 E féin 's an leirg mar shòlus mòr.
 'S labhara guth 'digrìdh thall !
 Tha carraid nan lann a' triall ;
- 535 Am màireach thig an Dearg a nall
 'Chur còmhraig air clann nan triath,
 Clann an rìgh, a's glaine cruaidh,
 Siol stoirmeil nan creuchd 's nam buadh."

CRIDH-MÒR.

- " Chunnaic mi, 'Chonaill, a shiuil
 540 Leatham mar liath-mhùig nan tonn ;
 Bu mhall gu tràigh 'bha an iùl ;
 'S ònmhor laoch aig Dearg nan long."

CONALL.

- " Càirich sgiath d' athar ri m' thaobh,
 An sgiath chruaidh chopach 'bh' aig Rinnhal ;
 545 An sgiath mar ré làn nach faoin
 A' siubhal troi' speur fo iorghuil,
 'S i dubh, agus ciar 'n a tuar."

CRIDH-MÒR.

" Càireamsa gu luath an sgiath,
 O nach do thearunn triath nam buadh.

of light. The sun is on their shields. Like a ridge of fire they descend the hill. Loud is the voice of the youth! the war, my love, is near! To-morrow the dreadful Dargo comes to try the force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies; the race of battle and wounds!

CRIMORA.—Connal, I saw it: it like grey mist on the dark-

- 530 Returned hath the wrathful warrior like a shining
 The sun is on the boss of his unruined shield, [light;
 (And) himself, on the hillside, like a great light.
 Bold is the voice of his young men around him.
 The conflict of brands travels on ;
- 535 On the morrow Dargo will come
 To do battle with the children of chiefs,
 Children of the king of clearest steel,
 The stormy race of gashing wounds and victories.”

CRI-MORA.

- “ I saw, O Connal, his sails,
 540 Broad as the hoary mist of waves ;
 Slow to the shore was their course ;
 Many are the heroes of Dargo of ships.”

CONNAL.

- “ Place on my side the shield of thy sire—
 The hard bossy shield which was Rinvel’s—
 545 The shield like full moon unimpaired,
 Speeding through the sky under storm,
 Black and dusky in her visage.”

CRI-MORA.

- “ I will place, without delay, the shield,
 Though it saved not the hero of victories.

Connal answers that Fingal lives, but that Dargo is coming to attack him.

She says that she had seen his fleet.

He asks her to bind her father's shield on his arm.

She does so, mentioning that it had not saved her

brown wave. They slowly came to land. Connal, many are the warriors of Dargo !

CONNAL.—Bring me thy father's shield ; the bossy, iron shield of Rinval ; that shield like the full-orbed moon, when she moves darkened through heaven.

CRIMORA.—That shield I bring, O Connal ! but it did not defend

550 Thuit e le Cormar 's an t-sliabh ;
'S maith gu-n tuit thu féin, a Chonaill !”

CONALL.

“ 'S maith gu-n tuit ; ach togsa m' uaigh,
'Chridh-mhòir nam buadh. Biodh liath-chàrn
'Us meall de 'n ùir air taobh nan stuadh,
555 A chur m' ainm 's mo chliù troi' àm.
Aomsa do rosg dearg fo dheoir,
O iomall an tòrr' thar m' ùir ;
Buail-sa d' uchd àluinn 'am bròn,
'Us ann am dhéigh cum beò mo chliù.
560 Ge h-àillidh' thu na 'n solus féin,
Mar aiteal an t-sléibh do ghuth ciuin,
Cha-n fhan mi ri d' thaobh 's a' bheinn ;
Tog thusa 'am dhéigh mo chliù.”

CRIDH-MÒR.

“ Cùirear airm sholuis 'am làimh,
565 Lann gorm geur, agus sleagh chruaidh ;
Tach'ram ris an Dearg gun dàil,
'N am chobhair 's a' bhàr do m' luaidh.
Slàn leibh, a chruach' nam beann àrd',
A dheirg nam bàrr, 'us sruth nan càrn,
570 Cha till sinn air ais o 'n bhàr ;
'Eiridh ar n-uaigh fada thall !”

my father. By the spear of Gormar he fell. Thou mayst fall, O Connal !

CONNAL.—Fall I may ! but raise my tomb, Crimora ! Grey stones, a mound of earth, shall send my name to other times. Bend thy red eye over my grave, beat thy mournful heaving breast. Though fair thou art, my love, as the light ; more pleasant than the gale of

550 Fell he by (the hand of) Cormar on the hill ;
Perchance thou too wilt fall, O Connal !”

CONNAL.

“ Perchance I shall fall : but raise thou my
Crimora of graces. Be there a grey cairn [tomb,
And mound of earth hard by the waves,
555 To send my name and praise through time.
Bend thou thine eyelids, red in tears,
From the end of the mound above my dust ;
Strike thy beautiful breast in mourning ;
And after me keep thou alive my fame.
560 Though fairer thou than light itself—
Thy voice as gentle as the mountain breeze—
I will not remain beside thee on the Ben ;
Raise thou, after me, my renown.”

CRI-MORA.

“ Be arms of light placed in my hand,
565 A blue keen-edged blade and spear of steel ;
Let me encounter Dargo speedily,
And bring help in the field to my love.
Farewell ye peaks of the high Bens,
O red antlered ones, and streams of cairns !
570 Return not shall we from the battle ;
Far away shall rise our tomb !”

father, and forebodes Connal's death.

He, admitting the probability of his fall, charges her to build his tomb, and to preserve his name.

She equips herself in armour, resolved to follow Connal to the war, and foretells that neither would return.

the hill ; yet I will not here remain. Raise my tomb, Crimora !

CRIMORA.—Then give me those arms that gleam ; that sword, and that spear of steel. I shall meet Dargo with Connal, and aid him in the fight. Farewell, ye rocks of Ardven ! ye deer ! and ye streams of the hill ! We shall return no more. Our tombs are distant far !

Trì làithean mhair cuirm do na laoiach ;
 An ceathramh sgaoil araon an siuil.
 O Thuath shéid neartmhor a' ghaoth :
 575 Bhual Fionnghal gu tìr gun mhùig,
 Coille Mbòr-bheinn nan tìr àrd.
 Shuidh air neul fuath dubb Chruth-Lòduinn,
 'N déigh Fhrothail air àros nan stuadh,
 'S e 'g aomadh, aig osaig nam mòr thonn,
 580 Sìuil bhàn' air aghaidh a' chuain :
 Air a lot bha smaoin an taibhs',
 Agus 'eagal o làimh an rìgh.*

* Here the Gaelic ends ; but in Macpherson's English the following conclusion is given, which, in justice to him, I subjoin :—

“And did they return no more?” said Utha's bursting sigh.
 “Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live? Her steps were
 lonely ; her soul was sad for Connal. Was he not young and
 lovely ; like the beam of the setting sun?” Ullin saw the virgin's
 tear, he took the softly-trembling harp : the song was lovely, but
 sad, and silence was in Carric-thura.

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

Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal ! who recount
 thy fathers ? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which
 meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the
 earth. Who shall supply the place of Connal ? Here was the din
 of arms ; here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of

.

Three days lasted the feast of the warriors ;
 On the fourth the sails of both were spread.
 From the north strong blew the wind ;
 575 Fingal struck the unclouded land—
 The wood of great Bens of lofty towers.
 Cloud-seated was the black loathly form of Lodin,
 Following Fro-hal over the abode of waves,
 And bending on the breeze of billows great,
 580 The white sails on the face of ocean.
 On his wound were the thoughts of the phantom,
 And on the dreaded hand of the king.

The feast lasted three days, at the end of which Fingal returns to Morven, and Fro-hal to Sora—Cru-Lodin, seated on a cloud, impelling his sails.

Fingal, O Connal ! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm ; thy sword, a beam of the sky ; thy height, a rock on the plain ; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, in the battles of thy steel. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy. Dargo the mighty came on, darkening in his rage. His brows were gathered into wrath ; his eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side ; loud was the clang of their steel.

The daughter of Riival was near ; Crimora bright in the armour of man. Her yellow hair is loose behind ; her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much beloved. She drew the string on Dargo ; but erring, she pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain ; like a rock on the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid ? He bleeds ; her Connal dies ! All the night long she cries, and all the day, “ O Connal, my love, and my friend ! ” With grief the sad mourner dies ! Earth here encloses the loveliest pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of the tomb. I often sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass ; their memory rushes on my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together ; in the tomb of the mountain you rest alone !

“ And soft be their rest,” said Utha, “ hapless children of streamy Lotha ! I will remember them with tears, and my secret song shall rise ; when the wind is in the groves of Tora, when the stream is roaring near. Then shall they come on my soul, with all their lovely grief ! ”

Three days feasted the kings : on the fourth their white sails arose. The winds of the north drove Fingal to Morven's woody land. But the spirit of Loda sat, in his cloud, behind the ships of Frothal. He hung forward with all his blasts, and spread the white-bosomed sails. The wounds of his form were not forgot ; he still feared the hand of the king !

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

ix

CARRIC - THURA.

ANNIR, the father of Fro-hal, former king of Sorcha; also "father of Erragon, who succeeded his brother Fro-hal on the throne." The death of Erragon is the subject of the battle of Lora.—Macpherson's Notes.

BINVEL or BINVELA, *Binnbheul*, "melodious mouth."

BRAN, *Bra-an*, or *Brathan*, is said to mean a "rapid mountain-stream." There is a river in Ross-shire, and another in Perthshire, still retaining the name of *Bra-an*; and Chalmers ("Caledonia"), says that the term occurs frequently in the name of British streams.

CA-HUL, *Cath-shuil*, "eye of battle," king of Innis-Torc, brother of Covala, and the much-valued friend of Fingal. Zeuss, in his *Grammat. Celt.*, vol. i. p. 5, mentions Catullus, the poet of Verona, as bearing a Celtic name, evidently *Cath-shuil* with a Latin termination.

CAROL, or CARUL, the name of a celebrated bard and harper, and a word descriptive of the office of a musician. The English "carol" is traced through French and Italian to the Latin *car*-men, said to be from *caro* "to card;" but the root may possibly be found in the Gaelic *car*, "a turn" or "variation;" or in *gair*, *goir*, "to call on," "to sing," &c. *Cuireall*, or *coirioll*, is still in Gaelic use to describe the notes of a singer.

CARRIC-THURA, *Corraig-thùra*, “the rock of towers.” This was the capital of Innis-Torc, as also the palace of Ca-lul, king of the island.

CONNAL, *Conall*, “impetuosity,” “excitement.” Cri-mora loved Connal—followed him to a battle which he fought with Dargo. (Connal, the son of Diaran, one of the most famous of the Ossianic heroes, was slain in a battle against Dargo, a Briton.—Macpherson.)

CRIMORA, *Cridh'-mòr*, “great heart,” daughter of Rinvel.

CRONAX, “a low, murmuring sound,” “a pathetic ode,”—here the name of a singer.

DARGO, *Dearg*, or *An Dearg*, “red,” or the “red one,” a warrior much celebrated in Ossianic poetry. *Dàn an Deirg*, “the song of Dargo,” is published by Dr Smith, and seems of old to have been held in the highest estimation. A proverb still in use says, *Gach dàn gu dàn an Deirg, 's gach laoidh gu laoidh an amadain mhòir*—“Each song to the song of Dargo, and each lay to the lay of the great fool,” these two being deemed the best of their respective kinds.

FRO-HIAL, *Frothal*, the king of Sorcha or Sora, who besieged Carric-thura.—*Vide* Note 10.

HERMIN, a noble who dwelt by the “Taine.”

INNIS-TORC or THORC, “isle of boars or whales,” said to be one of the Orkney Islands, in which the scene of this poem is principally laid.

LOTHA, the ancient name of one of the great rivers in the north of Scotland. The only one of them that still retains a name of a like sound is Lochy in Inverness-shire.—Macpherson.

MINONA, *Mù-fhonn*, “sweet air or tune,” the name of a female singer.

RINVEL, a Fingalian chief who was slain by Cormar.

ROTHA, a harbour of Innis-Torc.

SARNO, king of Innis-Torc, succeeded by his son Ca-hul.

SILRIC, *Siol Rìgh* (†), "one of royal race," the lover of Binvela, and one of Fingal's warriors who perished in battle.

SORA, *Sorcha*, *Sorch*, is said to have been a kingdom in Scandinavia. I have heard it applied to Ardnamurchan in Argyleshire. It is also said to mean "light," as opposed to *dorcha*, "dark."

TAINÉ, a river in Scandinavia. The names *Tanaís* and *Tana* will readily occur here to the reader. As a Celtic word, *Tàine* may mean *Támhamuinn*, "the sluggish or still river," from the same root as the *Thames*, or *Tamesis*, and very many other river names. *Tàine* is said to be an old Celtic word for "water."

TUBAR, the friend and confidant of Fro-hal.

UHA, daughter of Hermin, who, in love to Fro-hal, followed him, disguised as a warrior, in his expedition against Carric-thura. In the latter part of the poem *Cri-mora* acts similarly towards Connal, and throughout the Ossianic poems we have many such records of maidens following their lovers to the wars. The history of Scandinavia tells us of the *skiold-moer*—i.e., "shield-maids"—who engaged in battle, not merely for the defence of their lovers, but frequently from pure love of war—the Amazons of the north.

NOTES TO CARRIC-THURA.

¹ "Son without blemish, of gold-yellow hair."

Attributing hair to the sun appears at first sight very fanciful; but we find many poets thus describing his rays. Virgil, *Æn.* ix. v. 638, speaks of "crinitus Apollo;" Dante, in the beginning of Canto xxiv. of the 'Inferno,' speaks of the sun "freshening his locks;" Spenser, in the 'Faery Queene,' Book I. Canto v. s. 2, has

"Phœbus . . . shaking his deawie hayre;"

and in Max Müller's translations from the 'Vedas' the figure frequently recurs.

In all modern Gaelic, as in so many other modern languages, the sun is feminine; here, and generally throughout the Ossianic poems, he is masculine—a presumption in favour of their antiquity.

² The appearance in nature underlying the bold and beautiful image described in lines 5-9, may probably be what is seen when the sun is sinking in the ocean from a cloudless sky with a gentle breeze. The bright shining on the face of the waters gives the rippling waves an appearance of life and eager motion. But the instant that the sun does sink, all becomes still, and pale, and deathlike, as if the waves had suddenly fled, and nothing but a dim void remained.

³ The episodes inserted in this poem, as the songs of Silric and Binvela, and of Crimora and Connal, form three sections of the 'Fragments of Ancient Scottish Poetry,' published by Macpherson in 1760; and it is no more than justice to him to mention what he then stated regarding the Fragments generally,—that while they appeared in his publication "as detached pieces," there was 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."—*Vide* Dr Blair's preface to the Fragments.

The Address to the Sun, or "Sun-Hymn," as it is called, with which the poem opens, is incontestably proved to be older than the days of Macpherson.

⁴ "'Ainnir nan rosg mall"—

"Maid of slow-moving eyelids"—

occurs very frequently as descriptive of female beauty. It might be translated "mild" or "meek-eyed" maiden; but I generally prefer the more literal rendering.

⁵ "I am . . . alone"—literally, "in my one," as stated in the margin—a mode of speaking not peculiar to Ossian, but used in prose as well as in poetry, pervading Gaelic usage alike modern and ancient. Thus, "I am a poor man," or "a rich man," becomes, in Gaelic idiom, "I am *in my* poor man," or "*in my* rich man"—"Tha mi ann dhuine bochd," &c. This form of expression might suggest that they who first used it believed in a duality of being and condition as belonging to man; but when we examine the matter we find that this does not afford a solution, for the form is not confined to conditions mental or material into which a man may pass. It is also used regarding objects or things which, in other languages, we are said to be, or to become, or to which we are likened. Thus, in the well-known passage, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, "I am *as* sounding brass," &c. (while the Irish and Welsh versions introduce, like the English, a particle of comparison which is not in the Greek), the Gaelic asserts the actual passing of the person into the brass, which thereby becomes his, and into which he is transformed, saying, "I am *in my* sounding brass," &c.—"Tha mi *ann ann* umbha a ni fuaim," &c. Further, this transmigration and indwelling are attributed to inanimate objects—to things as well as to persons—when they undergo a change of condition or nature among themselves; and while I can give no explanation whatsoever of this form of speech—peculiar, as far as I know, to the Gaelic language—yet, as every peculiar form of speech denotes a peculiar form of thought, and illustrates a portion of the history of mind, I have thought it proper to call attention to this strange idiom, hoping to see some light thrown upon it by some more skilful analyst of speech and thought.

⁶ "Cruth-Lòduinn 's an lear gun tuar."

"Cru-Lodin wan, upon the plain."

For Lodin, *vide* note on the name in the poem of Ca-Lodin. *Lear* is generally translated "sea" or "ocean." It is like the Latin *aquor*; and here, as also in line 315, the context evidently requires it to be translated by "plain."

⁷ "Said the king of might," &c.

"Thuirt rìgh nach b' *fhaoin*," &c.

"Dixit rex qui non erat vanus" (Macfarlan).

I am glad, once for all, to quote the high authority of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland as to the absolute unmanageableness, in an English translation, of this word *fhoin*. It is "a word of which it is scarcely possible to give an adequate translation," they say, in a note at p. 132 of their Report. I would make the same assertion regarding *thall*, "ex adverso," and several other words, whose meaning must be determined entirely by the context, and, consequently, must frequently be more a matter of conjecture than of certainty.

⁸ "*Na* cuimhich Mac-Cumhail," &c.

"Remember *not* the son of Cu-hal."

Any one who reads the passage in which this line occurs will see that the *na*, "not," must be a misprint. It makes the words of Fingal utterly meaningless—"Go and dwell thou in thy plains, . . . remember *not* the son of Cu-hal." Dr Graham of Aberfoyle long ago pointed out the inconsistency here, yet it has been allowed to stand in the subsequent Gaelic editions, and is received by Macfarlan. The change of *na*, "not," into *no* or *neo*, "else," gives a clear meaning and point to the words: "Go to thy plains, . . . *else* remember the son of Cu-hal,"—an alternative exactly similar to that with which Cru-Lodin, in his answer (line 293), threatens Fingal.

⁹ "Tha 'Thios gun 'bhi dall."

"He knows, and he's not blind."

This is another obvious error on the part of printer, transcriber, or reciter. "There is knowledge, *without being blind*, of the weakness of thy hand," &c. This would imply that blindness increased the means

of obtaining knowledge. I suggest, "Tha fhios aig an dall," "*Even* the blind know thy weakness;" or, "Tha fhios gun bhi thall," without being "over," *i.e.*, in the world of spirits—meaning, "all men know thy weakness." At the same time, I have left the text as I found it, in case any other translator might see a meaning in it which I cannot perceive.

¹⁰ "The king of Sora is son of mine."

This may mean, as the next line suggests, that he was Lodin's worshipper, or it may be taken more literally. According to Scandinavian genealogy, the kings of Denmark were actually descended from Odin; and Frode III., one of these, according to the historian Suhm, reigned near the time assigned to Fingal. This *Frode* is said to be Ossian's *Fror-hal*.

¹¹ Moved the light of the steel through the spectre."

The perfect keeping of this line with all that is said about the phantom is worth observing.

¹² "Like smoke

Which a boy, with stick in hand, raises
Around a hearth of discord and of gloom."

This simile reminds one of the modern proverb of a "smoky house and a scolding wife." The Fingalians, however, may have suffered from the same combination of domestic grievances which their successors complain of, so that the saying may be really as old as the days of Selma. At the same time, it has a more modern flavour about it than any other portion of this really old poem.

¹³ "Gathering himself into himself."

Among the many gorgeous and often fantastic appearances presented by clouds in the deep valley of Glen Nevis, and on the face of the great Ben, I have more than once noticed what renders this expression very intelligible to a dweller among the mountains. I have seen a cloud, or a mass of mist, which filled the chasm of the glen, suddenly torn and scattered into many fragments, apparently by the action of a whirlwind within the mass. When raised to a higher region the same

whirlwind, seemingly embracing a wider sweep, has again rapidly and violently forced all these together; or, more frequently, the scattered fragments, released from the disturbing influence, and floating in calm, mutually drawn together by the force of attraction, have reunited into one cloud, which sometimes rested peacefully on the brow of the mountain, and sometimes floated on high beyond the summit, to be seen no more.

14 "Who had overthrown him in warrior strife"—

literally "had taken *cess* of him." The Gaelic word *eis*, "tax" or "cess," is among the many which have been challenged as modern, because it is so obviously connected with the English "cess." If, however, we examine the pedigree of "cess," we are led upwards to the Latin "census," and "censeo" or "kenseo." Now, whether we refer to a "poll-tax" or a mere enumeration of "heads," we find the Celtic *ceann*, or *ken* (*i. e.*, head), affording a clearer explanation of the root-meaning of the word than any other language; so that if there is to be any dispute about borrowing, the Gaelic clearly comes out as the lender, not as the borrower. *Stoirm*, "storm," is another word that Laing tries to make much of on the same ground; but this also is a word belonging equally to various languages. We have it in Welsh and Armoric, as well as in the Teutonic dialects; and its root *tor*, "noise," pervading all these, I have little doubt gave his name to the great Scandinavian "Thor."

The fact is, that the recent discoveries of philology, in proving the Celtic to be one of the many branches of the great Aryan tree, show the objections brought against Ossian, on the score of his using words borrowed from other languages, to be utterly unfounded, and to result from the now abandoned system of deriving one language from another.

15 "Geng nan rosg mall."

"The *branch* of gentle eyelids."

This term "branch" is, both in Ossianic and in modern Gaelic poetry, very frequently applied to a beautiful young woman. It appears to the English reader to be a very violent figure; but in English, "scion," "sapling," "stem," are instances of the same figure; and in the Bible our Lord is described as the "Branch of righteousness," or simply "the Branch."

¹⁶ “Las fraoch na feirg”—

“Burned the fury of wrath”—

literally, “kindled the *heather* of wrath.” This is an expression still in use to denote “fury,” or “the uttermost of wrath.” “Moor-burning,” a thing familiar to every Scottish shepherd, and, in modern days, the fertile source of contention between the rearers of game and the owners of sheep, will suggest a probable explanation of this remarkable expression. When a mountain-side, covered with long heather, is set on fire in breezy weather in spring, the flames spread with wonderful rapidity, and their surging and sweltering amid the darkness of night convey an image of consuming wrath not easily surpassed. *Fallusg*, the Gaelic name for “great moor-burning,” frequently occurs in Ossian.

¹⁷ “He called unto him Tubar, good at need.”

“Ghairm thuige Tùbar nach *mairg*.”

This is an expression not easily translated. *Mairg* is “pity” or “regret,” but never used alone. It occurs in conjunction with the substantive verb, and is more of an adjective than a substantive in signification. “Is *mairg*,” or “cha *mhairg*,” &c., might even be called a composite verb. A circumlocution is necessary to bring out the full meaning. He called unto him Tubar (to call), whom was no (cause of) regret. “Good at need,” “faithful,” or “trusty,” conveys the idea. Macfarlan has mistaken *mairg* for *meiry*, “rust,” and translates the line—

“Vocavit . . . Tubarem laud rubiginosum.”

¹⁸ “My soul was full of her smooth white (form)”—

literally, “full of the smooth white.” Tennyson, in ‘Vivien,’ speaks of

“A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful.”

¹⁹ “When the *stranger* would yield in combat.”

I have here translated the word *dàinb* by “stranger,” in deference to Macfarlan and other translators of Ossian. It seems to be assumed that this is always its meaning throughout these poems; but it appears to me that in the line before us, as in many other places, the true meaning is “enemy.” Hospitality to strangers ranked as a cardinal virtue among the Fingalians; but if we uniformly understand “strangers”

by *dàimh*, we must conclude that the stranger, as such, was to be fought with whenever he appeared.

In "Covala," lines 184, 185, we read—

"Bi'dh ar còmh-stri ri *dàimh* 'thig a nall,
O thalamh nan *Gull* o thuath ;"

translated by Macfarlan—

"Erit nostra concertatio adversus *catervas* quæ venient huc,
E terra alienigenarum a septentrione."

The rendering *catervas* here is unwarranted by any authority that I am acquainted with, and the meaning evidently is "enemies."

I might refer to many other passages to confirm this view : but I observe further, that in some places *dàimh* seems to bear the very opposite meaning ; that of "friend," as in "Car-hou," line 77, where Moira is called—

" Ùrla shneachda nan *dàimh* treun "—
" Snowy-bosom of brave *friends*."

This I believe to be the meaning of the line ; for Moira was in her father's hall, in the very midst of her kin, and I cannot see how she could, in such circumstances, be spoken of as Moira "of brave *strangers*." In modern Gaelic the word *dàimh* signifies "relation" in the abstract ; and its derivative adjectives, *dàimheil* and *dàimheach*, signify "friendly," "kindly," "related." Contrary to the general opinion, I believe it has this meaning in the Ossianic poetry. It appears to bear the three different significations of "enemy," "stranger," "friend ;" or possibly I should reverse their order, as the experience of actual life too frequently teaches us to do.

The derivation of the Latin "hospes" and "hostis" from a common root, is somewhat akin to the remarkable change of meaning in the Gaelic *dàimh*.

²⁰ "Took Fingal to himself the hill."

This sounds strange to an English ear ; but "he took the road," "he took to his heels," are common enough in conversation.

C A R - H O N

A R G U M E N T.

“ This poem is complete, and the subject of it, as of most of Ossian’s compositions, tragical. In the time of Comhal, the son of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Clessámmor, the son of Thaddu, and brother of Morna, Fingal’s mother, was driven by a storm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which stood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hospitably received by Reuthámir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina, his only daughter, in marriage. Reuda, the son of Cormo, a Briton, who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthámir’s house, and behaved haughtily towards Clessámmor. A quarrel ensued in which Reuda was killed ; the Britons who attended him pressed so hard on Clessámmor, that he was obliged to throw himself into the Clyde, and swim to his ship. He hoisted sail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to sea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night, but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to desist.

“ Moina, who had been left with child by her husband, brought forth a son, and died soon after. Reuthámir named the child Carthon—*i. e.*, *the murmur of waves*—from the storm which carried off Clessámmor his father, who was supposed to have been cast away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal, the father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions against the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthámir was killed in the attack, and Carthon was carried safe away by his nurse, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man’s estate, was resolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha on Comhal’s posterity. He set sail from the Clyde, and falling on the coast of Morven, defeated two of Fingal’s heroes, who came to oppose his progress. He was at last unwittingly killed by his father Clessámmor, in a single combat. This story is the foundation of the present poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon, so that what passed before is introduced by way of episode. The poem is addressed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar.”—M.

C A R T H O N N.

SGEUL ri aithris air àm o aois ;
 Gnìomha làithean nam bliadhna 'll'aom.

a Tòirne, generally toirn.

- Do thòirne-sa, a Lòra nan sruth,^a
 Thog cuimhne an diugh air na thréig,
 5 Fuaim coille Gharmallair nan craobh !
 Sèimh a guth do m' chluasaibh féin.
 Am faic thu, 'Mhalmhìna nan seòl,
 Carraig mhòr, 'us a ceann 'am fraoch ;
 Tri giubhais ag aomadh o 'n tòrr,
 10 Caoin ghlasra 'tha còrr r' a taobh ?
 An sin tha dìthein thlà nan gleann,
 A's glaine ceann, a' crith fo ghaoith ;
 An chuaran glas air chròm nan càrn,
 'Call gu mall a chalg le h-aois ;
 15 Dà chloich gu an leth ams an ùir,
 An còinneach fo smùr air an raon.
 Theich fiadh o iomall a' chùirn

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

The murmur of thy streams, O Lora ! brings back the memory of the past. The sound of thy woods, Garmallar, is lovely in mine ear ! Dost thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath ?

C A R - H O N .

A TALE to tell of the time of old ;
Deeds of the days of years that are gone.

- Thy murmur, O Lora of streams ! “
To-day has raised remembrance of the past ;
- 5 Echo of wooded Garmallar,
Mild is its voice in my ears.
Seest thou Malvina (child) of heroes,
A massy rock with heath-clad head,
Three pines a-slanting from the height,
- 10 A copse surpassing fair along its side ?
There tender daisies of the glens,
Of purest head, are waving in the wind.
The thistle grey, on slope of cairns,
Slowly sheds its beard from age ;
- 15 Two stones (sink) mid-way in the ground,
Their moss decaying on the plain.
Fled has the deer from the edge of the cairn,¹

The murmur
of the stream
of Lora recalls
to Ossian the
tale of Car-
hon.

He describes
to Malvina the
place where
this hero was
laid.

Three aged pines bend from its face ; green is the narrow plain at its feet. There the flower of the mountain grows, and shakes its white head in the breeze. The thistle is there alone, shedding its aged beard. Two stones, half sunk in the ground, show their heads of moss. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds

'S an do chuireadh air chùl an laoch.
 Tha tannas caol, 'us faoin, 'us fuar,
 20 Mall ag aomadh mu uaigh an t-seoid :
 Na tréin, a Mhalmhìna nam buadh,
 Aig iomall nan stuadh fo 'n tòrr !

Sgeul ri aithris air àm o aois ;
 Gnìomha làithean nam bliadhna 'dh'aom.

25 Co sud, 'tha o thìr nan dàimh,
 Le mìltean mu 'làimh fo chruaidh ?
 Tha dèarsa na gréine m'a cheann,
 A chiabh fo strì ri gaoith nan stuadh.
 Tha 'ghnùis a' sìoladh sìos gu sìth,
 30 Cho cinin, a rìgh, ri feasgar thall,
 'N uair theumas gath o iar nam frìth,
 Air caol-ghleann Chòna nan sruth mall.
 Co 'th' ann, ach mac Chumhail nan treun,
 Ard rìgh nam beum, 's nam beusa mòr ;
 35 'Faicinn a gharbh mhonaidh féin ;
 A mhiltean gum bheud 'ba chòrr."
 "Togar guth," thuirt bàrd 'bha liath ;
 " Dh'aom nàimhdean fo fhìamh air leirg,
 Clann na tìre fad o iar,
 40 Rìgh talla nan sgiath fo mheirg,^b
 A dhearg-shùil a' sìubhal 'am mòr-chuis,

^a His hosts ;
 lit. *his thou-*
sands.

^b Under
 gloom ; lit.
under rust.

a dim ghost standing there. The mighty lie, O Malvina ! in the narrow plain of the rock.

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

Who comes from the land of strangers, with his thousands around him ? The sunbeam pours its bright stream before him ; his hair meets the wind of his hills. His face is settled from war. He is

- Wherein the hero has been laid.
 A phantom thin, shadowy, cold,
 20 Slowly bends over the warrior's grave.
 The valiant, Malvina of graces,
 (Are) by the marge of waves, beneath the mound.

A tale to tell of the time of old ;
 Deeds of the days of years that are gone.

- 25 Who is yonder from the land of strangers,
 With thousands around him armed in steel ?
 The brightness of the sun (is) round his head,
 His locks in struggle with the wind of waves ;
 His aspect calming down to peace,
 30 O king ! as gently as the close of day,
 When slants a beam from west the wood,
 O'er Cona's narrow glen of sluggish streams.
 Who but the son of Cu-hal of heroes,
 Great king of cleaving blows and noble deeds,
 35 Viewing his own rugged mountains
 (With) his faultless and matchless hosts ! "
 " Raised be a voice," said a hoary bard ;
 " Fled have the foe in fear on the hill—
 Sons of the land which is far from the west.
 40 The king of the shield-hung hall is in gloom ; ^b
 His red eye rolls in wrathful pride ;

A description
 of Fingal re-
 turning from
 victorious
 war.

The bards
 sing of the
 flight of the
 foe, and de-
 scribe the
 wrath of their
 leader, called
 the "king of
 the world."

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

E 'tarruing lann mhòr nan triath.
Theich air raon nan cruadalach gnòmh,
Clann na tìre fad o 'n iar."

- 45 Mar so mhosgail guth nam bàrd,
'N uair thàinig gu talla Shelma nan stuadh ;
Mìle solus a' losgadh mu 'n aird,
'Dealadh dhealan 'am meadhon an t-sluaigh ;
A chuirn 'an àrd thalla nam buadh :
50 Dh'aom oidhche gu luath le sòlas.

" C'àite 'bheil triath nan cleasa mòra ? "

Thuir Fionnghal, a's aillidh eùl ;

" C'àite, measg sòlas nan seòd

Garbh bhràthair na còrr òighe Mùirn !

- 55 Dorcha, mall tha 'laithean 'triall
'An toirm gbleann nan sìan mu Lòra.
Faic ! is esan 'tha 'teurnadh o 'shliabh,
Mar steud-each gun srian 'am mòr-chuis,
'N uair chithear an eachradh mu'n raon,
60 Agus foghar na gaoith 'n a shùin.^a
Ceud fàilt air Cleasamor nach faoin !
C' uim' cho fhada o Shelma nan còrn ? "

" 'N do thill an rìgh, " 's e 'fhreagair an triath,

" Gu monadh nam fiadh le 'chliu ?

^a *Foghar* frequently signifies "sound," or "noise." Macfarlan renders it "odor."

his father's sword. Ye have fled over your fields, sons of the distant land !

Such were the words of the bards, when they came to Selma's halls. A thousand lights from the stranger's land rose, in the midst of the people. The feast is spread around ; the night passed away in joy. Where is the noble Clessamor ? said the fair-haired Fingal.

He draws the mighty brand of heroes.
 Fled from the field of dauntless deeds ²
 Have the sons of the land that is far from the west."

- 45 Thus kindled the voice of the bards,
 When they came to Selma's hall of waves.
 A thousand lights were flaming high,
 Flashing bright gleams amid the host.
 The feast was in the high and noble hall ;
 50 Passed speedily the night in joy.

Fingal and his
 warriors sit
 down to a
 feast in Selma.

- "Where is the prince of the great deeds ?"
 Said Fingal of the graceful locks :
 "Where, amid the joy of warriors,
 (Is) the great brother of Morna, maiden rare ?
 55 Dark (and) slow his days creep on,
 In murmur of stormy glens by Lora.
 See, he from the hill descends,
 Like war-horse free and proud,
 When the stud is seen on the plain,
 60 And in his nostrils sounds the wind."
 A hundred welcomes be to Clessamor the brave !
 Why from Selma's festal hall so long ?"

He inquires
 for his uncle
 Clessamor,
 whose absence
 he regrets.

Clessamor is
 seen approach-
 ing, and is
 welcomed by
 Fingal. He
 rejoices at the
 king's return,
 and wishes
 that his fame
 may be as
 that of his
 father Cu-hal ;

"Has the king returned ?" was the chief's reply,
 "To the mountains of deer with his fame ?"

Where is the brother of Morna, in the hour of my joy ? Sullen and dark he passes his days in the vale of echoing Lora : but, behold, he comes from the hill, like a steed in his strength, who finds his companions in the breeze ; and tosses his bright mane in the wind. Blest be the soul of Clessámmor ! why so long from Selma ?

Returns the chief, said Clessámmor, in the midst of his fame ?

- 65 Do mholadh mar Chumhal nan srian,
 'An còmhrag nan sgiath gu 'chùl !
 Bu tric thar Carunn 'bha sinn a' triall
 Gu talamh a's ciara dàimh :
 Cha do thill sinn gun fhuil air ar sgiath ;
 70 Cha robh sòlas air triath nan lann.

- “C' nìmh' tha cuimhu' air àm nam blàr,
 'Us mo chiabhan gu 'm bàrr cho liath ?
 Cha -n aithne do 'n bhogha mo làmh ;
 An diugh is eutrom mo shleagh 's mo sgiath.
 75 Nan tilleadh sòlas dhomhsa féin,
 Mar chunnaeas air cheud an òigh,
 Ùrla shneachda nan dàimh treun,
 Maona ghlan do'n géilleadh slòigh,
 Ainnir àillidh nan rosg ciar !”

- 80 “Aithris,” thuirt an rìgh le fòill,
 “An sgeul mu 'n òigh, a thriath.
 Mar nial air gath gréine tha do bhròn ;
 Tha d'anam fo cheò nach crìon ;
 'S dubh-dhorcha do smaointean, 'ard laoih,
 85 A' 'd aonar mu Lòra nam fuaim.
 Chinnear mu d'òg-bhròn nach faoin,
 Air a' cheò a chuir d'aois fo ghruaim.”

Such was the renown of Cumhal in the battles of his youth. Often did we pass over Carun to the land of the strangers: our swords returned, not unstained with blood: nor did the kings of the world rejoice. Why do I remember the times of our war? My hair is mixed with grey. My hand forgets to bend the bow: I lift a lighter spear. O that my joy would return, as when I first beheld

65 (Be) thy praise as of Cu-hal of bridles,
 In the conflict of shields, to its close.
 Oft over Carron did we wend,
 To the land of duskiest foes :³
 We turned not with unblooded shields ;
 70 Joy was not on the chief of spears.

mentions the time when he and Cu-hal fought together against " dusky foes " on the other side of the river Carron ;

 " Why is there memory of battle-days,
 When my hair throughout is so grey ?
 The bow (now) knoweth not my hand ;
 Light to-day are my spear and shield.
 75 Could joy come back to me—even me—
 As when the maid was first beheld,
 Snowy-bosom of brave friends,⁴
 Moina bright, to whom peoples yield—
 The lovely maid of dark-brown eyelash ! "

mourns over his age and decaying strength ; and recalls the days of his youth, when he first beheld Moina, his love.

80 " Unfold," said the king in gentleness,
 " The tale of the maid, O prince !
 As cloud on sunbeam is thy sorrow ;
 Thy soul is under heavy mist.
 Black-dark are thy thoughts, high hero,
 85 In thy loneliness by sounding Lora.
 Heard be the tale of thy young grief so great,
 Of the mist which has dimmed thine age."

Fingal asks him to tell the tragical tale which had rendered his life so sad.

the maid ; the white-bosomed daughter of strangers. Moina, with the dark-blue eyes !

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

“ Iadsa làithean na sìth a bh’ann ;”
 Thuirt Cleasamor nan lann, an triath,
 90 “ Bhuail mi gu Bailechluthai nan tùr àrd,
 Nam balla càrn, ’an eathar ciar.
 Chuir gaoth mo shiuil bhàna fo ruaig
 Gu cal’ air Cluthai nan sruth sèimh.
 Tri lài’ thogadh fleagh, agus cuirm
 95 ’An talla Rurmhair nan còrn fial ;
 Chunnacas ùrla soluis na mùirn,
 Maona ghasda nan tùr ’s nan triath.
 Chuireadb sòlas na slige mu’n cuairt ;
 Thug Rurmar nam buadh an òigh,
 100 A broilleach mar chobbar nan stuadh,
 A sùil reul sholuis an t-slòigh ;
 Dubh mar am fitheach a ciabh ;
 B’ àillidh na ’ciabh a gnè.
 Mòr m’ annsadh air ainneir nan triath,
 105 Maona ghasda air sliabh nan réidh.

“ Chunnacas mac coigrich nan sgiath,
 Òg a dh’imich a thriall gu Maona ;
 Chualas ’fhocail ’an talla nan triath ;
 Leth-thàirngeadh leis sgian nach caol.
 110 ‘ C’ àite ’bheil àrd Chumhal nan lann,
 Fear-astair nan gleann gun raon ?

“ It was in the days of peace,” replied the great Clessúmmor, “ I came in my bounding ship, to Balcutha’s walls of towers. The winds had roared behind my sails, and Clutha’s streams received my dark-bosomed ship. Three days I remained in Renthámir’s halls, and saw his daughter, that beam of light. The joy of the shell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breasts were

- “Days of peace were they then,”
Said Clessamor of swords, the prince.
- 90 “I bore for Balclutha of tall towers
And winding walls, in a dusky skiff; ⁵
My white sails fled before the wind,
To a bay on Clutha of smooth streams.
For three days feast and joy were raised
- 95 In Rurmar’s hall of generous bowls.
Seen was the dear one’s countenance of light—
Goodly Moina of towers and of heroes.
Sent round was the joy of the shell.
Rurmar of conquests gave (to me) the maid.
- 100 Her bosom as the foam of waves;
Her eye the people’s star of light,
Black as the raven was her hair;
More lovely than her hair, her mien.
Great (was) my joy in the noble maid,
- 105 Graceful Moina, on the hill of plains.

- “Seen was a son of the stranger of shields—
A youth who bent his course to Moina.⁶
Heard were his words in the hall of heroes;
A broad-bladed sword he half-unsheathed.
- 110 ‘Where is the mighty Cu-hal of brands,
Traveller of glens without a plain?’⁷

He tells that in youth he had sailed to Balclutha, the dwelling of Rurmar, who received him hospitably.

He fell in love with Moina, Rurmar’s daughter, and married her.

A stranger comes to Balclutha, who seeks to carry off Moina. When Clessamor resists, he asks if he presumes on Fingal’s aid.

like foam on the wave, and her eyes like stars of light: her hair was dark as the raven’s wing: her soul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great: my heart poured forth in joy.

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

'Bheil Cumhal 'us gaisgich 's an àm,
'Thusa ladorna, dàn, 'us faoin ?'

“ ‘Tha m' anam,' thuirte mise, 'a thriath,
115 A' lasadh gu 'thrian leis féin ;
Gun eagal tha Cleasamor fo 'sgiath,
Measg mhiltean, ge cian na tréin.
'S mòr d'fhocal, 'mhic coigrich nan lann,
Agus mise 's an àm 'am aonar ;
120 Tha mo chladheamh 'erith-mhosgladh gu 'cheann ;
Grad a b' àill leis mo làmh ag aomadh—
Gun fhocal eile air Cumhal nan ceud,
'Mhic Chluthai o 'n do thréig an sruth.'

“ Dh'éirich neart agus àrdan na h-òige ;
125 Bhuail, 'us thuit an trith mòr fo chruaidh.
Chuala Cluthai air 'bruaichan na seoid ;
Las mìle sleagh còrr mu'n cuairt.
Chuir mi cath : thug coigrich buaidh :
Leum mise grad 'an Cluthai nan sruth ;
130 Sgaoil mo shiuil bhàn' air cuan,
A' beumadh tro' stuadhan dubh.
Thàinig Maona, truagh fo dheoir,
Ag aomadh nan rosg brèin o speur :
Chualas a guth, 's e dubh 'us beur.^a
135 Trie a thill mi féin an long ;

^a Mournful ;
lit. *black*.

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

Is Cu-hal, with his warriors, now (here),
(When) thou (art so) presuming, rash, and vain ?'

" 'My soul,' I replied, 'O chief !

115 Burns wholly with a fire its own.

Fearless is Clessamor, beneath his shield,

'Midst thousands, though the brave be distant far.⁸

Big is thy word, son of the stranger of brands !

When I, meantime, am here alone.

120 My sword starts quivering to its hilt ;

Eager it courts my hand, nigh-leaning.

No further word of Cu-hal of hundreds,

Thou son of the stream-forsaken Clutha.'⁹

" Uprose the strength and pride of youth :

125 We struck ; and fell the hero great beneath the
Clutha heard the warriors on her banks. [steel.

Flashed a thousand mighty spears around.

I fought a fight : strangers prevailed.

Quick I leaped into Clutha's stream,

130 Spread my white sails on the sea,

Cleaving through billows dark.

Came Moina, miserable in tears,

Bending sad eyelids from on high ;¹⁰

Heard was her cry mournful and shrill."

135 Often did I turn the skiff ;

Clessamor answers that he trusts wholly to his own strength.

They fight, and the stranger is slain.

His followers attack Clessamor, who is obliged to swim to his boat for safety.

Moina followed him to the bank. He repeatedly strove to reach the shore,

" The strength of his pride arose. We fought ; he fell beneath my sword. The banks of Clutha heard his fall ; a thousand spears glittered around. I fought : the strangers prevailed : I plunged into the stream of Clutha. My white sails rose over the waves, and I bounded on the dark-blue sea. Moina came to the shore, and rolled the red eye of her tears : her loose hair flew on the wind ; and I heard her mournful distant cries. Often did I turn my ship ; but

- Bhuadhaich tonn 'us gaoth o 'n ear ;
 Ni-m facas Cluthai chaoin o 'n uair,
 No Maona nam buadh, nan ciabh ciar :
 Thuit ise mu Chluthai gun tuar ;
- 140 Chunnacas tannas 'bha fuar air sliabh.
 Dh'aithnich measg na h-oidhche a triall,
 Isc 'an iomall nan sìan 'an Lòra ;
 A caol-ghath mar ghealach as-ùr,
 'Scalladh sìos o mhùg nan speur,
- 145 'N uair thuiteas an sneachda gu dlùth,
 An domhan fo smùr gu léir."

- "Togaibh, 'bhàrda caoin, am fonn,"
 Thuirt Fionnghal, àrd shonn nan sgiath ;
 "Togaibh moladh mìn-Mhaona nan tonn,
- 150 'Us i 'codal 'am fonn nan sliabh ;
 Gairmear a h-anam gu mall fo dhuann
 Gu talamh nan stuadh mòr,
 A caoin astar mu iomall nan cruach,
 Air Mòrbheim, nach truagh òigh ;
- 155 Gathan gréine nan laithe 'dh'aom,
 Sòlas banail nan daoine 'bh' ann.
 Chunnacas balla Bhaile Chluthai nan laun,
 Air nach éirich ach gann guth slòigh ;
 Anns an talla bhla teine nach mall ;"
- 160 An dìugh gun chaidre measg tréith 'us òigh :

^a Devouring
 fire ; lit. *a*
 fire not slow.

the winds of the east prevailed. Nor Clutha ever since have I seen, nor Moina of the dark-brown hair. She fell in Balclutha, for I have seen her ghost. I knew her as she came through the dusky night, along the murmur of Lora : she was like the new moon, seen through the gathered mist ; when the sky pours down its flaky snow, and the world is silent and dark."

Wave and wind from east prevailed.
 Unseen thenceforth the tranquil Clyde,
 And graceful Moina of the dark-brown hair—
 At Clutha she fell in paleness.

- 140 Seen on the hill was a ghost all cold ;
 (I) knew amid the night her path,
 On the skirt of storms in Lora.
 Her slender beam (was) like the moon renewed,
 Looking down through haze of skies,
 145 When snow is thickly falling,
 (And) the world (is) all in gloom.”

“ Raise, ye tuneful bards, the song,”
 Said Fingal, high chief of shields ;

“ Raise praise to gentle Moina of the waves—

- 150 She sleeps amid the music of the hills ;
 Let her soul be slowly called by song
 To the land of the great clouds,¹¹
 Her gentle course by edge of peaks,
 On the great Bens of happy maidens.
 155 The sunbeams of days that are gone,
 The womanly joy of the men who have been.¹²
 Seen was the wall of Balclutha of swords,
 Where the people’s voice now rises faint ;
 In the hall devouring fire had been.^a
 160 To-day no converse there ’twixt brave and fair.

but an east
 wind drove
 him to sea ;
 nor did he
 ever after see
 Moina in life.

He soon after
 recognised her
 spirit amid
 the storms of
 Lora, where
 his home was.

Fingal calls on
 the bards to
 sing Moina’s
 praise ; to call
 her soul by
 song to the
 land of happy
 maids.

He describes
 the desolation
 of Balclutha,
 which had
 been burnt to
 the ground.

Raise, ye bards, said the mighty Fingal, the praise of unhappy Moina. Call her ghost, with your songs, to our hills ; that she may rest with the fair of Morven, the sunbeams of other days, the delight of heroes of old. I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls ; and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from

Dh'aom Cluthai ; sruth eutrom air raon
 O àrd bhallaibh 'thuit claon fo smùr.
 An sin cluaran a' ghuasad fo ghaoith,
 Agus còinneach a' caoineadh fo thùr ;
 165 An sionnach ruadh 'n a uinneig féin,—
 Mall-lùbadh an fhéir m'a chùl.
 Is fàsach còmhnuidh Mhaona nan teud,
 Doilleir talla nan ceud 's an tùr.

“Togaibh, a bharda, bròn nam fonn
 170 Mu thalla nan tonn, a bh' ann ;
 Thuit na treuna fada fo thom ;
 Thig làithean nan sonn a nall.
 C' uim' a thogadh leat talla nan còrn,
 'Mhic aimsir, a's lionmhoire sgiath !
 175 Thu 'coimhead an dingh o 'n tùr mhòr,
 An t-ath là fo seòrr nan sliabh.
 Cha mhall na bliadhna 's cumhaehd triall,
 Le osaig nan ciar mhonadh fàs
 A' gairm 'an talla nan triath,
 180 A thuiteadh gu trian air làr.”
 Thig -sa, 'chiar osag, o mhonadh fàs ;
 Bithidh sinne sàr 'n ar làithean féin ;
 Bithidh comhara mo laimn 'am blàr ;
 Bithidh m' anam aig bàrd an tréin.
 185 Togaibhse fonn, cuiribh slige ma 'n cuairt ;

a A thuiteadh,
 “ would fall ;”
 probably for *a*
thuiteas, “ will
 fall.” One of
 a hundred in-
 stances of ir-
 regularity in the
 use of tenses
 of verbs occur-
 ring in Ossian.

its place by the fall of the walls. The thistle shook, there, its lonely head : the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round its head. Desolate is the dwelling of Moina ; silence is in the house of her fathers. Raise the song of mourning, O bards ! over the land of strangers. They have but fallen before us ; for, one day, we must

Turned Clutha by, in light stream, on the plain,
 From lofty walls which fell, all prone, in dust.
 There, in the wind, the thistle sways,
 And weeps the moss beneath the tower.

- 165 The russet fox, in window all his own,
 The grass slow-waving round his back ;
 Desolate is the dwelling of tuneful Moina—
 Dark is the spacious hall in the tower.

- “ Raise, ye bards, the grief of songs,
 170 For the wave-girt hall which has been.
 The fallen brave have long lain in the mound,
 But the heroes' days will (to us) come down.
 Why built by thee has been the festive hall,
 Thou Son of Time, with many wings ?

- 175 Thou lookest to-day from turret high,
 The next (from) beneath the mountain-crag.
 Not tardy are the years whose tread is power,
 With blast from mountains dark and desert ;
 They lift their voice in lordly hall,

- 180 Which fall in ruins to the ground.”
 Come on, dark blast from mountain drear,
 We shall be noble in our day ;
 My sword shall leave its mark in war,
 My soul shall be with bards of heroes.

- 185 Raise ye the tune ; send round the shell !

He calls on
 the bards to
 “ raise the
 grief of songs ”
 for the deso-
 late dwelling
 of Moina.

He reproaches
 the “ Son of
 Time ” for
 building high
 towers which
 often leave
 their occu-
 pants to the
 shelter of the
 mountain rock.

But he resolves
 to be great in
 his own day,
 and thus bids
 defiance to
 time.

fall. Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day ; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes ; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield. And let the blast of the desert come ! we shall be renowned in our day ! The mark of my arm shall be in battle ; my name in the song of bards. Raise the song ; send round

Biodh sòlas r'a luaidh 'am chòir.
 'N uair dh'aomas tusa, 'chi mi shuas,
 Ma dh'aomas tu, a sholuis mhòir ;
 Ma ta air àm, air àm gun tuar,
 190 Mar Fhionnghal a's luaithe ceum ;
 'S ceart co fada mo chliu 's do dhcarrsa."

Mar sin a thog an rìgh am fonn,
 Air làithean nan sonn a b'airde gnìomh ;
 Làn mhìle fear-focail shuas,^a
 195 Ag aomadh gu luaidh an rìgh.
 Bu chosmhuil sin ri fuaim nan teud,
 'N uair dh'èircas a' ghaoth mall o 'n ear.
 B' àillidh do smaointean féin, a thréin ;
 C' uim' tha Oisian 'ad dheigh gun neart ?
 200 Ach seasaidh tu, 'athair, leat féin ;
 Co e coimeas rìgh Shelma nam feart ?

Chaidh an oidheche thairis 'am fonn ;
 Dh'èirich madainn le sòlas còrr ;
 Chunnacas monadh thar liath-cheann nan tonn ;
 205 An gorm chuan fo aoibhneas mòr ;
 Na stuaidh fo chobhar, ag aomadh thall,
 Mu charraig mhaoil 'bha fada uaim.
 Ghluais cèd o linne gu càrn,
 Sàmbla dall 'us aosl' o chuan ;

^a " Word-
men," some-
times used for
bards, and
sometimes for
orators or
spokesmen.

the shell : let joy be heard in my hall. When thou, sun of heaven, shalt fail ! if thou shalt fail, thou mighty light ! if thy brightness is for a season, like Fingal ; our fame shall survive thy beams !

Such was the song of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thousand bards leaned forward from their seats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the music of harps on the gale of the spring.

Let joy be carolled around me.
 When thou, whom I behold on high, shalt fail,
 If fail thou shalt, thou mighty light ;
 If thou, from time to time, grow faint,
 190 As Fingal of the fleetest step ;
 My fame shall be as lasting as thy gleam."

His renown shall last as long as the shining of the sun.

Thus raised the king a song
 Of hero-days whose deeds were highest.
 Full thousand *word-men* (were) above,"
 195 Bending to the monarch's strain ;
 Like to the sound of chords it was,
 When rises slow the wind from east.
 Glorious were thy thoughts, thou mighty one !
 Why is Ossian, strengthless, left behind ?
 200 But thou wilt stand, O father ! all alone ;
 Who can rival Selma's matchless king ?

Ossian, after relating his father's words, celebrates him with highest praise, and mourns that he himself had been left behind.

The night flowed on in song ;
 Rose morn in joy exceeding.
 Seen were hills o'er hoary heads of waves ;
 205 The ocean blue in gladness great ;
 The billows curl in foam around
 A smooth bare rock in distance far.
 Glided fog from sea to cairn,
 A semblance blind and old from ocean.

Next morning, while the Fin-galians were looking across the sea, they saw mist, which soon assumed a dread appearance, passing from sea to land.

Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal ! why had not Ossian the strength of thy soul ? But thou standest alone, my father ! who can equal the king of Selma ?

The night passed away in song ; morning returned in joy. The mountains showed their grey heads ; the blue face of ocean smiled. The white wave is seen tumbling round the distant rock ; a mist

- 210 Cha robh 'shiubhal mar shiubhal nam fear,
 Nan garbh chruth o lear le ceum ;
 Caol thannas ag aomadh o 'n ear,
 'G a ghiùlan air leth nan speur.
 Gu Selma mhòr ghluais an cruth,
 215 'Tuiteam dubh mar fhuil air raon.

- Chunnaic an rìgh an scalla trom,
 Bàs nan daoine 'tighin a nall.
 Thàinig do thalla nan sonn ;
 Ghlac e sgiath Chumbail 'n a làimh :
 220 Chluinnteadh scread na màile cruaidhe.
 Mu 'n cuairt grad dh' éirich na laoich ;
 'An sàmhechair sheas treun-fhìr an t-sluaigh,
 Gach sùil air rìgh fuar-ghleann an fhraoich,
 An còmhrag a' snàmh air a ghnùis,
 225 Bàs an t-slòigh ag iadhadh m 'a shleagh.
 Dh' éirich mìle sgiath an àird ;
 Làn mhìle claidheamh dùbh-ghorm gear
 A' dealradh glan 'an talla Shelma,
 Screadadh truagh air cruaidh nan arm,
 230 Donnal balbh nan luath-chon còrr :^a
 Gun fhocal, gun ghuth o cheann ;
 Gach sùil air lainn 'us tuar an rìgh,
 Esan 'tarruing a shleagh o 'chùil.

^a The smothered howl ;
 lit. *the dumb howl*.

rose slowly from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the silent plain. Its large limbs did not move in steps ; for a ghost supported it in mid-air. It came towards Selma's hall, and dissolved in a shower of blood. The king alone beheld the sight ; he foresaw the death of the people. He came in silence to his hall, and took his father's spear. The mail rattled on his breast. The heroes rose around. They looked

- 210 Its going was not as the gait of men,
 Of stalwart forms from sea-(side) striding ;
 A meagre spectre from the east,
 Upbore it through mid-air.
 To Selma great advanced the wraith,
 215 And black, like blood, it fell upon the plain.

- Beheld the king the direful sight—
 The death of men approaching nigh.
 Came (he) to the hall of heroes ;
 Grasped in his hand the shield of Cu-hal.
 220 Heard was clang from arms of steel ;
 All round the warriors quick uprose ;
 In silence stood the strong ones of the host,
 Each eye on the king of cold and heathy gleus,
 The combat floating over his face,
 225 The death of people hovering round his spear.
 Rose a thousand shields on high ;
 Full thousand swords, dark-blue and keen,
 Brightly shine in Selma's hall ;
 Heard was the woeful gride of steel on steel,
 230 The smothered howl of fleet-foot dogs.^a
 Nor word nor voice from man ;
 Each eye on blade and aspect of the king,
 While he drew his spear from his back.

A spectre bore this "sem-
 blance" towards Selma, where it dissolved in a shower of blood.

Fingal readily understood it to be an omen of war from some ocean foe.

He returns to Selma. The warriors gather around him, in silent expectation of his commands.

in silence on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. They saw battle in his face ; the death of armies on his spear. A thousand shields, at once, are placed on their arms ; they drew a thousand swords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms ascends. The grey dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs. Each marked the eyes of the king, and half assumed his spear.

- “ A shìol Mhòrbheinn, a’s lìonmhor treun,
 235 Cha-n àm so do theud no fial :
 Tha còmhrag a’ dùbhradh romham féin,
 Bàs a’ dorchadh mu chruaich nan sliabh ;
 Tannas faoin, do-n annsadh cliu,
 ’Feuchainn dhuinn na dàimh o lear :
 240 O ’n uisge thàinig suas a’ mhùig,
 Còmhara garbh chunnart nam fear.
 Gach làmh air sleagh, a’s glaine crann ;
 Gach slios fo lainn ’tha guineach, gear ;
 Dubh-chlogaid ag éirigh mu gach ceann ;
 245 Gach màile thall mar theine speur.
 Mar stoirm tha ’n còmhrag ’tional shuas ;
 Cluinnear luath guth fuar a’ bhàis.”

- Dh’imich an rìgh ’us lean an sluagh,
 Mar nial stuaidh làn tein ’us toirm,
 250 ’N uair thig an caol dhealan o thuath
 Do mharuiche truagh le stoirm.
 Air Còna sheas na fir ’am fraoch ;
 Chunnaic òigh’ nan uchd glana na tréin—
 Mar bhadaid nan geug na laoich—
 255 Chunnaic bàs measg òig-fhear nam beum,
 Na rosga mall air euan le fiamh,
 Air cobhar ’bha ’triall mar sheoil ;
 Deoir a’ siubhal lic bhanaid gun ghìomh,

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

- “ Race of great Bens, in heroes rife,
 235 No time is this for song or feast :
 Battle looms upon my sight,
 Death darkens round the mountain-crag ;
 A phantom-form who loves (our) fame,¹³
 Shows us foes from (ocean’s) plain.
 240 From sea uprose the cloud,
 The sign of danger dread to men.
 Be every hand on spear of smoothest shaft,
 Each side beneath keen sword and sharp,
 A dark helm towering o’er each head,
 245 And every mail like the sky-fire.
 As a storm the conflict gathers on high,
 Soon shall the cold voice of death be heard.”

- Advanced the king, followed the host, [sound,¹⁴
 Like foam-cloud wave full charged with fire and
 250 When comes the pointed lightning from the north,
 On the mariner tossed in storm.
 In Cona stood the men in wrath ;¹⁵
 White-bosomed maids beheld the brave ones
 (Like branchy tree-clumps were the warriors) ;
 255 Death (they) saw among the valiant youth ;
 Slow-moving eyes (looked) on the sea in fear,
 On the foam which drifted like sails.
 Tears flowed down gentle cheeks and pure ;

He tells them
 that battle and
 death were ap-
 proaching,

and orders
 them to arm
 themselves
 fully.

He set forth to
 Cona—the
 point of
 danger.
 His people
 follow him.

Their maidens
 weep at the
 approaching
 danger, and
 look to ocean
 with dread.

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

The hero moved on before his host, like a cloud before a ridge of green fire, when it pours on the sky of night, and mariners foresee a storm. On Cona’s rising heath they stood : the white-bosomed maids beheld them above like a grove ; they foresaw the death of the youth, and looked towards the sea with fear. The white wave deceived them for distant sails ; the tear is on their cheek. The

- Spàirn anama mu ghnìomh nan seòd.
 260 Ghluais an solus suas air cuan ;
 Mòr chàbhlach air stuadh mar cheò ;
 Air tràigh thaom na treuna gu luath.
 Measg tional a shluaigh bha seòd,
 Mar cheannard ruadh-cilid nan cruach,
 265 A sgiath bhallach, uallach, uasal, òir ;
 Bu duineal, còrr, rìgh mòr nan sleagh,
 A thriall gu sàr Sholma nan tòrr ;
 A mhiltean 'n a chòir air magh.

- “ Gluais le focal caoin na sìth,
 270 Gluais, Ullin, gu rìgh nan lann ;
 Innis da 's a' chòmhrag ar brìgh,
 Ar naimhdean measg fuath nam fann ;
 Gur mòr an cliùs' a thog ar fleagh,
 'An talla farsuing, a's fial bàigh.
 275 Feuchaidh iads' do 'n sinns're gach sleagh
 O thìr fhada nan treun dàimh—
 Iognadh sud do ehlann coigrich gun ghìomh,
 'Cur fàilt air càirdean do thriath Mhòrbheinn.
 Chualas thall mu ghùomh nam buadh ;
 280 Chrith rìghre measg àrdain an shluaigh,
 'Us an domhan a' luaidh oirme.”

Ghluais Ullin le focal caoin ;

sun rose on the sea, and we beheld a distant fleet. Like the mist of ocean they came : and poured their youth upon the coast. The chief was among them, like the stag in the midst of the herd. His shield is studded with gold ; stately strode the king of spears. He moved towards Selma ; his thousands moved behind.

“ Go, with a song of peace,” said Fingal ; “ go, Ullin, to the king

Their souls distressed for the deeds of the brave.
 260 Rose the light on high o'er ocean,
 A great fleet, on the waves like mist (was seen) ;
 On shore poured warriors with speed.
 A hero was, 'mid concourse of his host,
 Like leader of red hinds on mountain-heights,
 265 With bossy, light, and noble golden shield.
 Manly, choice, was this great king of spears ;
 To noble Selma of towers was his path,
 His thousands around him on the field.

“Go with the soothing word of peace—
 270 Go, Ullin, to the king of swords.
 Declare to him our might in war,
 Our foes 'mid the ghosts of the feeble ;
 That great is their renown who shared our feasts,
 In spacious hall of welcome free.
 275 They show to their sons each spear
 From the far land of valiant foes ¹⁶—
 A wonder to the sons of strangers brave,
 Who hail the friends of the chief of great Bens.
 Heard afar have been (our) conquering deeds ;
 280 Kings have trembled 'mid the pride of their hosts,
 While the world makes us its theme.”

Ullin advanced with peaceful word ;

At length a fleet draws near the shore, and many warriors land. Their leader is conspicuous among them.

Fingal orders Ullin to go with offers of peace, declaring Fingal's invincible might, and the honour enjoyed by those who accepted his hospitality, and with whom he had exchanged arms in token of friendship.

of swords. Tell him that we are mighty in war ; that the ghosts of our foes are many. But renowned are they who have feasted in my halls ! they show the arms of my fathers in a foreign land : the sons of the strangers wonder, and bless the friends of Morven's race ; for our names have been heard afar : the kings of the world shook in the midst of their host.”

- Sheas rìgh nach robh faoin r'a shleagh ;
 Chunnaic e nàmhaid 's an raon.
 285 " Ceud fàilt air mac coigrich nam fleagh !
 Mall 'us mòr do cheum o lear : "
 Thuirt Fionnghal nam fear 's nam faobh ;
 " Do lann mar ghath teine o 'n ear
 'Dol seachad gu mear ri do thaobh ;
 290 Cha mhò gealach mhòr nan speur
 Na do sgiathsa féin, a laoiich !
 Dearg do ghruaidh, 'us òg do shnuagh,
 Caoin leadan nam buadh mu d' cheann !
 'S math gu -n tuit an crann so gu luath,^a
 295 Gun chluinntinn m'a luaidh 's a' ghleann.
 Bithidh dòruinn chiar air òigh nan tonn,^b
 I 'coimhead air dronn an t-sàil.
 Their leanabh 'ceart-fhaicinn na luinge,
 ' Rìgh baile nan sonn a t'aun ! "
 300 Na deoir 'tigh'n o dhearg shùil do mhàthar
 Mu do chadal 'an càthar nam mòr-bheann."

Sud focala féin an rìgh.

- Thàinig Ullin na brègh gu 'n triath ;
 Thilg e sleagh fada air frìth,
 305 Roi' Charthonn le sìth fhial,
 'Us e 'togail an fhuinn gu mall.
 " Thig gu cuirm Fhionnghail nam beann,

Ullin went with his song. Fingal rested on his spear: he saw the mighty foe in his armour: he blest the stranger's son. "How stately art thou, son of the sea!" said the king of woody Morven. "Thy sword is a beam of fire by thy side: thy spear is a pine that defies the storm. The varied face of the moon is not broader than thy shield. Ruddy is thy face of youth! soft the ringlets of thy hair! But this tree may fall; and his memory be forgot! The

^a 'S math, frequently used by Ossian for "perhaps," or "per-chance," a meaning now totally obsolete.

^b The island-maid; lit. the maid of waves.

The mighty king with spear (in hand) stood still—
He saw the foeman on the plain.

285 “All hail to the son of the stranger of feasts!
Stately and great (is) thy stride from ocean;”
Said Fingal of men and of trophies;
“Thy brand (is) like fire-beam from the east,
Rapidly passing thy side.

290 Not larger the full moon of the skies,
Than the shield which is thine, O hero!
Ruddy thy cheek, youthful thy mien,
Soft, graceful locks around thy head;
Perchance this tree may fall full soon,^a

295 And his praise be unheard in the glen.
Anguish dim shall seize the island-maid,^b
As she looks on the salt sea's ridge.

A child will exclaim as he sees a sail,
‘The king of the warriors' town is there!’
300 Tears come from thy mother's red-weeping eye,
For thy sleep in the moor of great Bens.”¹⁷

These were the very words of the king.

Persuasive Ullin came unto the prince.

He cast a long spear on the ground,

305 At Car-hon's feet in generous peace,

While slowly he began the song.

“Come to the feast of Fingal of mountains,

While Ullin went forward to the leader of the strangers, Fingal, beholding him, expresses his high admiration of him; laments his early fall;

pictures the anguish of her who loves him, and the deep grief of his mother, when they shall hear of his death.

Ullin delivers his message.

daughter of the stranger will be sad, looking to the rolling sea: the children will say, ‘We see a ship; perhaps it is the king of Bal-clutha.’ The tear starts from their mother's eye. Her thoughts are of him who sleeps in Morven!”

Such were the words of the king, when Ullin came to the mighty Carthon; he threw down the spear before him; he raised the song of peace. “Come to the feast of Fingal, Carthon, from the rolling

- 'Gharbh Charthuinn o ghleann a' chuain ;
 Thig gu cuirm an rìgh a nall,
 310 No tarruing an lann gun bhuaidh.
 Is hionmhor taibhs' ar naimhd' a thréin ;
 Ach eliùthar sinn féin 's ar càrdean.
 Faiceadh Carthonn an raon gu léir,
 'S iomadh gorm-thom ag éirigh àrd ann
 315 Le clachan glas 'us feur fo fhuaim ;
 Naimhdean Fhionnghail fo uaigh a t' ann,
 Na dàimh, a dh' aisig ràmh thar cuain."

" Am bheil do ghuth ri taibhs' nan arm "

- Thuirt Carthonn, " a bhàird bhrais o Mhòrbheinn !
 320 'N do chaochail mo thuarsa gu glas,
 'Mhic fhonn, nach 'eil cas gu còmhrag !
 An dùil leat m' anam adhlac' 'an seicè
 Le sgeulaibh nam beò a dh'fhalbh ?
 Chosgair an làmh's' 'an carraid na seoid ;
 325 Air mo chliu cha-n 'eil còmhra balbh.
 Gu laigse nan làmh le fonn ; "^a
 Géilleadh iadsan do'n t-sonn Fionnghal !
 Nach fhaecas Bail -chluthai nan long
 'Us an suidhe air tom gun iorghuil ?
 330 Innis so do mhae Chumhail, a bhàird,
 Cumhal, a thilg a theine suas,
 'An talla Chluthai nam bruach àrd,

^a To the weak
 of arm ; lit.
 to weakness
 of hands.

sea ! partake of the feast of the king, or lift the spear of war ! The ghosts of our foes are many : but renowned are the friends of Morven ! Behold that field, O Carthon ! many a green hill rises there, with mossy stones and rustling grass ; these are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the sons of the rolling sea ! "

" Dost thou speak to the weak in arms ? " said Carthon, " bard

Great Car-hon, from the glen of ocean—
 Come with us to the banquet of the king,
 310 Or draw thy blade in vain.
 Many are the ghosts of our foemen ;
 But renowned are we and our friends.
 Let Car-hon view the plain throughout,
 Many green mounds there rise on high,
 315 Beside grey stones and rustling grass ;
 Fingal's foes, in graves, are there,
 Strangers who, across the ocean, plied the oar."

"Dost speak to a shadow in arms ?"
 Said Car-hon, "rash bard from Morven !
 320 Has my colour changed to pale,
 Thou son of song, to combat slack !
 Dost hope my soul to shroud in mist,
 With tales of those who live no more ?
 This arm has slain full heroes in the fight ;
 325 On my renown fame is not dumb.
 To the weak of arm (go) with the song ;"
 Yield such as they to Fingal great !
 Balclutha of ships, has it not been seen ?
 And, on the knoll, shall I sit down in peace ?
 330 Tell this to Cu-hal's son, thou bard—
 Cu-hal, who flung on high his fire
 In Clutha's hall of lofty banks,

Car-hon, the ocean chief, rejects the proposal of peace with scorn ; speaks of his own prowess in battle, and also of the burning of Balclutha, his native place, by Fingal's father.

He sends a message of defiance to Fingal.

of the woody Morven ! Is my face pale for fear, son of the peaceful song ? Why, then, dost thou think to darken my soul with the tales of those who fell ? My arm has fought in battle ; my renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, bid them yield to Fingal. Have not I seen the fallen Balclutha ? And shall I feast with Comhal's son ? Comhal ! who threw his fire in the midst of my father's hall !

Aite còmhuidh mo shiuns're ri stuadh."*

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LAOIDH NA GRÉINE.

- O 'Thusa féin a shiùbbhas shuas,
 335 Cruinn mar làn-sgiath chruaidh nan triath,
 Cia as tha do dhearrsa gun ghruaim,
 Do sholus a tha buan a Ghrian ?
 Thig thu 'n ad àille thréin,
 'Us folaichidh réil an triall,
 340 Théid gealach gum tuar o 'n speur,
 'G a cleith féin fo stuaidh 's an iar.
 Tha Thus' ann ad astar amhàin,
 Co 'tha dàna 'bhi 'n ad chòir ?
 Tuitidh darag o 'n chruaich àird,
 345 Tuitidh càrn fo aois, 'us scòrr,
 Tràighidh, 'us liònaidh an cuan,
 Caillear shuas an ré 's an speur,
 Thus' 'ad aon a chaoidh fo bhuaidh,
 'An aoibhneas do sholuis féin.
 350 'N uair a dhubhas mu 'n domhan toirm,
 Le torrann borb, 'us dealan beur,
 Seallaidh tu 'n ad àille o 'n toirm,
 'Fiamh-gàire 'am bruailein nan speur.
 Dhòmhsa tha do sholus faoin,
 355 'S nach faic mi a chaoidh do ghnùis

* As in "Carrie-Thura," I add, at p. 222, the conclusion of the poem given by Macpherson in English, though the Gaelic ends abruptly with this line. It is very remarkable that he does not give the Gaelic of the "Address to the Sun ;"

My father's home beside the wave."

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A "SUN-HYMN."

- O thou that travellest on high,
 335 Round as warriors' hard, full shield,
 Whence thy brightness without gloom,
 Thy light which lasts so long, O sun ?
 Thou comest in thy beauty strong,
 And the stars conceal their path ;
 340 The moon, all pale, forsakes the sky,
 Herself in western wave to hide ;
 Thou, in thy journey, art alone ;
 Who, to thee, will dare draw nigh ?
 Falls the oak from lofty crag ;
 345 Falls the rock in crumbling age ;
 Ebbs and flows the ocean (tide) ;
 Lost is the moon in heavens high ;
 Thou alone dost triumph evermore,
 In joyaney of light thine own.
- 350 When tempest blackens round the world,
 In thunder fierce and lightning dire,
 Thou wilt, in thy beauty, view the storm,
 Smiling 'mid the uproar of the skies.

To me thy light is vain ;
 355 Thy face I never more shall see

for there is unquestionable proof (*vide* Preliminary Dissertation) that it was in his possession, as there is of its having been known before his day. I give the Gaelic as I find it in the Highland Society's Report, Appendix, p. 185, 186.

'Sgaoileadh cùil a's òr-bhuidh ciabh
 Air aghaidh nan nial 's an ear,
 No 'n uair chritheas anns an iar,
 Aig do dhorsaibh ciar air lear.

360 'S math-dh'fheadta gu-m bheil thu 's mise féin
 'S an àm gu treun, 's gun fheum 'an àm,
 Ar bliadhnaidh a' teurnadh o 'n speur,
 A' siubhal le 'chéile gu 'n ceann.
 Biodh aoibhneas ort féin a ghrian,
 365 'S tu neartmhor, a thriath 'ad òige.

'S dorcha mi-thaitneach an aois
 Mar sholus faoin an ré gun chàil,
 'S 'i 'sealltuinn o neoil air an raon,
 'S an liath-cheo air taobh nan càrn,
 370 An osag o thuath air an réidh,
 Fear-siubhail fo bheud, 's e mall.

I was young, and knew not the cause why the virgins wept. The columns of smoke pleased mine eye, when they rose above my walls! I often looked back, with gladness, when my friends fled along the hill. But when the years of my youth came on, I beheld the moss of my fallen walls; my sigh arose with the morning, and my tears descended with night. Shall I not fight, I said to my soul, against the children of my foes? And I will fight. O hard! I feel the strength of my soul."

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

Shall I, said Fingal to his soul, meet, at once, the youth? Shall I stop him, in the midst of his course, before his fame shall arise?

Spreading thy locks of gold-yellow wave
 In the east on the face of the clouds,
 Nor when (thou) tremblest in the west,
 At thy dusky doors, on the ocean.

- 360 And perchance thou art even as I,
 At seasons strong, at seasons weak,
 Our years, descending from the sky,
 Together hastening to their close.
 Joy be upon thee, then, O sun!
- 365 Since, in thy youth, thou art strong, O chief!

Dark and unpleasing is old age,
 Like dim light of a sickly moon
 When she looks through clouds on the plain,
 The hoary mist on the side of cairns,
 370 The blast from north on the field,
 The wayfarer weary and slow.

But the bard hereafter may say, when he sees the tomb of Carthon, Fingal took his thousands to battle before the noble Carthon fell. No : bard of the times to come ! thou shalt not lessen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the war. If he overcomes, I rush, in my strength, like the roaring stream of Cona. Who, of my chiefs, will meet the son of the rolling sea ? Many are his warriors on the coast ; and strong is his ashen spear !

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

“Clessámmor !” said the king of Morven, “where is the spear of thy strength ? Wilt thou behold Connal bound ; thy friend, at the stream of Lora ? Rise, in the light of thy steel, companion of valiant Comhal ! Let the youth of Balclutha feel the strength of Morven's race.”

He rose in the strength of his steel, shaking his grizzly locks. He fitted the shield to his side; he rushed, in the pride of valour.

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

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

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

They fought, like two contending winds, that strive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his spear to err; he still thought that the foe was the spouse of Moina. He broke Clessámmor's beamy spear in twain: he seized his shining sword. But as Carthon was lúnding the chief, the chief drew the dagger of his fathers. He saw the foe's uncovered side; and opened, there, a wound.

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

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

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

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

"King of Morven," Carthon said, "I fall in the midst of my course. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the last of Reuthámir's race. Darkness dwells in Balclutha ; the shadows of grief in Crathmo. But raise my remembrance on the banks of Lora, where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the husband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon." His words reached the heart of Clessámmor : he fell, in silence, on his son. The host stood darkened around : no voice is on the plain. Night came : the moon, from the east, looked on the mournful field ; but still they stood, like a silent grove that lifts its head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

Three days they mourned above Carthon ; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie ; a dim ghost defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often seen ; when the

sunbeam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There she is seen, Malvina! but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the stranger's land; and she is still alone!

Fingal was sad for Carthon; he commanded his bards to mark the day, when shadowy autumn returned: and often did they mark the day, and sing the hero's praise. "Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire! Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who but Carthon, king of swords! The people fall! see how he strides, like the sullen ghost of Morven! But there he lies a goodly oak, which sudden blasts overturned! When shalt thou rise, Balclutha's joy? When, Carthon, shalt thou arise? Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud?" Such were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: Ossian often joined their voice, and added to their song. My soul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his youth: and thou, O Clessámmor! where is thy dwelling in the wind? Has the youth forgot his wound? Flies he, on clouds, with thee? I feel the sun, O Malvina! leave me to my rest. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a feeble voice! The beam of heaven delights to shine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around!

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

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IX

C A R - H O N .

BALCLUTHA, *Baile - Cluathai*, "the town of Clyde," believed to have been a name for Bede's *Alcluyth*, "the rock of Clyde," the modern Dumbarton—in Gaelic called *Dùn-Breatunn* or *Dùn-Bhreatuinn*, "the fort of Britain"—which formed the capital of the kingdom of the Strath-Clyde Britons until their overthrow by Kenneth MacAlpin.

Laing says that there could be no such place as Balclutha in the days of Cu-hal, because Ptolemy does not mention it. Without referring to the almost countless number of names by which, according to Mr Skene, this ancient fortress was known, it is enough to answer that Ptolemy does not enumerate either all the towns or all the tribes of Caledonia, and that his account is notoriously defective and inaccurate.

It is, again, said that Balclutha could not be the modern Dumbarton, because Dumbarton lay within the Roman province. But it would require a far more minute account of the Roman occupation than we possess to give this objection any weight. Notwithstanding the line of forts raised by Agricola, and the turf rampart subsequently built in their line by Lollius Urbicus about A.D. 145, the Emperor Severus, after his disastrous raid into Caledonia in 210, contented himself with rebuilding the wall of Hadrian, between the friths of Tyne and Solway. It was not till the year 367 that Theodosius restored what is called Agricola's Wall, and established the Roman power over the province of Valentia. In such a long interval of years, there surely is room enough for the

occupation of Balclutha by a British chief ; and it is worthy of observation that the somewhat remarkable description of the town given at line 105 of the poem, "the hill of plains," is very applicable to Dumbarton, whose rock rises so abruptly and conspicuously in the midst of very level ground.

It must, however, as already observed, be kept in remembrance that the genuineness of these poems depends in no degree on the system of chronology or topography adopted by Macpherson.

CAR-HON, *Carhonn*.—This name would, in the Gaelic of the present day, be translated "winding wave," or the "winding of waves." Macpherson, however, says that it means "noise" or "roar of waves;" and that the storm which drove the father Clessamor to sea led to the bestowing this name on the son. With this meaning, the name would now be written *Gàir-thonn*; and the use of the *C* proves Macpherson's form to be ancient; for it is abundantly known that in the Aryan languages, at least, the hard consonants preceded the use of the soft ones.

Carhon, the hero of the poem, was the son of Clessamor and Moina, and grandson of Rurmar, chief of Balclutha.

CLESSAMOR, *Cleasa-mòra*, "great feats," or "heroic deeds," the name of a chief who dwelt at Lora. He was the maternal uncle of Fingal, and father of Car-hon.

CLUTHA, *Cluyd*, or *Cluathai*, the old name of the river Clyde, which has been Latinised into "Glotta." The root of this name is probably to be found in *Cluimh* or *Clòimh*, signifying "down," "fur," or "wool," from which we have an adjective still in common use, *Clùth'or* (*Clu-or*), signifying "warm," "snug," "comfortable." According to this derivation, the *Clùth-ai* signifies "the warm" or "well-sheltered river," a name very applicable to the Clyde.

GARMALLAR, probably signifying "rough" and "wild," the name of a mountain near Lora, Clessamor's dwelling-place.

MOINA, *Maona*, probably *Maoth aon*, "the soft" or "tender one," daughter of Rurmar, wife of Clessamor, and mother of Car-hon.

MORNA, *Mùirn*, "love," or "loved one," the mother of Fingal, and sister of Clessamor.

OSSIAN, a name written in so many ways that it is needless to enumerate or discuss them. I follow that which is established by Macpherson. It is uniformly pronounced "Oshen" by Highlanders, and the second syllable has been connected with *seinn*, "to sing." It is superfluous to state that he is the Homer alike of Caledonia and of Ireland. I am not to discuss here the respective claims of the two countries to him; but it is worth observing, that while the Irish, according to the habit of their language, which generally accents the last syllable of the word, pronounce this celebrated name "Oshēēn," it occurs in the book of the Dean of Lismore as it is still pronounced in the Highlands, with the last syllable short, "Oshēn"—proving that it has been familiar to the Caledonians as a native word for more than three hundred years.

RURMAR, or *Reuthamir*, prince of Balclutha, and father of Moira.

NOTES TO CAR-HON.

¹ "Fled has the deer from the edge of the cairn."

The deer fled from the spirit which guarded the tomb of Car-hon; and it is to this day a common belief that, when any of the lower animals—particularly horses or dogs—show signs of terror where no causes for it can be seen by man, they are startled by beholding some ghostly sight.

² "Fled from the field of dauntless deeds."

"Theich air raon nan cruadalach gnìomh."

This is a form of expression frequent in Ossian, placing the adjective before the substantive, *nan làn bhroilleach òigh*, &c., and has been challenged as contrary to Gaelic usage. No one would use these long adjectives before nouns in the present day, though monosyllabic adjectives are thus treated. *Muile nan àrd bheann*; *Fear nam mòr ghnìomh*, &c., are in everyday use. And seeing we have so few old MSS. whereby to test this usage, we are not in circumstances to condemn it.

³ "Oft over Carron did we wend,
To the land of duskiest foes."

The river Carron, as formerly observed, is said to have formed a part of the boundary between the Roman and Caledonian territories; and it is deserving of remark that the description here given of the foes as "duskiest," corresponds with the appearance which the natives of Italy would present to the Caledonians.

⁴ "Snowy-bosom of brave friends."

"Ùrla shneachda nan dàimh treun."

See note 19 to "Carric-Thura" on the various meanings of the term *dàimh*.

⁵ "And winding walls, in a dusky skiff,"

It is worth remarking that "boats" are generally, if not uniformly, described in Gaelic poetry as dark-coloured, and Homer repeatedly describes the Greek vessels in similar terms.

⁶ "A youth who bent his course to Moina."

"Òg a dh'imich a thriall do Mhaona."

This is a line which I think may be justly condemned as bad Gaelic. The verb *imich*, "go," or "to go," is, in Gaelic, as in all other languages, necessarily intransitive; but here it is used transitively. Again, the preposition *do* is used when speaking of going to a place, not when going towards a person. I notice that in a similar misuse of it in "Caledon" (Duan I. line 8) both E. Maclachlan and Dr Maclauchlan rightly change it into *gu*, which I have done here and in other places where the same construction occurs. I have otherwise left the line as I found it; but the following very slight alteration, though not making it elegant Gaelic, would improve it much—

"Og a dh'imich, 'n a thriall, gu Maona."

⁷ Macpherson has a note on this passage which deserves remark. "The word in the original here rendered by 'restless wanderer' is *Scuta*, which is the true origin of the Scoti of the Romans, an opprobrious name imposed by the Britons on the Caledonians, on account of their continual incursions into their country." In the Gaelic, no such word as *Scuta* occurs.

"Fear-astair nan gleann gun raon,"

is literally, as I have rendered it—

"The traveller of the glens without a plain;"

i.e., rugged glens. It is obvious, then, that Macpherson either had two different copies of the poem before him, or that here, as in so many other instances, he took an unwarrantable liberty with his original. Much learning and ingenuity have been expended in tracing the etymology of *Scotus*, *Scuta*, &c. In all probability it is the same word as the old *Scythus* or *Skuthos*, the well-known "Scythian."

⁸ "Amid thousands, though the brave ones be dusky."

"Measg mhiltean, ge ciar na tréin."

The three Gaelic editions before me give this reading—*ciar*, signifying "dark," or "dusky." Notwithstanding this, I have ventured to

substitute the word *cian*, "distant," "far off," and I think the alteration will necessarily commend itself to every reader. The "stranger" alleges that Clessamor's boldness arose from the fact that Fingal and his hundreds were near at hand to support him. He answers that he rests entirely on his own prowess, and professes himself ready for the combat, though alone among thousands. It is difficult to imagine what bearing the complexion of his brave friends, whether "dusky" or "fair," has upon this resolve. But if we read "distant" for "dusky," his words become intelligible. He is ready to engage his adversary, although his friends are "far away." Besides this strong internal evidence, I have the authority of Macpherson's English to support me in the change. He says, "Though the valiant are *distant far*;" and Macgregor follows him in this. *Cian* must have been the reading before Macpherson; and *ciar*, rendering the line meaningless, must be a typographical error.

- ⁹ "Thou son of the stream-forsaken Clutha."
 "'Mhic Chluthai o 'n do thréig an sruth."
 "Fili Cluthæ quem non deserit flumen."

This is Macfarlan's translation; but entirely at variance with the Gaelic, if there be any meaning at all in it. The line is an obscure one; but it certainly speaks of the Clyde as that from which the stream has "departed," or "failed." I render it "stream-forsaken," taking the expression as synonymous with what is said previously in line 93—

- "Cluthai nan sruth sèimh."
 "'Clutha thentorum lenium."
 "Clutha of the gentle or sluggish streams."

- ¹⁰ "Bending sad eyelids from on high"—

literally, "from the sky"—*i.e.*, Moina, standing on the bank, looked down to his boat.

- ¹¹ "To the land of the great clouds."
 "Gu talamh nan *stuardh mòr*."

Stuardh, or *stugh*, is generally translated "wave;" it signifies, however, as already observed, any high object, and is very often applied to the "gable of a house." In the Gaelic Bible, Song of Solomon, iii. 6, we have "pillars of smoke" rendered "*stughan deataich*;" and in Stewart's translation of the "Address to the Sun" (Society's edition of 'Ossian,' vol. iii. p. 496), we have the word translated "cloud." I think that,

in the line before us, "the land of great *clouds*" gives a better meaning than either "land of great waves" or "land of great peaks," though either of these is quite warrantable.

- ¹² "The sunbeams of days that are gone,
The womanly joy of the men who have been."

These lines, which are translated most literally, present a remarkable picture of the dignity and purity which the poet associated with women. *Banail* expresses more than its corresponding English term "womanly," and suggests Wordsworth's grand idea of

"A perfect woman, nobly planned," &c.

- ¹³ "A phantom-form who loves (our) fame."
"Tannas faoin, do-n annsa cliu."
"Spectrum vanum cui est amor fama."

Thus Macfarlan translates literally; Macpherson makes it, "Some ghost the friend of Fingal;" and Macgregor, "Some ghost that loves our fame." In all probability this last is the true meaning of the line; for warning Fingal of his danger must be regarded as a friendly act; but receiving the words in this meaning would imply changing the Gaelic text to

"Tannas faoin le-n anns' ar cliu."

I consider this a desirable change, yet I have thought it best to leave the line in its present obscurity, because there is nothing in it either self-contradictory or opposed to the context.

- ¹⁴ "Like foam-cloud wave full charged with fire and sound."

This is one of those very striking pictures which demonstrate that the poet drew from nature; and also drew a picture which no landsman, as Macpherson was, could ever paint. Macdonald, in his "Birlinn," which, as a sea-song, is unmatched in Gaelic—perhaps not surpassed in English—uses stronger epithets in describing the terrors of a storm than are to be found in Ossian; but nowhere does he give in so few words a description so very graphic as we have in this and the two following lines. No one whose boat has been tossed at night among mountain-waves will easily forget the awe with which he viewed them as they rose with their sides sheeted in fire, their tops crested with a cloud of foam, while they roared as if for prey. Macpherson's translation here is very meagre, if it be not unintelligible.

¹⁵ " In Cona stood the men in wrath."

" Air Còna sheas na fir 'am *fraoch*."

Macpherson and others translate the word *fraoch* here by "heather." I have pointed out in note 16 in "Carric-Thura" its secondary signification of "anger," "wrath;" and I think this gives a better meaning here than to say that

" The men stood in Cona on heather."

¹⁶ "They show to their sons each spear
From the far land of valiant foes."

"It was the custom among the ancient Scots to exchange arms with their guests, and those arms were preserved long in the different families as monuments of the friendship which subsisted between their ancestors."—Macpherson.

Laing thinks it quite enough to dispose of this assertion to say that it is borrowed from Homer's account of the exchange of arms between Diomedes and Glaucus, though Macpherson himself points out the Greek passage as similar to what is said by Ossian. I believe, however, that traces of this once grave and important ceremony of interchanging weapons have remained in the Highlands to a recent period, in what came in course of time to be called *Iomlaid Bhiodag*, "exchange of dirks," a practice to which convivial parties sometimes had recourse in order to pass the evening. Lachlan Mackinnon, a Skye bard, who lived in the beginning of last century, has preserved a very ludicrous account of this pastime in his well-known song of "Sgian an sprogain chàim."

Like this, we have in the so-called "sword-dance," so often exhibited at "Highland gatherings," a poor wretched remnant of the ancient sword-dance, which held as important a place among our remote ancestors as did the "saltatio armata" among the Romans, or the "Pyrrhic dance" among the Greeks.

¹⁷ " For thy sleep in the moor of great Bens."

In Gaelic, '*an cathair nam mòr bheann*, which Macfarlan translates, "in cathedra magnorum montium." Macpherson ignores the word, as he generally does every difficulty; but both the rhythm and the meaning obviously require that the word should be *càthar*, signifying "mossy" or "moory ground,"—and I have made it so. It evidently rhymes with *màthair*, and must have the first syllable long.

O I N A M M O R H U L

ARGUMENT.

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

Ò I G H - N A M - M Ò R - S H Ù L.

- MAR ghluaiseas solus speur fo seledò
 Air Làrmon mòr a's uaine tom ;
 Mar sin thig sgeul nan triath nach bed
 Air m' anam 'us an oidheche trom.
- 5 'N uair thréigeas filidh caoin a mhùirn,
 A chlàrsach chiuil 's an talla àrd ;
 Thig guth gu chuais Oisein o 'chùl,
 Mosgladh anma 'an tùr nam bàrd.
 'S e guth nam bliadhna 'thuit a th' ann,
- 10 'Tional uile a nall le 'n gnèomh.
 Glacam-sa na sgeulan nach fann,
 Cuiream sìds iad 'am fonn gun ghèomh.
 Cha shruth 'tha dorcha fonn an rìgh,
 'N uair dh' éireas e measg strì nan teud ;
- 15 O làimh-ghil 'an Lùtha nam frìth—
 Malmhàna, cruth clìth gun bheud !
 A Lutha nan teud a's glaine fuaim !
 Gun sàmhchair air do chruachan àrd.

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

OINAMMORHUL.

- As moves the light of heaven under mist
 On Larmon great of greenest knoll,
 So comes the tale of chiefs who live no more,
 On my soul in the deep of night.
- 5 When leaves the gentle bard his joy,
 His tuneful harp, in lofty hall,
 Comes a voice from behind to Ossian's ear,
 Kindling in his soul the spirit of the bards.¹
 'Tis the voice of the years that are gone,
- 10 Crowding all back, with their deeds.
 Grasp I the not unworthy tales,
 And them record in truthful song.
 No darksome stream is the strain of the king,
 When, 'mid the striving chords, it rises high
- 15 From the White hand in woody Lutha—
 Malvina of the fair and faultless form.
 Tuneful Lutha of sweetest sound,
 No silence (is) amid thy lofty peaks,

The memory of the deeds of the past flashes on Ossian's soul, and he resolves to record them in song.

He asks Malvina to aid him with her harp in recalling the years that had gone.

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 the

- 'N uair shiùbhlas geal-làmh na stuaim
 20 Air clàrsaich fo dhuan nam bàrd.
 'Sholuis nan smaointean dorecha truagh,
 'Tha 'tarruing suas air m' anam dall ;
 A nighean Thoscair nan ceann-bheairt cruaidh,
 Thoir cluas do chaoim fhuaim 'tha mall !
 25 Gàirm -sa air ais gu luath
 Na bliadhna gun tuar a bh' ann.

^a Warlike
 mien ; lit.
 bristly mien,
 or, appear-
 ance.

- 'An làithean an rìgh 'bu cholgach smuagh,^a
 Mo chiabhau, 'n an dual mar chuach nan òigh,
 Sheall mi air Cathlinne nan stuadh,
 30 O dhruim a' chuain, fo ghruaim gun chedò.
 M' astar gu innis Fuarfead thall,
 Mòr choille nan crann 's an t-sàil.
 Chuir rìgh nan sonn air tonn mo lann,
 Le beum nach fann, gu nàimhdean rìgh
 35 Mhalorchoil nam fuar-fead crann,
 Fear-cuirne nach robh gann 'an sìth.
 Ghluais còmhrag o chuan mu'n triath.

- 'An cala Choileid thrus mi mo shedl,
 Chuir mi 'n lann gu fear mòr nam fleagh ;
 40 Dh' aithnich es' ard-shuaicheantas nan seòd,
 Agus dh' éirich le mòrchuis a shleagh.
 Dh'innich triath o 'thalla àrd,
 Ghlae esan mo làmh le fiamh :

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 mighty wave. My

When moves the White hand of pureness
 20 Over the harp with song of bards.
 Thou light of the dark, unhappy thoughts,
 Which upwards trail o'er my blind soul—
 Daughter of Toscar of steel-helmets hard,
 Listen to the gentle sound and slow !
 25 Do thou swiftly recall
 The faded years which have been.

In days of the king of warlike mien,^a
 Waved my locks as those of maidens.²
 I looked to Ca-linnè of waves,
 30 From ocean's ridge in cloudless storm.
 My course to Fuarfed's far-off isle—
 Great grove of trees amid the main.
 The king of brave ones sent my sword to sea,
 With mighty blow against the foes of King
 35 Malorcol, of cold-whistling woods,
 A feast-man generous in peace.
 From ocean, conflict came around the prince.

In Coiled bay I furled my sail ;
 I sent my sword to the great one of feasts.
 40 The noble badge of the brave he knew,
 And in pride raised high his spear.
 From his lofty hall came forth the prince,
 And with emotion grasped my hand.

Fingal had sent him when young to assist Malorcol, king of Fuarfed.

He landed in Coiled bay, and sent his sword to Malorcol, who came forth to welcome him.

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 ! I 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

- “C’ uime thàinig sìol Mhorbheinn nam bàrd
 45 Gu duine gun chàil, gun ghnìomh ?
 Tonnthormod nan lann geur, ’s nan sleagh,
 Fear-cuirm agus fleagh ’an Sardronlo,
 Dh’ iadh a shùil mu m’ nighin chaoin,
 Òigh-nam-mòr-shùl a’s glaine ùrla.
 50 Dh’ iarr es’, ’s dhiùlt mis’ an òigh ;
 Le mòrchuis bha ar sinns’re fo nàimhdeas.
 Thàinig e le còmhrag ’bu chòrr,
 Gu Fuarfead nan seòl le gàmhlas ;
 Thaom e mo shluagh air mo shluagh.
 55 C’ uime thàinig gu tuath an triath,
 Gu duine, ’s e ’tuiteam gun ghnìomh ?”

- “Cha d’thàinig mar bhalachan neo-threun
 A choimhead gun fheum air strì ;
 Tha cuimhne do ’n mhòr rìgh ort féin,^a
 60 ’S air do chuiruibh gun bheud ’an sìth.
 Thàinig an rìgh o àrd thonn sìos,
 Air innis nam frìth ’s nan cranu ;
 Cha bu nial thu ’am meadhon nan sìan,
 Bha fleagh, bha fial, bha dàn.
 65 ’S e furan, a thriath, ’thog mo lann ;
 ’S math gu-m fairich do nàimhdean a càil.
 Ni-n dì-chuimhn ar càirdean ’an àm,
 Ge fada sinn thall air sàil.”

^a Remembers thee ; lit. *there is memory on thee.* So, l. 67, Our friends are not forgotten—our friends are not forgetfulness.

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?”

- " Why came the race of Morven of bards
 45 To a man without strength or exploit ?
 Tormod of sharp swords and spears,
 Hospitable chief of Sardronlo,
 Entwined his eye around my daughter fair—
 Oinammorhul of purest breast.
 50 He asked, and I refused the maid.
 In pride, our fathers had been foes.
 Came he with mighty hostile force
 To Fuarfed of sails in vengeance.
 He rolled my people over my people.³
 55 Wherefore north has come the prince
 To a man who falls without valiant deed ? "

- " I came not as a weakling boy,
 A battle idly to behold.
 The mighty king full well remembers thee,"
 60 And thy courteous feasts in peace.
 The king came down from the towering waves
 To the island of forests and trees.
 No cloud wert thou amid the storms—
 Feast, friendship, song, were (thine).
 65 Thy welcome free, O king ! has raised my spear ;
 Thy foes, mayhap, shall feel its edge ;
 Our friends are not forgotten in their need,
 Though far across the sea we dwell."

Maloreol tells that his neighbour Tonn-Hormod had asked his daughter Oinammorhul in marriage. He refused her ; whereupon Tonn-Hormod made war on him, and utterly routed his people.

Ossian says that he had been sent to Maloreol's aid on account of his great hospitality to Fingal when he had landed on his island.

" 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 warriors 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, though distant is our land."

“ Shàr-mhic Thréimhoir nan colg sheòl,
 70 Tha do ghuth mar Chruth-Lòduinn beur,
 'N uair a labhras o bhriseadh an neoil,
 Fear-tuinidh ro mhòr nan speur.
 'S iomadh sonn a chròm air fleagh,
 Nach tog an diugh sleagh air mo dhèruinn :
 75 Mo shùil air gaoith a' chuain, 's i 'caochladh,
 Cha-n fhaicear air chaol na scoil chòmhnard.
 Tha stàilinn 's an talla le saoihbneas,
 Gun slige bhreac chaoin le sòlas.
 Thig-sa, 'shìol nan triath, a nall ;
 80 Tha 'n oidheche mu chàrn, 's i ciar ;
 Cluinn-sa guth, a's glaine fonn,
 O òigh nan tonn a's fuaire fead.”

 Air clàrsaich ghrinn nan iomadh tend
 Dh'éirich làmh-gheal, rùn nan ceud,
 85 Òigh-nam-mòr-shùl 'b' àillidh snuagh.
 'An sàmhchair sheas mi fada thall.
 Mar sholus, ainnir nan ciabh mall,
 Ainnir àillidh inuis nan stuadh.
 'Dà shùil a' dearrsadh mar dhà reul
 90 'Sealltuinn tro' dhubh-bhraon nan speur,
 Fear-seachrain a' chuain a' coimhead suas,
 Air gathan glan air stuadh na h-oidheche.

“ Descendant of the daring Trenmor, thy words are like the voice of Cruth-loda, when he speaks from his parting cloud, strong dweller of the sky! Many have rejoiced at my feast, but they all have forgot Mal-orchol. I have looked towards all the winds, but no white sails were seen. But steel resounds in my hall, and not the joyful shells. Come to my dwelling, race of heroes! dark-skirted night is

- “True son of Treunmor of the daring sail,
 70 Thy voice is strong as Cru-Lodin,
 When he speaks from the rending cloud,
 The great, great dweller in the skies.
 Many a chief at my feast has bowed,
 Who now, in my need, will lift no spear.
 75 My eye is on the changing wind of ocean ;
 No spread sail is seen in the bay.
 The sword hangs in the hall in silent gloom ; ⁴
 Nor does the speckled soothing shell give joy.
 Come thou with me, son of the noble ;
 80 Night, in duskiness, enfolds the hill.
 Hear thou a voice of sweetest tone,
 From maiden of the waves of coldest sigh.”

Maloreol
invites him to
his house.

- On dulcet harp of many strings
 Moved the White hand, love of hundreds—
 85 Oinammorhul of brightest mien.
 In silence stood I far away.
 Like light (was) the maid of softly-waving hair—
 The lovely maid of the isle of waves.
 Her two eyes beaming like two stars
 90 Which look through dark soft shower in sky ;
 The ocean wanderer marks on high
 The shining rays on waves of night.

Description of
Oinammorhul
as she played
on the harp.

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 two stars, looking forward through a rushing shower. The mariner marks them on high, and blesses the lovely beams.

- Ghluais mi le madainn gu còmhrag,
 Gu Tormul nam mòr shruth o chàrn.
 95 Thàinig an nàmhaid air chòmhlà ;
 Sgiath-Thormod nan cop 's nam ball.
 O thaobh gu taobh sgaoil an strì ;
 Thachair Tormod is mi 's a' chruadal ;
 Bhriseadh leam stàilinn gun bhrègh :
 100 Fo cheangal chuir rìgh nam fuar-thonn.
 Thug mis' a làmh fo neart nan iall
 Do shlige na fial, Malorchol ;
 Dh' éirich sòlas na cuirm' air an triath ;
 Thuit nàimhdean o thrìan na droch-bheirt.
 105 Thionndaidh Tormod fada thall
 O nighin àillidh nan rosg mall.

- “ 'Mhic Fhionnghail,” so thòisich an rìgh,
 “ Cha-n ann gun bhrègh a théid thu uam ;
 Cuiream solus 's an luing 'an sìth,
 110 Ainnir àillidh rosg mall gun ghruaim ;
 Loisgidh an teine so 'an sòlas
 Air anam na mòrchuis 'an gnìomh ;
 Gun fhaicinn cha siubhail i gu mòthar
 'An Selma nam mòr bheann 's nan rìgh.”

- 115 Anns an talla doilleir, trom,
 Chròm mo rosg 'an cadal sèimh ;

With morning we rushed to battle, to Tormul's resounding stream :
 the foe moved to the sound of Ton-thormod's bossy shield. From
 wing to wing the strife was mixed. I met Ton-thormod in fight.
 Wide flew his broken steel. I seized the king in war. I gave his
 hand, bound fast with thongs, to Mal-orchol, the giver of shells.
 Joy rose at the feast of Fuarfed, for the foe had failed. Ton-thormod

- With morn I to the conflict hied ;
 To Tormol of great mountain-streams.
 95 The self-same hour came on the foe—
 Tormod of the bossy, spotted shield.
 From wing to wing the battle spread ;
 Tormod and I closed in the hardy strife.
 I shattered his pithless steel,
 100 And bound the king of the cold waves.
 I gave his hand, beneath constraint of thongs,
 To Malorcol, prince of bounteous shells.⁵
 Kindled the chief to festal joy ;
 His foes had failed in their bad emprise.
 105 Tormod turned him far away
 From the lovely maid of gentle eyelash.
- “Son of Fingal,” thus the king began,
 “Not unrequited shalt thou go from me.
 In thy ship I shall place a peaceful light,
 110 The graceful, cloudless maid of eye serene—
 A light which will shine in joy
 Over a soul that exults in noble deeds.
 Moving in stately grace, she shall not be unmarked
 In Selma of great Bens and kings.”
- 115 In the house (now), dark and silent,
 My eyelids bent in soothing sleep.

With morning
 Ossian goes
 forth to attack
 Tonn-Hor-
 mod, defeats
 him, and
 brings him a
 prisoner to
 Malorcol,

who spread
 the feast, and
 rejoiced
 greatly.

He resolves
 to reward
 Ossian by
 giving him
 Oinammorhul
 as his wife.

Ossian during
 night hears
 her lamenting

turned his face away, from Oina-morul of isles !

“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, through the dwelling of kings !”

In the hall I lay in night. Mine eyes were half closed in sleep.

a A chaomh-
neas réidh,
Society's
Edition.

Air mo chluais thuit torman nam fonn,
Mar osaig nan tom, a chaoincas réidh,^a
Osag, a dh'fhuadaicheas mu'n cuairt
120 Feusag liath a' chluarain 'an aois,
'Dorch-shiubhal air cruachan an fheoir.
Co e an guth? Òigh ghlan nam Fuar-fead,
'Togail mall a fonn 's an oidheche :
B' còl do 'n ainm m' anam caoin

b By music's
side—i.e.,
under the
power of
music.

125 Mar shruth nach faoin air taobh nam fonn.^b

“ Co as an triath,” 's e 'thuirt an òigh,
“ Tha 'coimhead air gorm-cheò a' chuain ?
Co 'th' ann ach triath a' chùil mhòir
Dubh mar sgéith fithich nan cruach !

130 Chi mi measg osag a chiabh,
'S is àillidh a thriall 'am bròn.
Tha sùil an fhir fo dheoir gun fheum,
A chliabh duineil ag éirigh mall
Air 'anam 'tha briste o 'chéile.

135 Fàg an tràigh, 's mi fada thall,
'An seachran nan càrn leam féin ;
Tha clann nan rìgh gu cli 'us caoin ;
Tha m' anamsa baoh, a thréin.
C' uime bha ar n-aithrichean féin

140 'An nàimhdeas treun, a rùin nan òigh ?”

“ A ghuth chaoin o àrd innis nan sruth,

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 Fuarfed wild! she raised the nightly song: 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

On my ear fell the murmur of songs,
 Like breeze of knolls which softly mourns ;^{a 6}
 A breeze which chases round and round
 120 The hoary beard of thistle old,
 Dark-moving over grassy mounds.
 Whose is the voice ? Fuarfed's lovely maid's,
 Softly raising her song in night.
 The maiden knew that my generous soul
 125 Was as a flowing stream by music's side ?^b

“ Whence the chief,” the maiden said,
 “ Who looks on the blue mist of ocean ?
 Who but the chief of the flowing locks,
 Black as the wing of the rock-dwelling raven !
 130 I see his hair upon the breeze,
 And stately his step in sorrow.
 The hero's eye sheds bootless tears ;
 Slowly heaves his manly chest
 Over his soul, which is riven asunder.
 135 Leave thou the shore, for I am far away,
 Wandering 'mid mountains alone.
 Powerless, though loving, is the race of kings ;⁷
 My soul is all distraught—O hero !
 Wherefore were thy sire and mine
 140 In bitter hate, thou love of maids ?”

“ Sweet voice from the lofty isle of tides,

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. Though the race of
 kings are around me, yet my soul is dark. Why have our fathers
 been foes, Ton-thormod, love of maids ?”

“ Soft voice of the streamy isle,” I said, “ why dost thou mourn

her separation
 from Tonn-
 Hormod.

C' uime chaoineas 'an dubh nan speur ?
Sàr-shìol Thréinmhoir a's colgaiche cruth,
Cha mhùgach an anam, 's cha bheur.

- 145 Cha sheachrain thu 'an càrn leat fèin,
'Òigh-nam-mòr-shùl nan rosg tlàth.
Fo 'n ùrla so tha guth gun fhuaim,
(Cha druid e gu chuais nan dàimh)^a
"Tha 'g iarraidh dhiom clàistinn do thruaigh',
150 'N uair ghluaiseas iochd m' anam gu bàigh.
Tréig an talla, thusa 's caoine fonn ;
Cha bhi Tormod nan tonn fo bhròn."

^a It reaches
not the ear of
strangers ; lit.
*it closes not to
the ear of
strangers.*

^b I placed the
. . . hand
in his ; lit.
*I stretched
to him the . . .
hand.*

- Thuit 'iallan le madainn o 'n rìgh ;
Shìn mì dha làmh mhìn na h-òigh.^b
155 Chuala Malorchol mis' 'an sìth,
'Am meadhon talla a's àirde fuaim ;
"A rìgh Fhuarfhead, a's uallach crann
C' ar son a bhiodh Tonnthormod fo bhròn ?
A shinns're luchd tarruing nan lann,
160 Dealan speur e féin 's a' chòmhrag.
Bu nàimhdean aithrichean nan triath ;
Tha sòlas 'am fial a' bhàis ;^c
Tha 'n làmhan ris na sligean liath,
"Tha 'g iadhadh mu chiar Chruth Lèduinn.
165 Air chùl, le 'chéile 'ur fraoch
An dubh nial a dh' aom o shean."

^c In the free
fellowship of
death ; or,
in the hospi-
tality of death.

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 roek !"

With morning I loosed the king. I gave the long-haired maid.

Why weep 'neath blackness of the skies ?
 Treunmor's true race of warlike mien,
 Not dark nor cruel is their soul.

- 145 Thou shalt not wander on the hills all lone,
 Oinammorhul of the soft warm eye.
 Within this breast is a silent voice
 (It reaches not the ear of strangers) ^a ·
 Which bids me hearken to thy woe,
 150 As pity moves my soul to kindness.
 Leave the hall, thou sweetest-voiced,
 Tormod of the waves shall not be under grief."

With morning fell the thongs from off the king.
 I placed the maid's smooth hand in his. ^b

- 155 Maloreol heard me in peace,
 Within the hall of highest sound.
 "Fuarfed's king of lofty trees,
 Why should Tonn-Hormod be in sorrow ?
 His sires were the wielders of spears,
 160 Like sky-fire he himself in war.
 The fathers of the chiefs were foes ;
 (But) there is joy in the free-fellowship of death ; ^c
 Their hands (together) grasp the hoary shells
 Which circle round the dark Cru-Lodin.
 165 Banish, on either side, your wrath,
 The black cloud which came down of old."

He generously
 resolves to
 unite the
 lovers.

In the morn-
 ing he frees
 Tonn-Hormod
 from the
 thong, brings
 him to
 Maloreol,

urges them
 mutually to
 lay aside their
 ancient feud,
 which they
 agree to do,
 and the lovers
 are united.

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
 hands of mist to the same shell in Loda. Forget their rage, ye war-
 riors! it was the cloud of other years."

Sud mo ghnìomhan féin 'n uair dh' iadh
 Mo chiabh mu 'm mhuineal gun aois ;
 'N uair bha solus mar éideadh mu'n cuairt
 170 Nighean uasal innis nan crann.

Ghairm sinne air ais gu luath
 172 Na bliadhna gun tuar, a bh' ann.

Such were the deeds of Ossian, while yet his locks were young :
 though loveliness, with a robe of beams, clothed the daughter of

Such were the deeds I did, when twined
My youthful locks around my neck—
When light, as a garment, enrobed
170 The noble maid of the isle of trees.

Swiftly we have (thus) recalled
172 The faded years which have been.

many isles. We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled
away!

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IN

OINAMMORHUL.

CA-LINNÈ, *Gath-linne*, "ray or beam of the sea," said to be the polar-star.

COILED, a bay in the island of Fuarfed, where Ossian landed.

FUARFED, *Fuar-fhead*, "cold whistle," or "cold blast," an island on the Scandinavian coast, the domain of Malorcol, Fingal's friend.

LARMON, *Làr-mhonadh* (?) "smooth or even hill," a mountain in Alba.

LUTHA, probably "swift stream," a river in Alba.

MALORCOL, prince of the isle of Fuarfed, to whose assistance Ossian went.

OINAMMORHUL, *Ùigh-nam-mòr-shùl*, "the maiden of the large eyes," daughter of Malorcol.

SARDRONLO, a Scandinavian island, reigned over by Tonn-Hormod or Tormod.

TONN-HORMOD, *Tonn-Thormod*, "Tormod of the waves." Tormod, in English "Norman," is still a common name in the Highlands, and, I need hardly say, well known through every part of Britain. Macleod of Harris, or of Dunvegan, is styled of the race of Tormod,—as Macleod of Lewis, or Raasay, was of that of Torquil.

TORMHUL, *Toirm-thuil*, "noisy flood or stream," the name of a river in Fuarfed.

NOTES TO OINAMMORHUL.

¹ “Mosgladh auna 'an tùr nam bàrd.”

“Kindling in his soul the spirit of the bards.”

This is an obscure line. *'An tùr nam bàrd* may refer to the place in which the inspiration of the poet came on Ossian—“in the tower of bards;” or it may point to the nature of the inspiration which visited him—“in the mind or genius of the bards.” I have taken it in this latter meaning, as appearing to be the more probable of the two. Macfarlan unaccountably makes it “*in torpore bardorum*.”

² “Mo chiabhan, 'n an dual mar chuach nan òigh.”

“Waved my locks as those of maidens.”

The Society's edition has “*mu chuach*.” The correction is so clearly necessary as to need no justification.

³ “He rolled my people over my people.”

More literally—

“He poured my people over my people;”

an expression as descriptive of utter discomfiture as may well be imagined.

⁴ “Tha stàilinn 's an talla le saobhneas.”

“The sword hangs in the hall in silent gloom.”

Macfarlan translates the word *saobhneas* by “morositate,” and the dictionaries render it “moroseness,” “joylessness.” But they do so entirely on the faith of this one rendering by Macfarlan. No other reference is given; nor am I aware that the word occurs anywhere else.

I believe it to be entirely a misprint, for it is difficult to see how it can possibly mean "gloom," or "joylessness." *Aoibhneas* signifies "joy," or "gladness." *Sò* and *dò* (before vowels, *s* and *d*) possess, in Gaelic, the force of *ḡ* and *ḡ'*; in Greek; so that "*s*-aoibhneas," according to uniform analogy, ought to signify "high joyfulness." To mean "moroseness" the word should be "*d*-aoibhneas." But while directing attention to it, I have left it unchanged in the text. The only word like it in sound which I have met with is *suibhneas*, in a song by William Ross (Stewart's Collection, p. 483). There it evidently means joy or prosperity, and may probably be the same as *suimhneas*.

⁵ "Do shlige na fial Malorchol."

"To Malorchol, prince of bounteous shells."

"To Malorchol, the *shell* of hospitality," is the literal rendering of this line—probably it should be.

"Do *fhcar*-sliḡo na fial, Malorchol,"

Literally—

"To Malorchol the shell-man of hospitality."

I have rendered it—

"Prince of bounteous shells."

It is evident the text requires some emendation.

⁶ "Mar osag nan tom a chaomh' neas réidh."

This is another line calling for correction. The verb "*caomhain*" signifies to "*spare*." It is impossible, however, to imagine how the breeze here spoken of can be said to "*spare*" the "*plain*" over which it blows. Macfarlan makes it "*muleet planitiem*," a rendering, as far as I know, altogether without authority. I have made the expression "*a chaoineas réidh*," translating it—

"Like breeze of knolls which *softly* mourns,"

a meaning in harmony with the context, and also with Ossianic imagery in other places—*e.g.*, in "*Car-hon*," line 164, we have—

"Còinneach a' caoineadh," &c.

"The moss weeping, or mourning;"

and in "*Golnandona*," line 35—

"Do chòinneach a' caoineadh gun lochd,"

"Thy moss weeping sleeplessly (ceaselessly)."

7 "Tha clann nan rìgh gu *cli* 'us caoin,"

"Powerless, though loving, is the race of kings."

The word *cli* or *clith* is used in such various and opposite meanings as to speak strongly of the poverty of the language which requires such hard service of it, or of the plan of "homonyms" followed in the early stages of language. In the present day *clith*, as a substantive, signifies "strength," and as an adjective "left-handed;" hence, in a secondary sense, "awkward," "feeble." In the dictionaries it is given as signifying both "weak" and "strong," and it is so used in Ossian; while in this poem, line 16, it has a meaning which must be different from all these—

"Malmhna, cruth *clith* gun bheud."

Macfarlan renders it there "concinna," and I know not that a better translation can be given. In the line which forms the subject of this note he renders *cli* by "benigna." I think, however, that looking to the circumstances in which Oinammorhul uttered these words—feeling herself and Tormod powerless to avert the hard fate of separation which threatened them—the natural meaning is "weak," or "powerless;" and this is the more common acceptation of the word.

Maepherson, as usual, steers wide of the difficulty.

"Though the race of kings are around me, yet my soul is dark."

G O L N A N D O N A

ARGUMENT.

“Fingal despatches Ossian and Toscar, the son of Conloch and father of Matvina, 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, Carul, a neighbouring chief, invited them to a feast. They went; and Toscar fell desperately in love with Colna-dona, the daughter of Carul. Colna-dona became no less enamoured of Toscar. An incident, at a hunting-party, brings their loves to a happy issue.”—M.

GAOL - NAN - DAOINE.

- 'CHAOL-AMHAINN nan sruth ciar o chàrn,
 Dorcha dall do shiubhal shuas ;
 Tha mo shùil measg iomairt do chrann,
 Talla Charuill nan lann 's nam fuaim !
- 5 An sin a bha tuineadh na h-àille,
 Gaol-nan-daoine, sàr fhuil an rìgh :
 A sùilean mar sholus nan reul,
 A ruighe gasda gun bheud ; bha 'làmh
 Geal mar chobhar air uisge nan leum ;
- 10 Dh' éireadh èiochan nam beus gu mall
 Mar thoman barr-gheal a' chuain mhòir ;
 A h-anam 'n a shruth de sholus
 Fo ùrla corrach, a b' àillidh snuagh.
 Co ise measg òighean 'n àrd bhroillich,
- 15 'Bu choimeas ri glan rùn an t-sluaigh ?

Fo ghuth caismeachd rìgh nam buadh,
 Gu Cròna nan sruth ruadh 'tha thall,

COL-AMON of troubled streams, dark wanderer of distant vales, I behold thy course between trees, near Carul's echoing halls ! There dwelt bright Colma-dona, the daughter of the king. Her eyes were rolling stars ; her arms were white as the foam of streams. Her

G O L N A N D O N A .

- COLAMMIN of brown mountain-streams,
 Dark and blind (is) thy course on high ;
 My eye is on the waving of thy trees,
 On Carul's hall of swords and sounds.
- 5 There loveliness had her abode,
 Golnandona, true king's blood ;
 Her eyes (were) as the light of stars,
 Her fine arm faultless ; (and) her hand
 White as foam on stream of falls.
- 10 Her pure bosom slowly rose,
 Like white-crested waves on the great sea ;
 Her soul (was) a stream of light
 Beneath a breast of fairest mould ;
 Who, among high-bosomed maids,
- 15 Could vie with the bright love of the people ?

Bidden by voice of the conquering king,
 To distant Crona of brown streams

Colammin was the dwelling-place of Carul, whose daughter, Golnandona, is described.

Toscar and Ossian were sent to Crona,

breast rose slowly to sight, like ocean's heaving wave. Her soul was a stream of light. Who, among the maids, was like the love of heroes ?

Beneath the voice of the king, we moved to Crona of the streams,

- Ghluais Toscar o Lutha gun ghruaim,
 'Us Oisean, fear-luaidh nan dàn,
 20 Tri bàird air ar taobh le fonn,
 Tri sgéith nach robh lom, 'n ar còir,^a
 'Dol a thogail nan clach air an tom,
 'Chuireadh euimhne nan sonn fo ghlòir.^b
 Aig fiar shruth còinnich Chròna féin
 25 Sgap Fionnghal, an t-àrd threun, na dàimh ;
 Theich coigriche roimh 'ehlaidheamh gu léir,
 Mar gharbh mhuir a' beumadh air tràigh.
 Thàinig sinne gu raon a chliu ;
 Theiring an oidheil' o chùl nan càrn ;
 30 Reub mi darag o leathad nan smùr ;
 Thogadh lasair measg màinig nan àrd.
 " Seallaibh sìos, mo shinns're treun ;
 Seallaibh sìos o 'r tallaibh féin,
 'N uair mhoglas cliu as-ùr 'ur clann,
 35 Soillsidh suinn nan lann air gaoith."^c

O chladach Chròna thagh mi clach,
 Measg fonna le neart nam bàrd ;
 Fuil nàimhdean Fhionnghail fo smachd
 'An còinnich dhubh-ghlas nan alld.

- 40 Fo sud shuidhich mi o 'ehéile
 Tri copana o sgéith nan dàimh,
 'N uair luidheadh mu seach 's a dh'éireadh

^a Bossy bucklers ; lit. *bucklers not bare.*

^b The stones which memorise the glory of the brave ; lit. . . *which place the memory of the brave under glory.*

^c The arm-
renowned ;
lit. *the heroes of blades.*

Toscar of grassy Lutha, and Ossian, young in fields. Three bards attended with songs. Three bossy shields were borne 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,

- Went joyous Tosear from Lutha,
 And Ossian the singer of lays ;
 20 Three bards, with music by our side ;
 Three bossy bucklers (borne) before—^a
 We went to rear on high the stones
 Which memorise the glory of the brave.^{b 1}
 By Crona's winding, mossy stream,
 25 Fingal, high-chief, discomfited the foe ;
 Fled strangers from his sword in utter rout,
 Like stormy sea that's dashed upon the shore.
 We reached the field of his renown ;
 Night came down from beyond the cairns ;
 30 Tore I an oak from a crumbling bank,
 (And) kindled a flame 'mid mist of the hills.
 "My mighty ancestors, look down,
 Look down from halls that are your own ;
 When glory wakes your sons anew,
 35 On the wind shall shine the arm-renowned."^c

- From Crona's beach I chose a stone
 'Mid songs of bards (who sang) with power,
 (To mark) the blood of Fingal's conquered foes
 On the dark-grey moss of the burns.
 40 Beneath I set, due interval between,
 Three bosses from the strangers' shield,
 As fell and rose by turns

in the neigh-
 bourhood of
 Colammin,

to raise a
 stone pillar
 in commemora-
 tion of a
 victory gained
 by Fingal.

They raise the
 stone, placing
 under it arms
 of their own,
 and of the
 enemy.

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

Fonn oidheche o Ullin an àigh.
 Chuir Toscar a sgian fo 'n ùir,
 45 'Us mùrla dùbh-ghorm stàilinn chruaidh ;
 Thogadh mu chloich àird an smùr,
 A ghairm gu cliu bliadhnan nan luadh.

A nighean chòinnich sruth nan càrn
 Thu 'g éirigh an àird ann am chòir ;
 50 A chlach o chladach a tha thall,
 'N uair chaillear sìol Shelma nan tòrr ;
 Labhair-sa ri laigse nan daoine.
 Air 'aghaidh, 's an oidheche fo sprochd
 Luidhidh dubhailteach bochd 'tha 'triall ;
 55 Do chòinneach a' caoineadh gun lochd,
 A' tilleadh mu 'rosg nam bliadhna.
 Éiridh còmhraig threun fa 'chòir,
 Rìghrean gorm-sgiathach a' teurnadh gu cath,
 Làn ghealach a' dubhadh fo 'n scòrr
 60 Air raonaibh nan seòd 's nam flath.
 Brisidh e o 'aising chiar ;
 Druididh madainn air triall na h-oidheche ;
 Chithear uaighean nan treun air sliabh,
 Treuna gasda nan gnìomh 'an soillse.
 65 Labhraidh e mu chloich an raoin,
 Agus freagraidh an aois r'a iarraidh :
 " So an liath-chlach 'thog Oisean nach faoin,
 Sàr cheannard, mu-n d'aom na bliadhna."

sound of Ullin's nightly song. Toscar laid a dagger in earth, a mail of sounding steel. We raised the mould around the stone, and bade it speak to other years.

Oozy daughter of streams, that now art reared on high, speak to the feeble, O stone ! after Selma's race have failed ! Prone, from the stormy night, the traveller shall lay him by thy side : thy whis-

The song of night from gracious Ullin ;
 Toscar placed his dagger 'neath the sod,
 45 And a dark-blue mail of tempered steel ;
 Earth was heaped around the upraised stone,
 Calling to renown the years of praise.

Mossy daughter of the stream of cairns,
 Thou risest on high before me !
 50 Thou stone from a far-distant strand,
 When the race of towering Selma shall be lost,
 Speak thou to feebleness of men.
 There, on his face, at night, in sadness,
 Shall lie a wanderer poor and lorn,
 55 Thy moss which evermore is weeping,²
 And round its eyelash drawing back (gone) years,
 Shall raise before him battles of the strong—
 Blue-shielded kings descending to the fray.
 The full moon darkens 'neath the rock
 60 On battle-fields of brave and great.
 From his sable dream he will start ;
 Morn will haste on the path of night ;
 Their graves shall be seen on the hill—
 Men of might and of shining deeds ;
 65 He will speak of the stone on the plain,
 And age will to his quest reply,
 “ The grey stone raised by Ossian great,
 Leader true, on whom years have come down ! ”

Ossian calls on the pillar to hand down the memory of the great and brave to the feeble men who were to follow them ; and describes the associations which it would recal to the traveller resting beside it at night.

ting moss shall sound in his dreams : the years that were past 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 ! ”

- Ghluais mall o Chaolamhainn am bàrd
 70 O Charull, do 'n annsadh dàimh,
 G' ar cuireadh gu cuirm nan àrd,
 Aite-tuinidh geal-làimh na bàigh,
 Gaol-nan-daoine nan sàr thriath.
 Shoillsich Carull measg aois a chiabh,
 75 'N uair chunnaic e sìol a chàirdean,
 Mar dhà gheug òg air an t-sliabh,
 Air chrannaibh do 'm miann na h-àrdan.

- “A chlann nan treun mòr,” thuirt Carull,
 “Thug sibh làithean 'chaidh thairis a nuas,
 80 'N uair a theurnadh leam sìos o thonn mara
 Air Selma nan darag ri stuaidh.
 Bha Dubh-mhac Chéir-ghlais fo mo rnaig,
 Fear-còmhnuidh gaoith luaith air chuan ;
 Ar n-aithrichean 'n an nàimhdean cruaidh,
 85 Thachair sinne aig Cluthai nam bruach ;
 Theich esan 'o m' lainn air fairge,
 Mo shùil-sa 'leantuinn 'n a dhéigh.
 Mheall an oidhehe mi gun fhàire ;
 Thàinig mi gu talla an rìgh,
 90 Gu Selma nan làn-bhroilleach òigh.
 Thàinig Fionnghal 'bu chòrr, le 'bhaird ;
 Thàinig Conlaoch, làmh bàis nan ceud.

a A night of
 rayless dark ;
 lit. a night
 without dawn,
dc.

From Col-amon came a bard, from Carul, 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 Carul brightened
 between his aged locks, when he beheld the sons of his friends, like
 two young branches, before him.

“Sons of the mighty,” he said, “ye bring back the days of old,

Moved slowly from Colammin the bard
 70 Of Carul who joyed in strangers,
 Inviting us to feast in lofty hall—
 The home of the White hand benign,
 Golnandona, (child) of nobles true.
 Brightened Carul 'mid the age of his locks,
 75 When he saw the sons of his friends,
 Like two young branches, on the hill
 Of trees which love the heights.

“Sons of the great brave,” said Carul,
 “The bygone days you have recalled
 80 When I came down off ocean-wave
 On Selma of oaks by the sea.
 Du-mac-kiar-glas fled before me,
 Dweller in the swift wind of ocean,³
 Our fathers were relentless foes ;
 85 We met at Clutha of mounds ;
 Fled he from my sword to sea ;
 My eye was eager in pursuit ;
 A night of rayless dark deceived me.⁴
 Came I to the palace of the king,
 90 To Selma of high-bosomed maids ;
 Came peerless Fingal with his bards,
 Came Conloch, hand of death to hundreds.

Carul sent his bard to invite Toscar and Ossian to a feast.

He greatly rejoices to see the young sons of his friends.

They recall a time when in his youth he had defeated Du-mac-kiar-glas, who fled to sea. Toscar pursued, but lost him in the darkness of night. He landed at Selma,

when first I descended from waves on Selma's streamy vale! I pursued Duthmocarglos, 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 Selma of high-bosomed maids. Fingal came forth with his bards, and Conloch,

- Tri làithean bha cuirm anns an àrd ;
 Chunn 'as gorm-shùil làn na h-Éirinn,
 95 Nighean nan triath mòr, Roscranna,
 Solus àille shìl Chormaic nam beum.
 'An dì-chuimhn' cha do thréig mo cheuman ;
 Thug rìgh nam beum dhomh a sgiath ;
 Sud àrd i 'an talla nan teud,
 100 A' cur cuimhne air àm nan triath.^a
 A chlann nan treuna mòr o fhairge,
 Thug sibh làithean 'chaidh thairis a nuas.

^a Recording days, &c.; lit. putting remembrance on the days, &c.

- Thog Carull lasair ghlan na cuirme.
 Dà chopan nan toirm o 'r sgèith,
 105 Chuir sìos fo chlachan le mùirn,
 Gu labhairt ri ùr-chloinn an tréith.
 “'N uair bhencas còmhrag,” thuirt an rìgh,^b
 “'N uair thachras 'an strì nan lann
 Ar maca—so caismeachd na sìth !
 110 Air a' chloich so bithidh brìgh nach fann.
 'N uair ghleusas iad na sleaghan gu feum—
 Nach robh ar n-aithrichean fo chliu
 Aig cuirm ? Cuir air chùl an sgiath.”

^b When battle thunders; lit. bellows.

- Thuit oidhehe le 'ciabhan donn ;
 115 Ghluais ainneir nan sonn dàna ;
 Measg chlàrsach chualas a fonn,

arm of death. I feasted three days in the hall, and saw the blue eyes of Erin, Roscrana, daughter of heroes, light of Cormac's race. Nor forgot did my steps depart: the kings gave their shields to Carul: they hang on high in Col-amon, in memory of the past. Sons of the daring kings, ye bring back the days of old !”

Carul kindled the oak of feasts. He took two bosses from our

- Three days the feast was in the lofty hall ;
 Seen was the full blue eye of Erin,
 95 Roscranna, daughter of great chiefs,
 Lovely light of Cormae's cleaving race.
 Nor unforgotten did my steps depart,
 His own shield gave the wound-dealing king to me,
 In the hall of harps it is there on high,
 100 Recording days of mighty men.^a
 Children of the brave and great from ocean,
 The bygone days you have recalled.

- Kindled Carul the feast's bright flame ;
 Two sounding bosses from our shields
 105 He placed, in kindliness, 'neath stones,
 To speak unto the chief's new race.
 "When battle thunders," said the king,^b
 "When, in the strife of arms, shall meet
 Our sons, lo ! here is a note of peace !
 110 On this stone shall be power not vain ;
 When they shall dress their spears for work,
 (They will say), Were not our fathers in renown
 (Together) at the feast ? Throw the shield aside."

- Fell night with its dusky hair ;
 115 The maid (beloved) of heroes raised the song ;
 Amidst the harps was heard her voice,

was treated most hospitably by Fingal, who presented him with his own shield, which he proudly points to now hanging in the hall of harps.

After the feast he also raised stone pillars, under which he laid bosses from the shields of his friends in order to show to their common descendants that they and he had feasted together.

At night Golnandona played on the harp. Toscar fell in love with her.

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

Gaol-nan-daoin' nan ruighe bàna.
 Dhorchaich Toscar 'n a àite féin
 Roinh rùn nan ceud. Air 'anam thall
 120 Thainig i mar dhearrsa nan speur
 Air dubh-dhruim nan leum air sàil'^a
 'N uair bhriseas an solus o nial,
 Air cobhar liath nan tonn.

^a On the black
 ridge of the
 heaving brine;
 lit. on black
 ridge of leaps
 on the brine.

Le madainn mhosgail sinn' an sliabh ;
 125 Ar ceuman air triall nan ruadh.
 Thuit iad mu shruth a b' annsadh riamh ;
 Thill sinne tro' Chròna nam buadh.
 O 'n choille thàinig oirnn fear òg,
 Sgiath nach mòr, 'us sleagh gun bheud.
 130 "Co as tha 'n dearrsa o 'n tòrr?"
 Thuirt Toscar o Lòtha nan ceud.^a
 "'Bheil sìth 'an Caolamhainn nan teud
 Mu sholus nam beus air clàrsaich?"

^b From guest-
 thronged
 Lotha; lit.
 from Lotha of
 hundreds.

"'An Caolamhainn nan sruth," thuirt an t-òg,
 135 "Thuinidh soillse nan seòd air clàrsaich ;
 A nis tha a siubhal 's an tòrr
 Le mac an rìgh mhòir a's sàire,

Carul. Mixed with the harp arose the voice of white-armed Colnada. Toscar darkened in his place before the love of heroes. She came on his troubled soul, like a beam to the dark-heaving ocean, when it bursts from a cloud, and brightens the foamy side of a wave.

With morning we awaked the woods; and hung forward on the

Golnandona of white arms.

Dark grew Toscar in his place,

Before the love of hundreds. On his soul

120 She came like brightness of the skies

On the black ridge of the heaving brine,^a

When breaks the light from a cloud

On hoary foam of the waves.

.

With morning we roused the hill ;

125 Our steps (were) in chase of the deer ;

They fell by the streams which they always loved.

Through goodly Crona we returned.

From out the wood there came a youth,

With shield not large, and harmless spear.

130 "Whence the beam from the hill?"

Said Toscar, from guest-thronged Lutha.^b

"Dwells peace in tuneful Colammin,

Around the light of beauty o'er the harp?"^c

"In Colammin of streams," replied the youth,

135 "Dwelt she, whose harp was the light of heroes ;

Her path is now upon the hill,

With the great king's greater son.

In the morn-
 ing the young
 men followed
 the chase.

As they re-
 turned a
 youthful war-
 rior met them.
 Toscar in-
 quires of him
 regarding
 Golnandona.

He replies that
 she had gone
 off with a
 king's son.

path of the roes. They fell by their wonted streams. We returned through Crona's vale. From the wood a youth came forward, with a shield and pointless spear. "Whence," said Toscar 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 deserts, with the son

Es' a ghlac le rùn a h-anam
A' seachran ear tamuill 's an talla."

- 140 "Òg-choigrich na sgéile truaighe,
Am faca tus' a thuar 's a thriall?
Tuitidh e fo chadal 'tha buan.
Thoir dhomhsa gu luath do sgiath."
Le feirg reub an sgiath dha féin ;
- 145 Dh' éirich broilleach nam beus o 'cùl,
Mar uehd eala ag iadhadh gun bheud
Air tonnan o threunas a' chuain.
'S i Gaol-nan-daoine féin a bh' ann,
Nighean Charuill, fuil shàr an rìgh.
- 150 Ghluais 'gorm-shùil mu Thoscar nan lann ;
Chaidh a h-anam air chall 's an strì.

of the king ; he that seized with love her soul as it wandered through the hall." "Stranger of tales," said Toscar, "hast thou marked the warrior's course? He must fall ; give thou that bossy shield." In wrath he took the shield. Fair behind it rose the

In love he took her soul,
As, brief time, it flitted though the hall."

- 140 " Young stranger of the tale of woe,
Saw you his form and his path ?
In sleep long lasting he shall fall.
Give quickly unto me thy shield."
In wrath he tore the shield away ;
- 145 Rose a modest bosom behind it,
Like breast of swan which glides serene
On waves 'mid the strength of ocean.
Golnandona's self it was,
Daughter of Carul, true king's blood ;
- 150 Her blue eye wandered round Toscar of spears ;
In the struggle her heart was lost.

He wrenches the shield from the youth, in order to pursue Golnandona's lover. Golnandona herself is discovered. She had returned Toscar's love, and followed him in disguise.

breasts of a maid, white as the bosom of a swan, rising graceful on swift-rolling waves. It was Colnandona of harps, the daughter of the king! Her blue eyes had rolled on Toscar, and her love arose!

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

ix

G O L N A N D O N A.

COLAMMIN, *Caol-amhainn*, "narrow river," the residence of Carul, a name formerly explained, and belonging to many of the Ossianic characters.

CONLOCH, *Conlaoch*, "fiery hero," or "warrior," an Irish chief.

CORMAC, king of Ireland, dethroned and slain by Cairbre.

DU-MAC-KIAR-GLAS, *Dubh-mhac Chiàr-ghlais*, or *Chúir-ghlais*, "the black son of the dark-grey," a seaman (viking?) defeated by Carul.

ERIN, the modern name for Ireland, said to be *Iar-inn*, Western Isle, which I regard as the most probable, because it is the most simple, and natural derivation of the name. In a note to M. Müller's 'Science of Language' (pp. 255, 256), much learning is shown to connect the oldest known form of the name, *Iverio*, *Ieriū*, with the Sanscrit "avara," "western;" and in old Celtic poetry the country has many other names which no one attempts to explain. Among these are, "Fodla," "Banbha," "Fàil," and "Elga."—Dean's Book, note, p. 36.

GOLNANDONA, *Gaol-nan-daoine*, "the love of men," the daughter of Carul, chief of Colammin.

ROSCRANNA, daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland, and wife of Fingal.

NOTES TO GOLNANDONA.

¹ "We want to rear on high the stones
Which memorise the glory of the brave."

The raising of stone pillars to preserve the memory of important events, as here described, appears to be coeval with the history of man. The practice is at least as old as the days of Joshua, or even as those of Jacob and Laban. It prevailed from Hindostan to the "Ultima Thule" of the Scottish isles, and has produced every form and size of monument, from the humble Highland cairn to the great pyramid of Cheops.

The number of Celtic names for these commemorative stones is remarkable. We have "càrn," "carragh," "cromleac"? "dolben," "menhir," &c. Tradition connects many of the multitude to be seen in the Highlands and islands either with the Druids or the Fingalian heroes. Fingal, Ossian, and Dermid have their "pillars" in almost every district of the country; and the 'Sculptured Stones of Scotland' prove that the practice referred to prevailed both in the south and north long before the days of Ossian.

In the description before us two peculiarities are mentioned which are worthy of remark—raising the stone in cadence to the music of the bards:—

"As rose and fell by turns
The song of night from gracious Ullin;"

and placing the armour of friend, as well as of foe, beneath it.

² "Thy moss which evermore is weeping,
And round its eyelash drawing back (gone) years."

These remarkable lines are thus translated by Macfarlan—

"Tuo musco plorante sine noxa,
Et retroagente, circa ejus cilia, annos."

It is clear, however, that he entirely misunderstands the first line

when he translates *lochul* by “noxa.” “Fault,” “crime,” “defect,” are common meanings of *lochul*; but so is also “a nap,” or “wink of sleep.” It is impossible to associate blame or praise with the moss; but the words become intelligible when we take this term for “sleep.”

“Thy moss weeping without wink of sleep,”

—*i. e.*, “ceaselessly,” “continually.”

It may be remarked that this “weeping of moss” is a favourite image with Ossian, and is probably suggested by the moisture which always surrounds the plant, and which seems necessary for maintaining its growth.

The general idea in the second line seems to be that the moss, indicating the great age of the stone, recalls the memory of long-past years; and there is a species of moss—the *Tortula muralis*—whose long slender fringe may not inaptly be compared to an eyelash; but it is not easy to see how the moss can be said to gather or turn back the years around its eyelash.

³ “Dweller in the swift wind of ocean;”

A description of a sea-rover worthy of remark.

⁴ “Mu sholus nam beus air clàrsaich.”

“Around the light of beauty o’er the harp.”

This is a very beautiful line in Gaelic, but difficult to render adequately into English.

I may remark that *beus*, generally signifying moral excellence, and here, I believe, all womanly accomplishments, sometimes bears a totally different meaning, being applied to the singing of birds. Alexander McDonald, in his ‘Song to Summer,’ uses the verb *beusailth* to denote the singing of the robin; and in his well-known song of “Allt-an-t-Siùcair” he applies the noun *beus* to the notes both of the robin and the blackbird. Further, in Ossian’s “Conlach and Colvala” (l. 275), it is said—

“Tha ’n cliu mar *bheus* nam bàrd;”

the most natural meaning of which seems to be,

“Their fame is as the *song* of bards.”

The line before us, according to this view, might be translated,

“The light of melody upon the harp;”

—*i. e.*, “she who diffused light or joy by her melodious playing on the harp.”

C R O M A

A R G U M E N T.

“ Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, is overheard by Ossian lamenting the death of Oscar, her lover. Ossian, to divert her grief, relates his own actions in an expedition which he undertook, at Fingal’s command, to aid Crothar, the petty king of Cromia, a country in Ireland, against Rothmar, who invaded his dominions. The story is delivered down thus in tradition : Crothar, king of Cromia, being blind with age, and his son too young for the field, Rothmar, the chief of Tronlo, resolved to avail himself of the opportunity offered of annexing the dominions of Crothar to his own. He accordingly marched into the country subject to Crothar, but which he held of Arth or Artho, who was at the time supreme king of Ireland.

“ Crothar being, on account of his age and blindness, unfit for action, sent for aid to Fingal, king of Scotland, who ordered his son Ossian to the relief of Crothar. But before his arrival, Fovargoruno, the son of Crothar, attacking Rothmar, was slain himself, and his forces totally defeated. Ossian renewed the war, came to battle, killed Rothmar, and routed his army. Cromia being thus delivered of its enemies, Ossian returned to Scotland.”—M.

C R Ò M A.

- 'S e guth ciuin mo rùin a th'ann !
 Neo-mhinic, gann gu m' aisling féin thu !
 Fosglaibh sibhs' 'ur talla thall,
 'Shiuns're Thoscair nan àrd spenr ;
- 5 Fosglaibh sibhse dorsan nan neul.
 Tha Malmhìna gu dian fo dheur.
 Chualam guth measg m' aisling féin ;
 (Tha farum mo chléibh gu h-àrd.)
 C' uim' a thàinig an osag 'n a dhéigh,
- 10 O dhubh-shinbhal na linne thall ?
 Do sgiath fhuaimear 'an gallain an aonaich,
 Thréig aisling Mhalmhìna air sliabh.
 Chunnaic is' a rùn ag aomadh,
 Cèd-earradh a' taomadh mu 'n triath,
- 15 Dearrsa na gréine mar thaobh ris,
 'S e 'boillsgeadh mar òr nan dàimh.
- 'S e guth ciuin mo rùin a th' ann ;
 Neo-mhinic gann gu m' aisling féin thu.

It was the voice of my love ! seldom art thou in the dreams of Malvina ! Open your airy halls, O fathers of Toscar of shields ! Unfold the gates of your clouds : the steps of Malvina are near. I have heard a voice in my dream. I feel the fluttering of my soul. Why didst thou come, O blast ! from the dark-rolling face

C R O M A.

- THE gentle voice of him I love it is !
 Rare, and brief thy coming to my dream.¹
 Open ye your hall afar,
 Sires of Toscar, in the lofty skies ;²
 5 Open ye the doors of the clouds ;
 Malvina passionately weeps.
 I heard a voice amid my dream ;
 (The throbbing of my heart is loud.)
 Wherefore behind it came a blast,
 10 From the black going of the loch afar ?
 Sounded thy wing across the mountain boughs ;
 Malvina's dream forsook her on the hill.
 Her love she beheld descending,
 A mist-robe poured itself about the chief,
 15 His side was formed by gleaming of the sun,
 Glittering like the gold of the stranger.

It is the gentle voice of him I love ;
 Rare, and brief thy coming to my dream.

Malvina hears
 in her dream
 the voice of
 Oscar, long
 dead, and calls
 on the spirits
 of her fathers
 to open their
 gates to receive
 her spirit.

She beholds
 his form, and

of the lake ? Thy rustling wing was in the tree ; the dream of Malvina fled. But she beheld her love, when his robe of mist flew on the wind. A sunbeam was on his skirts, they glittered like the gold of the stranger. It was the voice of my love ! seldom comes he to my dreams !

- 'S e do chòmhnuidh-sa m' anam féin,
 20 A shìol Oisein, a's tréine làmh ;
 Éiridh m' osna 'am madainn gun fheum,
 Mo dheoir mar shileadh speura àrd
 A' tuiteam mall o ghruidh na h-oidhche.
 Bu ehrann àillidh mi, 'thréin nan seòd,
 25 'Oseair chòrr, le geugaibh cùbhraidh,
 'N nair thàinig bàs, mar ghaoth nan tòrr ;
 Fo 'sgéith thuit mo cheann fo smùire.
 Thàinig earrach caoin fo bhraon ;
 Cha d' éirich duilleag fhaoin dhomh féin.
 30 Chunnaic òigh' mi fo shàmhchair thall ;
 Bhuail clàrsaichean mall nan teud.
 Chunnaic òigh' mi, 's mi 'cumhadh fo ghràdh.
 "C' uime cho truagh tha làmh-gheal nam beus ?
 'Cheud ainneir o Lòtha nan sìan,
 35 An robh Oscar, gu trian do luaidh,
 Anns a' mhadainn mar dhearrsa o ghréin' ?
 Làn àille do mhiann fo 'chruaidh ?

- Caoin am fonn ann am chluais féin,
 A nighean Lòtha nan sruth fiar.
 40 An cual' thu guth nach 'eil beò 's a' bheinn,
 'An aisling, ann do chadal ciar,
 'N àir thuit clos air do shùilibh mall

But thou dwellest in the soul of Malvina, son of mighty Ossian !
 My sighs arise with the beam of the east ; my tears descend with
 the drops of night. I was a lovely tree in thy presence, Oscar, with
 all my branches round me ; but thy death came like a blast from
 the desert, and laid my green head low. The spring returned with
 its showers ; no leaf of mine arose ! The virgins saw me silent in

- My inmost soul is thine own abode,
 20 Ossian's son of strongest arm ;
 Arise my sighs each morn in vain,
 My tears like rain-drops of the heavens high
 Slowly falling off the cheeks of night.
 A tree right fair I was, brave of the brave ;
 25 Matchless Osear, fragrant were my boughs,
 When death came like a blast from heights,
 Beneath his wing my head sank under dust.
 Came balmy spring with dewy shower ;
 Arose no leaflet green on me.
 30 The maidens saw me silent and apart ;
 They struck the harp, soft-lingering on the chords.
 The maidens saw me mourning in my love :
 "Why now so sad is the white-handed one and pure ?
 Thou choicest of maids in Lotha of storms,
 35 Was Oscar, never yet but praised of thee,²
 At morning, like the shining of the sun ?
 Splendidly beautiful was he, thy love, in arms ?

- Sweet (is) thy song in mine ear,
 Daughter of Lotha of the winding streams.
 40 Didst hear in the hill, a voice that lives not,
 In dream amid thy sable sleep,
 When slumber fell on thy slow-moving eyes,

describes her
own desolate
state.

The maidens
try to cheer
her, and in-
quire about
the surpass-
ing beauty of
Oscar.

Ossian, over-
hearing her la-
ment, warns
her that
while " sor-
rowing in
peace" brings
joy, despair
wastes the

the hall ; they touched the harp of joy. The tear was on the cheek of Malvina : the virgins beheld me in my grief. Why art thou sad ? they said ; thou first of the maids of Lutha ! Was he lovely as the beam of the morning, and stately in thy sight ?

Pleasant is thy song in Ossian's ear, daughter of streamy Lutha ! Thou hast heard the music of departed bards, in the dream of thy

^a Thou camest down ; lit. *it was come down by thee*—impersonal form of the verb, frequent in Ossian.

- Air bruachan Mhòrshruth nan toirm beura ?
 'N uair theurnadh leat o sheilg nan càrn,^a
 45 'An latha einn, àrd ghrian 's na speuran
 An cuala tu bàrda nam fonn ?
 'S taitneach, ach trom do ghuth,
 'S taitneach, a Mhalmhìna nan sonn.
 Leaghaidh bròn am bochd anam 'tha dubh.
 50 Tha aoibhneas ann am bròn le sìth,
 'N uair shuidhicheas àrd strì a' bhròin ;
 Caithidh cumha na tùrsaich gun bhrìgh ;
 Gann an là' 'an tìr nan seòd,
 A nighean Thoscair, a's àillidh snuagh.
 55 Tuitidh iad mar dhèithein sìos
 Air an coimhead grian neartmhor 'n a soillse,
 'N uair luidheas an dealt air a chiabh,
 'S a throm cheann fo shìan na h-oidheche.
 Èisd-sa ri mo sheann sgeul, 'dìgh ;
 60 Tha mo chuimhne air òige nam buadh.

^b Bore to Cromma ; lit. *struck Cromma*.

- Fo ghuth an rìgh glurad thog mi siuil.
 Bluail mi Cròma nan tòrr o chuan,^b
 Cròma, 'an Immis-fàile nan sluagh,
 Ard thalla nan seòd 's nam buadh ;
 65 Tùir ghlas mu iomall na tràigh,
 Baile Chròthair, am mòr thriath,

rest, when sleep fell on thine eyes, at the murmur of Moruth. When thou didst return from the chase, in the day of the sun, thou hast heard the music of bards, and thy song is lovely ! It is lovely, O Malvina ! but it melts the soul. There is a joy in grief when peace dwells in the breasts of the sad. But sorrow wastes the mournful, O daughter of Toscar ! and their days are few ! They

- On the banks of shrill-roaring Mōr-ru ?
 When from the mountain-chase thou camest down,^a
 45 Most still the day—the sun in heaven high—
 Didst thou hear the bards of song ?
 O sweet but sorrow-laden is thy voice,
 O sweet it is, Malvina (child) of brave ones.
 Grief wastes away the heart of black despair ;
 50 But joy belongs to sorrowing in peace,
 When settles down the agony of woe ;
 Wailing consumes the sad, and all in vain ;
 Few are their days in the land of the brave,
 Daughter of Toscar of fairest form ;
 55 They fall as doth the flower,
 On which the sun has looked in strength of light,
 When lies the dew on its locks,
 And bows its head beneath the blast of night.
 List thou, O maiden, to my olden tale ;
 60 My days of early prowess I recall.

- Swift, at the voice of the king, I hoisted sail,
 And bore to hilly Croma off the deep,^b
 Croma in Innisfail of hosts,
 The lofty hall of braves and mighty deeds—
 65 Grey towers by marge of waves—
 The house of Cro-har, mighty chief,

heart. They who yield to it fall as a sun-scorched flower.

To cheer her he tells a tale of his own early days.

He was sent by Fingal to assist Cro-har, who, when old and blind, had been attacked by Romar.

fall away, like the flower on which the sun hath looked in his strength after the mildew has passed over it, when its head is heavy with the drops of night. Attend to the tale of Ossian, O maid ! He remembers the days of his youth !

The king commanded ; I raised my sails, and rushed into the bay of Croma ; into Croma's sounding bay, in lovely Innisfail. High on

Laoch a bhuadhaich, 'n a òige, thar dàimh ;
Thog an aois a làmh mu 'n liath.

Shìn Ròthmar a lann thar sonn ;
70 Las fearg, a bha trom, air Fionnghal.
“Ghuais, 'Oisein, gu còmbrag a null ;
Tha mo charaid 'am òige fo iorghuil.”

Chuir mi suas am bàrd le fonn ;
Thàinig e gu talla nan sonn.
75 Shuidh Cròthar measg arma nan triath ;
Ghéill a shùil ; bu ghlas a chiabh.
An gaisgeach liath air maide thall,
A leadan m'a cheann ag aomadh mall ;
Mhùch e fonn air àm a dh'fhalbh ;
80 Bhuail farum ar n-arm a chluas ;
Ghluais Cròthar, shìn e mach a làmh ;
“Cend fàilte do shàr mhac nam buadh,
'Oisein !” thuirt an laoch, a' còmhradh ;
“Thréig spionnadh làmh Chròthair 'am blàr.
85 Nan togaimm féin an lann gu dòruinn,
Mar 'an là 'thug Fionnghal a nall
Buaidh ri Srutha nan gleann fiar !
B' esan ceann nan daoine 'e féin ;
Bha Cròthar gun bheud fo chliù ;

the coast arose the towers of Crothar king of spears ; Crothar, renowned in the battles of his youth ; but age dwelt then around the chief. Rothmar had raised the sword against the hero ; and the wrath of Fingal burned. He sent Ossian to meet Rothmar in war, for the chief of Cromma was the friend of his youth. I sent the bard before me with songs. I came into the hall of Crothar. There sat the chief amidst the arms of his fathers, but his eyes had failed.

A hero went in youth to vanquish foes ;
 (But) round the hoary head age raised its hand.

Stretched Romar his spear against the brave ;
 70 Kindled the deep wrath of Fingal.
 "Go forth, O Ossian, to the fight ;
 The friend of my youth is sore beset."

Forward I sent the bard with song ;
 He came to the hall of the brave.
 75 Sat Cro-har 'mid the arms of heroes ;
 His eye had failed—hoary his locks—
 A grey-haired warrior leaning on a staff :
 His locks slow-waving round his head ;
 He crooned an air of other days.
 80 Struck on his ear the clanging of our arms ;
 Cro-har rose, and forth he stretched his hand ;
 "A hundred welcomes be to victories' true son,
 Ossian !" said the hero, speaking (thus) ;
 "Failed has the strength of Cro-har's arm in war.
 85 The blade for havoc could I now uplift,
 As on the day when Fingal hither brought
 Conquest, by Srúa of the winding glens !
 He was, indeed, the head of men ;
 (And) without blot was Cro-har in renown :

Description of
 Cro-har as he
 sat in his hall.

He gives a
 joyous wel-
 come to Os-
 sian and his
 friends. Re-
 calls the time
 when he
 fought with
 renown under
 Fingal.

His grey locks waved around a staff on which the warrior leaned. He hummed the song of other times, when the sound of our arms reached his ears. Crothar rose, stretched his aged hand, and blessed the son of Fingal.

"Ossian !" said the hero, "the strength of Crothar's arm has failed. O could I lift the sword, as on the day that Fingal fought at Strutha ! He was the first of men ! but Crothar had also his

^a Wall of trophies; lit. wall of magnificence.

- 90 Dhomhsa thug e moladh nan treun.
 Chuir e copan na sgéith air chùl,
 Sgiath Chalthair, a dh'aom 'an còmhrag
 Fo 'n rìgh, 's e 'n comh-strì nan lann;
 Faic àrd i ri balla na mòrehuis;^a
 95 Ghéill mo shùil. Tha Cròthar dall.
 'Bheil do neart mar neart nan triath?
 Sìn, Oisein, do ruighe do 'n liath."

- Thug mi mo ruighe do 'n rìgh féin;
 Ghlac an treun aosda mo làmh;
 100 Bhris an osan o spàirn a chléibh;
 Thuit deuran le 'ghruaidh gun tàmh.
 "Is làidir thu, a mbie an tréin;
 Ao-coltach do ghleus ri triath Mhòrbheinn.
 Co esan 'tha coltach ris féin
 105 Measg ghaisgeach nan ceud 'an còmhrag?
 Sgaoilear mo chuirn anns an talla;
 Togadh gach bàrd caoin am fonn;
 'S mòr esan 'tha 'n iadhadh mo bhalla,
 'Shiol Chròma 'ni freagar ri tonn!"
 110 A' chuirn sgaoilte; chualas an ceól,
 Àrd shòlas 'an talla nan triath;
 Ach sòlas mu 'n osna fo seled,

fame. The king of Morven praised me; he placed on my arm the bossy shield of Calthar, whom the king had slain in his wars. Dost thou not behold it on the wall? for Crothar's eyes have failed. Is thy strength like thy father's, Ossian? let the aged feel thine arm!"

I gave my arm to the king; he felt it with his aged hands. The

- 90 To me he gave a hero's praise.
 The bossy shield he laid aside,
 The shield of Calhar who had fallen in war,
 Before the king in strife of swords.
 Behold it high on the wall of trophies ;^a
 95 Failed has my eye. Cro-har is blind.
 Is thy strength as the strength of chiefs ?
 Stretch, Ossian, thine arm to the grey-haired."

He asks Ossian to stretch his arm towards him, that he may judge of his strength.

- I gave my arm unto the king ;
 Grasped the aged brave my hand ;
 100 A sigh broke from his labouring chest ;
 Ceaseless tears streamed down his cheek.
 "Stalwart thou art, son of the stalwart ;
 But, in thy build, unlike the chief of the great Bens.
 Who to that man may likened be
 105 Among chiefs of hundreds in the combat ?
 Spread ye my banquet in the hall ;
 Let every bard of skill strike up his song ;
 Great is he whom my circling walls enclose,
 Ye race of Croma echoing to the wave !"

He pronounces him strong, but not equal to Fingal.

He orders the feast to be spread.

- 110 The feast (was) spread. Music was heard,
 High joy was in the hall of warriors :
 But joy round sighs which were mist-veiled,

Ossian describes the joy of feast and music as

sigh rose in his breast, and his tears came down. "Thou art strong, my son," he said, "but not like the king of Morven! But who is like the hero among the mighty in war? Let the feast of my hall be spread; and let my bards exalt the song. Great is he that is within my walls, ye sons of echoing Croma!" The feast is spread. The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering

Am bròn 'còmhuidh dorcha 's a' chliabh,
 Mar sholus fann o ré, 's i faoin,
 115 'Tha 'sgaoileadh mu mhala nan speur.

Thraoigh an ceòl, 'us labhair le fòill
 Rìgh Chròma, do 'm b' aosda cruth ;
 Gun deoir labhair ceannard nan seòd,
 Dh'at am bròn 'am meadhon a ghuth.

120 'Shìol Fhionnghail, nach fhaic thu, 'thréin,
 An dùbhra dubh measg éibhneis Chròthair ?
 Cha robh mulad 'an cuirm orm féin,
 'N uair bu bhed seoid a bheumadh còmhrag.
 'Am fianuis dàimh bu mhòr mo shòlas,
 125 'N uair a shoillsich mo chòrr mhac a' chuirn :
 Ach gath sin a thréig mi fo dhòruinn,
 Gun fhàgail deò soluis air chùl.
 Thuit e, 'shìol Fhionnghail nan treun,
 'An còmhrag nam beum 'am chòir.

130 Chuala Ròthmar 'an Tromlo fo fheur
 Gu-n d' dhùineadh o leus mo shùilean ;
 Chual' e nu m' armaibh gun fheum,
 Air balla nan teud fo smùire ;
 Chual' e sud : 'an àrdan mòr

a sigh, that darkly dwelt in every breast. It was like the faint beam of the moon spread on a cloud in heaven. At length the music ceased, and the aged king of Cromá spoke. He spoke without a tear, but sorrow swelled in the midst of his voice.

Son of Fingal! behold'st thou not the darkness of Crothar's joy? My soul was not sad at the feast, when my people lived before

Grief dwelling darkly in the breast,
 Like the faint light of a siekly moon
 115 Diffused on the brow of the skies.

a glimmer on
 the surface of
 darkness.

The music ceased, and gently spoke
 The king of Croma, aged of form.
 He spoke without a tear, the chief of brave ones ;
 Sorrow swelled in the midst of his voice.

Cro-har tells
 the cause, say-
 ing that he
 truly rejoiced
 in the feast

120 Thou son of Fingal, seest thou, valiant one,
 The darkness black amid the joy of Cro-har ?
 Never sat sorrow yet at feast on me,
 Whilst still there lived the battle-cleaving braves.
 In presence of the guests my joy was great,
 125 When to the feast my peerless son gave light :
 He (was) a beam that left me anguish-pierced,
 Leaving no spark of light behind.
 He fell, thou son of Fingal, of the brave,
 In fight of gashing strokes, (and) by my side.

when his son
 shed a light
 on the board ;
 but that son
 had fallen by
 his side.

130 Romar heard in grassy Tromlo
 That my eyes were closed in film.
 He heard of my idle arms
 On the wall of harps, and under rust ;
 This he heard. In haughty pride,

His neigh-
 bour, Romar,
 hearing of
 this, invaded
 his territory,
 and routed his
 people.

me. I rejoiced in the presence of strangers, when my son shone in the hall. But, Ossian, he is a beam that is departed. He left no streak of light behind. He is fallen, son of Fingal ! in the wars of his father. Rothmar the chief of grassy Tromlo heard that these eyes had failed ; he heard that my arms were fixed in the hall, and the pride of his soul arose ! He came towards Croma ; my people

- 135 Thàinig e do Chròma le stoirm;
 Thuit mo shluagh leis 'an còmhrag còrr;
 Las fearg mi 'n a chòmhaile fo m' airm.
 Cìod a dheanadh Cròthar fo leus,
 Mo cheuman gun bheud fo mhùig?
- 140 Mo bhròn! mì gun treoir, 'us gun bheum!
 Truagh! nach tilleadh na lài' 'chaidh null!
 Na lài' treun 's an d' thug mi còmhrag,
 'N uair choisinn mì mòr chliu na strì.

Thill mo mhac o fhuaim na seilg,

- 145 Faobhar-gorm nan leadan ciar;
 Cha do thogadh leis riamh claidheamh le feirg,
 'Òg ruighe gun mheirg, lag fo sgéith;"
 Mòr anam an òig a' leumadh;
 Las solus nach géilleadh o 'shùilibh;
- 150 Chummaic e fo bhròn mo cheuman,
 Mhosgail osna nam beus o 'ùrla.

“A rìgh Chròma,” so 'labhair an treun,
 “'N ann air son nach dhuit féin a tha mac,
 'N ann air son gu-m bheil mise gun fheum,
 155 'Ghluais osna do chléibhe fo smachd?
 Faireaghadh m' athair féin mo neart;
 Tharruing mi cruaidh-bheairt nan lann ;”^b

^a His young unbrowned arm; lit. *his young arm without rust.*

^b The hard-hilted sword; lit. *the hard hilts of swords, or blades.*

fell before him. I took my arms in my wrath, but what could sightless Crothar do? My steps were unequal; my grief was great. I wished for the days that were passed. Days, wherein I fought; and won in the field of blood! My son returned from the chase; the fair-haired Fovar-gormo. He had not lifted his sword in battle,

- 135 With tumult, he came to Croma.
 Fell my hosts in dreadful fight ;
 Wrath fired me to meet him under arms.
 Of what avail was Cro-har filmy-eyed,
 My footsteps useless under mist ?
- 140 Woe's me! nor strength nor battle-stroke is mine!
 Woe's me! for vanished days that come no more!
 Brave days, when, eager for the fray,
 I gained high praise in war.

Fired with
 resentment,
 Cro-har went
 forth against
 him, but
 without avail.

- My son returned from the sounding chase,
 145 Favor-gorm of dark-brown hair ;
 Never by him was raised a sword in wrath ;
 His young unbrownèd arm was weak beneath a shield;^a
 The great heart of the youth was bounding ;
 Burned light unflinching in his eyes.
- 150 He saw the sorrow of my steps ;
 Wakened sighs of pity in his breast.

His young
 and only re-
 maining son,
 Favor-gorm,

- “ O king of Croma,” thus the hero spoke,
 “ Is it because to thee there is no son,³
 Because that I am without use,
 155 The smothered sigh awakens from thy breast ?
 Let my own father prove my strength ;
 I have drawn the hard-hilted sword ;^b

asks permis-
 sion to attack
 Romar.

for his arm was young. But the soul of the youth was great ; the fire of valour burnt in his eyes. He saw the disordered steps of his father, and his sigh arose. “ King of Croma,” he said, “ is it because thou hast no son ; is it for the weakness of Fovar-gormo's arm that thy sighs arise ? I begin, my father, to feel my strength ;

'N am òige 's annsa leam feart ;
 Làb mi bogha nan teud gu mall ;
 160 Tachraidh mi ri Ròthmar 'an còmhrag,
 Le sìol Chròma nam mòr ghnìomh,
 Tachraidh mi ri Ròthmar air còmhnard."

Las m' anam gu còrr gun ghìomh.
 "Tachair ris an triath fo lainn,
 165 'Mhic Chròthair 'tha mall gun fheum,
 Ach biodh gaisgich eile air cheann,
 Gus an cluinn am fear dall do cheum.
 Cha-n fhaic mo shùil thu ann ad chruaidh,
 'Fhaobhair-ghuirm nan ruadh chiabh."

170 Ghluais, thachair, 'us thuit an t-òg.
 Tha Ròthmar ri Cròma nam fleagh,
 Esa 'reub mo mhac 'bu chòrr,
 Le roinn ghorm a mhòir-shleagh.

Cha-n àm gu lìonadh nan còrn,
 175 'S mi 'glacadh 'n am dhòrn an t-sleagh.
 Chunnaic càirdean mi 'lasadh gu còrr ;
 Ghrad-ghluais iad o mhòr fhleagh.
 Shiubhail sinn tro' oidhche am fraoch :
 Ghlas madainn gu caoin o'n ear ;
 180 Dh' éirich romham gleann uaine, caol,

I have drawn the sword of my youth ; and I have bent the bow.
 Let me meet this Rothmar, with the sons of Cromá ; let me meet
 him, O my father ! I feel my burning soul ! " And thou shalt
 meet him," I said, "son of the sightless Crothar ! But let others
 advance before thee, that I may hear the tread of thy feet at thy
 return ; for my eyes behold thee not, fair-haired Fovar-gormo !"

In youth my joy is in deeds of might ;
 I've bent the stringèd bow with measured strength.
 160 I will encounter Romar in the fight ;
 With Croma's race of mighty deeds,
 I will encounter Romar on the plain."

Fired my soul, as ne'er before, without a fear.
 "Go forth in arms to meet the chief,"
 165 Thou son of Cro-har, old, and without use ;
 But let other heroes head (the fight),
 That the blind one may hear thy step.
 My eye will not behold thee in thy steel ;
 Favor-gorm of auburn locks."

170 (They) moved, (they) clashed, and fell the youth.
 Romar (now) is close to Croma of feasts ;
 He who pierced my peerless son
 With the blue point of his great spear.

"No time is this to fill the bowl,"
 175 As I clutched in my fist the spear.
 My comrades saw me roused beyond all wont ;
 Sudden they started from the plenteous board.
 We trod the heather all night long ;
 Greyed morning calmly from the east.
 180 Before me spread a narrow glen, and green ;

The father grants it ; but orders that older warriors should lead the fight.

Favor-gorm engages Romar, but is speedily cut down ; and Croma is now defenceless against Romar.

Ossian, fired with wrath, commands his comrades instantly to leave the feast, and seek the foe.

He went, he met the foe ; he fell. Rothmar advances to Croma.
 He who slew my son is near, with all his pointed spears.

"This is no time to fill the shell," I replied, and took my spear !
 My people saw the fire of my eyes ; they all arose around. Through
 night we strode along the heath. Grey morning rose in the east.
 A green narrow vale appeared before us ; nor wanting was its wind-

- Fiar shruthan a' taomadh gu lear.
 Bha Ròthmar ann le feartaibh ciar,
 Fo 'n armaibh 'bha liath ri soillse.
 Bhuaile air caol-fada nan gleann ;
- 185 Theich nàimhdean ; thuit Ròthmar fo m' lainn.
 Mu-n do cheileadh an là fo iar,
 Ghlae Cròthar airm Ròthmhair nan sgiath ;
 Dh' fhairich 'n a aois iaql le 'làimh,
 Mìn shòlas a' snàmh m'a smaointean.
- 190 Thionail sluagh gu talla nan triath ;
 Chualas farum nan slige fial ;
 Mhosgail chàrsach nan teud mall ;
 Cuig bàrda mu seach le rann
 'Togail cliu mu mhae nan treun,
- 195 'Us mu Oisein, fear ùr nan ceud ;^a
 Anam a' lasadh suas fo ùrla,
 Fonn a' freagradh fo thùr nan teud.
 Ro mhòr 'mhosgail sòlas air sluagh ;
 Gu Cròma thill buaidh fo shìth.
- 200 Thàinig oidheche ciuin 'us balbh ;
 Chaidh madainn air falbh fo shòlas ;
 Cha d' thàinig nàimhdean 'an dùbhra dùint',
 A' tàrruing o'n cùl nam mòr shleagh ;

^a New leader
 of the hosts ;
 lit. *new man*
 of the *hundred*.

ing stream. The dark host of Rothmar are on its banks with all their glittering arms. We fought along the vale. They fled. Rothmar sunk beneath my sword! Day had not descended in the west, when I brought his arms to Crothar. The aged hero felt them with his hands ; and joy brightened over all his thoughts.

- Winding rivers pouring through the plain.
 Romar was there with dusky hosts,
 In arms grey-glimmering to the light,
 (We) struck in the long defile of glens ;
- 185 Fled the foe. Romar fell beneath my blade.
 Ere day was hidden in the west,
 Grasped Cro-har the arms of Romar of shields ;
 The aged man, he felt them with his hands,
 A gentle gladness swimming o'er his thoughts.
- 190 Gathered the host to the hall of chiefs ;
 Heard was the stir of the shells of cheer ;
 Woke up the harp with strings of lingering sound ;
 Five bards, and each in turn, with songs
 Raise high the praises of the hero's son ;
- 195 Of Ossian, too, new leader of the hosts ;^a
 The soul a-flaming high within their breast,
 While airs repeat the spirit of the strings.⁴
 Exceeding joy broke forth upon the host,
 For victory, with peace, to Croma had returned.
- 200 Descended still and silent night ;
 In gladness morning sped away ;
 There came no darkness-hidden foes,
 Drawing, from their backs, their mighty spears ;

In the grey of morning they give battle, and conquer. Before the close of evening the aged Cro-har examines the armour of his foe, and the spoils presented to him by Ossian.

The feast is again spread ; five bards sing the praises of Cro-har's son and of Ossian.

Night and morning pass in gladness.

The people gather to the hall. The shells of the feast are heard. Ten harps are strung ; five bards advance, and sing, by turns, the praise of Ossian ; they poured forth their burning souls, and the string answered to their voice. The joy of Croma was great : for peace returned to the land. The night came on with silence ; the morning returned with joy. No foe came in darkness, with his

Bu mhòr an sòlas 'thog an sluagh,
205 'Us Ròthmar gun tuar air leirg.

Thog mi fonn air òg 'am bàs,
'N uair chuir iad fo làr an triath ;
Cròthar aosda, 's e 'g aomadh trom,
Gun osna o 'n t-sonn mu 'mhac.
210 Dh'iarr, 'us fhuair e lot 'n a bhroilleach—
Dealradh soluis am measg a bhròin.
'N am chomhair thàinig an treun dall ;
Ghlac e mo làmh, 'us e 'labhairt.

“ A rìgh nan sleagh a's géire ceann,
215 Thuit mo mhac fo làinn le cliu ;
Cha do theich mo ghaisgeach tro' ghleann ;
Thachair esan ri bàs gun smùr,
'Us e 'dlùthbadh ri neart nan nàimhdean.
Sona na h-òig threun', a thriath',
220 Mu-n chuinnear cliu fo chiar a' bhàis !
Cha-n fhaic iad 'an talla nan sgiath
Fiamh gàire mu chrìonaich an làmh ;
Cuinnh' orra-sa measg fonn na mòrehuis,
Deoir ghlana bhan òg mu 'n ùir.
225 Ceart gu-n seac an aois o chòmhrag,
'Chuir treunas 'au òige fo chliu ;

glittering spear. The joy of Cromá was great ; for the gloomy Rothmar had fallen !

I raised my voice for Fovar-gormo, when they laid the chief in earth. The aged Crothar was there, but his sigh was not heard. He searched for the wound of his son, and found it in his breast. Joy rose in the face of the aged. He came and spoke to Ossian.

Great was the host's exulting joy
 205 That Romar, pallid, lay upon the plain.

I raised a song about the youth in death,
 When in the dust the brave they laid ;
 Cro-har, aged, was heavily bowed down,
 But for his son no sigh the hero drew.
 210 He searched, and found upon his breast a wound—
 A gleam of light amid his utter woe.
 To meet me came the hero blind ;
 He grasped my hand as he spoke.

“ King of the spears of sharpest point,
 215 With glory fell my son beneath the sword ;
 My brave one fled not through the glen :
 Death he encountered without stain,
 Hard-pressing the force of the foe.
 Happy, O chief, are the youthful brave,
 220 Round whom, in dark of death, great praise resounds !
 In the hall of shields, they shall not see
 The smile of scorn at their withering arms ;
 They are remembered in majestic song ;
 Pure maidens' tears shall fall upon their dust.
 225 Withdrawn from war must wither the age
 Which youthful might had made renowned ;

Ossian sings
 the praise of
 Favor-gorm.
 Cro-har found
 a wound on
 the breast of
 his son, which
 was as a gleam
 of light amid
 his woe.

Addressing
 Ossian, he re-
 joices in the
 honourable
 death of his
 son ; declares
 the happiness
 of the youth-
 ful brave who
 fall amid
 glory. They
 escape the
 smile of scorn
 with which
 the aged and
 feeble are
 treated in the
 hall.

“ King of spears ! ” he said, “ my son has not fallen without his fame. The young warrior did not fly ; but met death, as he went forward in his strength. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is heard ! The feeble will not behold them in the hall, or smile at their trembling hands. Their memory shall be honoured in song ; the young tear of the virgin will fall. But the

Iadsan fo dhì-chuimhn nam beò ;
 'An dìomhaireas tuitidh iad thall,
 Gun osna mhall o 'm macaibh féin ;
 230 'An sòlas togar suas an càrn,
 Gun deoir air làr mu chloich nan treun.
 Sona na h-òig threun', a thriath,
 Mu-n chuinnear cliu fo chiar a' bhàis !

aged wither away by degrees ; the fame of their youth, while yet
 they live, is all forgot. They fall in secret. The sigh of their son
 is not heard. Joy is around their tomb ; the stone of their fame is

They are forgotten among living men,
 By all unnoticed—left alone they fall—
 Their very sons give forth no heavy sigh ;
 230 With joy they rear their cairn on high,
 No tears bedew the stones where heroes sleep.
 Happy, O chief, are the youthful brave,
 Round whom, in dark of death, great praise resounds !

They who
 thus outlive
 their strength
 are forgotten
 among the
 living.

placed without a tear. Happy are they who die in youth, when
 their renown is around them !”

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IX

C R O M A .

CAL-AR, *Calthar*, a warrior slain in battle by Fingal.

CROMA was a district or small principality in Ireland, where the chief events of this poem took place.

CROTHAR, *Cròth-fhear*, "strong man." He was king of Croma, and the friend of Fingal.

FAVOR-GORM, *Faobhar-gorm*, "blue edge"—*i. e.*, "edge of blue steel," or "keen edge"—son of Cro-har.

INNIS-FAILE, "the isle of the jewel" (?) an ancient name for Ireland, "the first gem of the sea." Some refer this name to the *Lia-fàil*, or rather, "*Leug-fàil*," the celebrated "stone of fate," now in the coronation chair in Westminster.—*Vide* 'Erin,' p. 277.

MOR-RU, *Mòr-shruth*, "great stream."

ROTHMAR or ROMAR, king of Tromlo, a district adjoining Croma.

SREUA, *Srutha*, or *Sruthan*. This term, used as a proper name, is not so in reality, but is a common name for streams, from the same root as Lat. *ruo*, and Greek $\rho\acute{\upsilon}\omega$.

TROM-LO, possibly "heavy or deep water"—*trom*, "heavy," and *lo* in Irish, as *li* or *lighe* in Scottish Gaelic, "water." We have *Loch Trom-li* in the Black Mount forest in Perthshire.

NOTES TO CROMA.

¹ "Rare, and brief thy coming to my dream."

"Neo-mhinic, gann gu m' aisling féin thu!"

Mr MacLachlan has very unaccountably altered and enfeebled this line by changing it into—

"O's ainmic gu m' aisling féin thu."

² "Was Oscar, never yet but praised of thee," &c.

"An robh Oscar, gu trian do luaidh."

This expression, *gu trian*, is generally rendered by Macfarlan "in tertian partem," and by other translators in the same signification of "the third." This is its modern meaning, nor does any dictionary which I have seen—Gaelic, Irish, or Welsh—hint at any other. But the reader of Ossian will clearly see that in many places it has a very different signification. Even Macfarlan, in the line before us, renders it "perpetuo," and it would be obviously absurd to render it here by a "third." Various other instances occur where the context obviously proves the meaning of *trian* to be "completeness" or "totality"—*e. g.*, in "Callion and Colvala," line 290, where Ossian, reproaching the cowardice of the disguised warrior who dropped his spear on the ground and wept, addresses him—

"A mhic làimh a tha tais *gu trian*,"

"Son of the hand which is *thoroughly* soft,"

the meaning is perfectly obvious. In "Oinammorbul," line 104, it is said—

"Thuit nàimhdean o *thrian* na droch-bheirt."

Macfarlan has—

"Ceciderunt hostes à *tertia parte* mali instrumenti"—

a meaning utterly inconsistent with the context. The enemy had been routed by Ossian. Their leader, Tormod, was bound with thongs. Malorcol was triumphant. Thus *trian na drochbheirt* must denote the total failure of the enemy.

“Car-hon,” lines 115, 179; “Covala,” line 230; “Calhon and Colvala,” line 273; “Conloch and Cu-hona,” lines 43, 91, as well as other places which might be quoted, all bear out the same conclusion, that Ossian often means by *trian* not the “third part,” but the whole of the object to which the term is applied; and the Gaelic is not the only language where the number three is significant of perfection.

³ “Is it because to thee there is no son.”

“’N ann air son nach dhuit féin a tha mac.”

This is a line which, to say the least, is inelegant, and very different from the usual diction of Ossian.

“’N ann air son dhuit féin nach ’eil mac”

is an improvement, though still leaving it rugged.

⁴ “While airs repeat the spirit of the strings.”

The meaning of this obscure line seems to be that the tunes corresponded with the words of the bards who swept the strings.

CALHON AND COLVALA

A R G U M E N T.

“This piece, as many more of Ossian’s compositions, is addressed to one of the first Christian missionaries. The story of the poem is handed down by tradition thus : In the country of the Britons, between the walls, two chiefs lived in the days of Fingal, Dunthalgo, lord of Teutha, supposed to be the Tweed ; and Rathmor, who dwelt at Clutha, well known to be the river Clyde. Rathmor was not more renowned for his generosity and hospitality than Dunthalgo was infamous for his cruelty and ambition. Dunthalgo, through envy, or on account of some private feuds which subsisted between the families, murdered Rathmor at a feast ; but being afterwards touched with remorse, he educated the two sons of Rathmor, Calthon and Colmar, in his own house. They growing up to man’s estate, dropped some hints that they intended to revenge the death of their father, upon which Dunthalgo shut them up in two caves on the banks of Teutha, intending to take them off privately. Colmal, the daughter of Dunthalgo, who was secretly in love with Calthon, helped him to make his escape from prison, and fled with him to Fingal, disguised in the habit of a young warrior, and implored his aid against Dunthalgo. Fingal sent Ossian with three hundred men to Colmar’s relief. Dunthalgo having previously murdered Colmar, came to a battle with Ossian, but he was killed by that hero, and his army totally defeated.

“Calthon married Colmal, his deliverer, and Ossian returned to Morven.”—M.

CALTHONN 'US CAOLMHAL.

- GLAN guth nam fonna do thréin,
 'Fhir 'tha 'tuineadh leat féin 'an còs,
 E 'teurnadh mar shruth o bheinn
 'An caol-ghleann na gréine dhomhs'.
- 5 'Fhir a thàinig o mhagh nan Gall,
 Mosglaidh m' anam 'an talla nam fleagh,
 Mar na lài 'am bliadhnaibh thall ;
 Tha mi 'sineadh mo làmh gu sleagh ;
 Tha mi 'sineadh mo làmh 'tha lag,
- 10 'Us an osun fo smachd mo chléibh'.
 An cluinn thu, 'shìol nan còs 'an creig,
 Fonn o Oisian mu 'òg-ghnìomh féin ?
 Tha m' anamsa mu 'n aimsir mhòir :
 Thill solus 'us sòlas do thriath ;
- 15 Mar so féin a chithear a' ghrian^a
 'Us i 'siubhal 's an iar 'an soillse,
 An déigh do 'ceuman gluasad fo nial,

^a "Sun" is here feminine, contrary to general usage. The rhythm would admit of the masculine as well.

PLEASANT is the voice of thy song, thou lonely dweller of the rock !
 It comes on the sound of the stream, along the narrow vale. My
 soul awakes, O stranger ! in the midst of my hall. I stretch my
 hand to the spear, as in the days of other years. I stretch my

CALHON AND COLVALA.

- SWEET to the brave (is) the voice of songs,
 Thou lonely dweller in the cave ;¹
 It downward flows, like mountain-rill,
 In the narrow glen of the sun on me.
- 5 Thou who from field of Gall hast come,
 My soul enkindles in the hall of feasts,
 As the days of the years that are gone ;
 I stretch my hands to the spear,
 I stretch my hands which are feeble,
- 10 And the sigh is smothered in my breast.²
 Wilt thou hear, son of the cave of the rock,
 From Ossian, a lay of the deeds of his youth ?
 My soul communes with times of greatness ;
 Light and joy have to the chief returned !
- 15 Even thus is seen the sun^a
 Sweeping in brightness through the west,
 After his steps have moved beneath a cloud.

Ossian asks a
 lonely dweller
 in caves to
 listen to a tale
 of his early
 years.

His soul is
 lighted up as
 the memory
 of the past
 revives.

hand, but it is feeble ; and the sigh of my bosom grows. Wilt thou not listen, son of the rock ! to the song of Ossian ? My soul is full of other times ; the joy of my youth returns. Thus the sun appears in the west, after the steps of his brightness have moved

- Tulaich uaine nan slàn a' boillsgeadh,
 Na sruthan gorm 'an sòlas 's a' ghleann ;
 20 An seann laoch air lorg, 'us e 'triall,
 A liath cliabhan 'lasadh m'a cheann.
 Am faic fear-tuinidh nan còs ciar
 Sgiath mhòr Oisein 'an àird an talla
 Fo chomhara scaran nan còmhrag ?
 25 Thréig an soillese glan a balla,
 Tha meirg air a ballaibh, mo dhòruinn !
 An sgiath sin féin air taobh an tréin,
 Fear-riaghlaidh nan cend air Tuaeide ;
 Air taobh Dhunthalmo nam mòr bheum,
 30 Seal mu-n d' thuit e fo gheur na cruaidh so.
 Cluinn-sa, 'fhir-tuinidh nan còs ciar,
 Mòr sgeul air na bliadhnaibh 'tha thall.

- Mòr Rathmor nan triath ri Cluthai.
 Thuinidh lagaich na truaighe fo 'thlàth ;
 35 Cha do dhùineadh riamh dorsan nam buadh,
 Cuirm 'us fleagh a' dol suas a ghnàth.
 Thàinig sìol coigrich nan Gall
 Le fàilte gu sàr na féile ;
 Thog bàrdan na duana 's na dàin ;
 40 Bhuaileadh clàrsaichean mall fo theudaibh ;
 Las sòlas 'an eudam a' bhròin.

behind a storm : the green hills lift their dewy heads : the blue streams rejoice in the vale. The aged hero comes forth on his staff ; his grey hair glitters in the beam. Dost thou not behold, son of the rock ! a shield in Ossian's hall ? It is marked with the strokes of battle ; and the brightness of its bosses has failed. That shield the great Dunthalmo bore, the chief of streamy Tenta. Dunthal-

- Now glisten the green knolls of showers,
 The blue streams in the glen rejoice ;
 20 The aged hero, on his staff, goes forth ;
 His hoary locks are radiant round his head.
 Sees the dweller in the darksome caves
 Ossian's great shield in the hall on high,
 All marked by dints of battle ?
 25 The bright gleam has faded from its field ;³
 Its bosses, woe is me, are dimmed with rust !
 That very shield (hung) on a hero's side—
 A ruler of hundreds on Tweed—
 On the side of Duntalmo of mighty strokes—
 30 Brief time ere he fell 'neath this sharp brand.
 List, thou dweller in the caverns dusk,
 A mighty tale of the years that are gone.

- Great (was) Ramor 'mid the chiefs by Clyde ;
 The febleness of woe, beneath his kindness, dwelt ;
 35 Never were closed the princely doors ;
 Welcome and feast were ever free.
 Came the foreign race of Galls⁴
 With greeting to the prince of cheer ;
 Raised the bards both chant and song ;⁵
 40 The harp's slow-lingering chords were struck ;
 The face of sorrow brightened into joy.

He points to a shield on the wall which once belonged to a renowned warrior, Duntalmo, slain by him, and he tells the tale.

Ramor was a powerful chief on the Clyde, famed for bravery and hospitality.

mo bore it in battle before he fell by Ossian's spear. Listen, son of the rock, to the tale of other years !

Rathmor was a chief of Clutha. The feeble dwelt in his hall. The gates of Rathmor were never shut ; his feast was always spread. The sons of the stranger came. They blessed the generous chief of Clutha. Bards raised the song, and touched the harp : joy bright-

Dunthalmo còrr an ardain mhòir,
 Ghluais e grad 'an còmhrag Rathmhoir :
 Bhuain triath na Cluthai a' bhuaidh 'bu chòrr ;
 45 Dunthalmo fo fheing, 'us e 'lasadh.
 Thàinig fo oidhche le 'shluagh ;
 Thuit Rathmor fo chruaidh nan lann ;
 Thuit e 'an talla nan luaidh,
 'S an do sgaoileadh fleagh luath nach gann,
 50 'N uair bhiodh coigrich nan Gall mu 'n cuairt.

Bha Colmar 'us Calthonn 'an òige,
 Dà mhac còrr triath mhòir nan carbad ;^a
 Thàinig iad le sòlas 'us mòrchuis
 Gu talla mòr an athar féin ;
 55 Sheall iad air-san 'n a fhuil,
 'Us theiring an tuil o 'n gruaidh.
 Leagh anam Dhunthalmo gu 'bhun,
 'N uair chunnaic e sìol gun luaidh.
 Gu Alteutha, tìr nan sìana,^b
 60 Mhosgail iad tigh triath a' chòmhraig ;
 Làb iad na boghan 'n a fhianuis,
 'Us theurnadh iad sìos gu 'chòmh-stri.^c
 Chummas balladh an athar air làr,
 An droighionn uaine 'fàs 's an talla :
 65 Thuit deuran mu ghruaidh nan sàr,
 'S an eudann air àm fo smala.

^a Car-borne chief ; lit. *the chief of chariots.*

^b "Gu Alteutha," &c. There is apparently a line wanting here. The preposition *an* for *gu* would be an improvement as matters stand.

^c They went forth ; lit. *they descended down.*

ened on the face of the sad ! Dunthalmo came, in his pride, and rushed into the combat of Rathmor. The chief of Clutha overcame ; the rage of Dunthalmo rose. He came, by night, with his warriors : the mighty Rathmor fell. He fell in his halls, where his feast was often spread for strangers.

Colmar and Calthon were young, the sons of car-borne Rathmor. They came, in the joy of youth, into their father's hall. They behold

Duntalmo, in pride and hate exceeding,
 Fell with sudden onset on Ramor.
 The chief of Clyde reaped victory complete.
 45 Duntalmo, in wrath high-flaming,
 Came with his people under night ;
 Ramor fell beneath the brands of steel ;
 He fell in the hall of minstrelsy,
 Where plenteous feast was quickly spread
 50 Soon as strangers of the Gall came nigh.

Colmar and Calhon were of tender age,
 Two noble sons of the great car-borne chief ;^a
 Came they in joy and in pride
 To their own father's spacious hall.
 55 They looked upon him in his blood,
 And floods streamed down their cheeks.
 The soul of Duntalmo melted to its depth
 When he saw the boys with none to love.^b
 In the tower of Alteutha of storms^b
 60 They gladdened the heart of the war-loving chief ;
 They bent the bow in his presence,
 And to his battles they went forth.^c
 Seen were their father's walls in dust,
 The green-leafed thorn grew in the hall ;
 65 Tears fell from the cheeks of the heroes,
 Their countenance at times was under cloud.

Duntalmo, a chief on the Tweed, moved with envy, attacked Ramor, but was defeated.

He returned under darkness of night and slew Ramor.

He took compassion on his two boys, Colmar and Calhon, and reared them in his own house of Alteutha.

As they grew up and saw their father's ruined hall, they showed such signs of sorrow as alarmed Duntalmo.

him in his blood ; their bursting tears descend. The soul of Duntalmo melted when he saw the children of youth. He brought them to Alteutha's walls ; they grew in the house of their foe. They bent the bow in his presence ; and came forth to his wars. They saw the fallen walls of their fathers ; they saw the green thorn in the hall. Their tears rushed forth in secret. At times their faces were sad. Duntalmo beheld their grief : his darkening

^a Duntalmo was not heedless of their grief; lit. *Duntalmo avoided not their grief.*

- Cha do sheachuin Dunthalmo am bròn ;^a
 Bha 'anam fo mhòrchuis mu 'm bàs ;
 Chuir esan iad sìos 'an dà chòs
- 70 Aig Teutha nan ro-thoirm 'tha fàs.
 Cha d' thàinig grian le 'dearrsa féin,
 Cha d' thàinig ré nan speur 's an oidheche :
 'An duibhre bha còmhuidh nan treun,
 'An duibhre gun leus, gun soillse,
- 75 Iadsan 'coimhead gu dìomhair ri bàs.

- Deoir shàmhach air nighin an triath,
 Air Caolmhal nan ciabh 's nan rosg mall ;
 Bha 'sùilean air Calthonn fo fhianh ;
 A ta 'àille 'n a cliabh air àm.
- 80 Chrith anam na h-òigh' m'a treun.
 “ Beag do chomas-sa féin a dheanamh :
 Cha-n éirich do ruighe féin air beum ;
 Cha robh lann riamh gu feum mu d' iadhadh.
 Cha mhosgail d'ùrla bàn fo mhàile ;
- 85 Cha ghiorrag do shàraibh do shùil :
 A Chaolmhal an uehd chorraich àillidh,
 Beag do chomas-sa féin mu d' rùn !”
 Is òmmhor 'us gearr bha 'ceuman,
 'Leadan àillidh a'leum m'a ceann,^b
- 90 'Sùilean alluidh 'losgadh tro' 'deuraibh,
 Ainnir ghasda nam beus air chall^c

^b Tossing, &c. ;
 lit. *leaping,*
 &c.

^c Distraught ;
 lit. *on loss—*
i.e. lost.

soul designed their death. He closed them in two caves on the echoing banks of Teutha. The sun did not come there with his beams ; nor the moon of heaven by night. The sons of Rathmor remained in darkness and foresaw their death.

The daughter of Dunthalmo wept in silence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal. Her eye had rolled in secret on Calthon ; his loveli-

Duntalmo was not heedless of their grief ;^a
 About their death rose tumult in his soul.
 He put them down into two caves,
 70 By the loud-roaring, desert Teutha.
 The sun came not with light, his own,
 Nor came the moon of heaven by night ;
 Dark was the dwelling of the brave ones ;
 In darkness without ray or gleam,
 75 They looked for secret death.

He confined
 them in two
 dark caves.

The daughter of the chief shed silent tears—
 Long-haired Colvala of slow-moving eyelash.
 On Calhon was her eye in bashful awe,
 His beauty ever is within her breast.
 80 Trembled the maiden's soul for her hero.
 "But little canst thou perform ;
 Thine arm can never rise to smite,
 A sword for slaying thou didst never wield ;
 Thy bosom white 'neath steel will never rise ;
 85 No terror for warriors hath thine eye.
 Colvala of bosom beautiful and high,
 How little for thy love canst thou achieve !"
 Many and short were her steps,
 Her lovely hair was tossing about her head,^b
 90 Her eyes, in wildness, burning through (her) tears ;
 The beautiful and modest maid distraught.^c

Colvala, Duntalmo's
 daughter, was
 in love with
 with Calhon.

ness swelled in her soul. She trembled for her warrior ; but what could Colmal do ? Her arm could not lift the spear ; nor was the sword formed for her side. Her white breast never rose beneath a mail ; neither was her eye the terror of heroes. What canst thou do, O Colmal ! for the falling chief ? Her steps are unequal ; her hair is loose : her eye looks wildly through her tears. She came,

Thàinig i 's an oidhche gu talla ;
 Chuir i 'eruth gun smala fo chruaidh,
 Cruaidh laoich 'an òige a chailleadh,
 95 'Thuit 'an còmhrag ri caladh nan stuadh.
 Thàinig i gu còs a rùin féin,
 'Us dh' fhuasgail i o 'n treun an iall.

“ Éirich, a shìol Rathmhoir nam beum ;
 Éirich, tha 'n oidhche gun ré fo ghruaim ;
 100 Teicheadmaid gu Selma nan teud,
 'Shàr cheannaird nan treun o Chluthai.
 Is mise mac Làmhghéal nan tòrr,
 Do-m bu thuineadh mòr thùra d' athar ;
 Chuala mi do dhorchadh 'an còs,
 105 Ghluais m'anam le bròn a' caitheadh.
 Éirich, a shìol Rathmhoir nam beum ;
 Éirich, tha oidhche gun ré fo ghruaim.”

“ A ghuth speura,” fhreagair an triath,
 “ A thàinig o nial gu Calthonn,
 110 Tha samhla mo shìms'ire a' triall,
 'Us gu tric a' dol sìos 'an aisling,
 O'n là thréig a' ghrian mo shùil,
 'S an dorcha so 'dlùthadh mu 'n cuairt.
 No 'n tusa mac Làmhghéal nam beum,
 115 An triath 'chunnaic mi féin aig Cluthai ?
 'N teich mise gu Selma nan teud,^a

^a Of harps ;
 lit. of strings.

by night, to the hall. She armed her lovely form in steel—the steel of a young warrior who fell in the first of his battles. She came to the eave of Calthon and loosed the thong from his hands.

“ Arise, son of Rathmor,” she said, “ arise; the night is dark ! Let us fly to the king of Selma, chief of fallen Clutha ! I am the son of Lamgal, who dwelt in thy father's hall. I heard of thy dark

Under night she came unto the hall ;
 She clothed her faultless form in armour—
 Armour of hero lost in youth,
 95 Who fell in war beside the bay of waves.
 She came to the cave of her love,
 And from the hero she unloosed the thong.

“ Offspring of warlike Ramor, rise ;
 Rise ; moonless and murky is the night.
 100 Flee we to Selma of harps,
 True leader of the brave from Clutha.
 I am the son of Lamgal of the hills,
 Who oftentimes dwelt in thy sire’s great towers ;
 I heard of thy darkening in the cave,
 105 Moved my soul, with grief consuming.
 Son of the warlike Ramor, rise ;
 Rise ; moonless and murky is the night.”

“ Thou voice from heaven,” replied the chief,
 “ Which hast come from a cloud to Calhon !
 110 The spirits of my fathers range (on high),
 And oftentimes, in the dream, come down,
 Since that the sun forsook mine eye,
 And this dark has deepened round.
 Or art thou warlike Lamgal’s son in sooth,
 115 The chief whom I myself have seen by Clyde ?
 Shall I flee to Selma of harps “

She disguised herself in the armour of a warrior, visited his cave, representing herself as the son of Lamgal, a friendly chief, and urged Calhon to flee to Fingal.

He at first believed her to be the spirit of one of his ancestors ;

dwelling in the cave, and my soul arose. Arise, son of Rathmor, arise ; the night is dark !” “ Blest voice !” replied the chief, “ comest thou from the clouds to Calhon ? The ghosts of his fathers have often descended in his dreams, since the sun has retired from his eyes, and darkness has dwelt around him. Or art thou the son of Lamgal, the chief I often saw in Clutha ? But shall I fly to Fingal,

'Us Colmar gun fheum fo chruaidh ?
 'N teich mise gu Mòrbheinn nan sìan,
 'Us Colmar gun trian de shoillse ?
 120 Cha teich—Thoir dhomh féin do shleagh,
 'Shìol Làmhghéal nam fleagh fo dhànaibh ;
 Bithidh Calthonn mu 'n cuairt do 'bhràthair."

a The lovely
 maid ; lit.
 the loveliness
 of the maid.

“Làn mhìle triath” thuirt sgiamh na h-òigh;^a
 “Le'n sleaghan mòr mu chòir nan earbad :
 125 Cìod a nì òg Chalthonn nan tòrr,
 'Am measg coimhthional slòigh 'an armaibh ?
 Teicheamaid gu rìgh nam mòr bheann ;
 Thig esan a nall le còmhrag ;
 Tha 'ruighe a sgaoileadh air gach àm
 130 Gus na truaigh 'tha 'n call 'an dòruinn ;
 Mar dhealan mu lagaich tha 'lann.
 Éirich, a shìol Rathmhoir nam beum ;
 Sìolaidhidh oidheche gun fheum o thriath ;
 Éirich ; chì an là do cheum ;
 135 Tuitidh 'an òige, mòr threun nan sgiath."

Ghrad ghluais, fo osna, an triath,
 A dheoir a' dol sìos mu Cholmar.
 Thàinig e gu Selma nan sìan
 Gun fhios da air sgiamh na h-òighe.

and Colmar my brother low? Will I fly to Morven, and the hero
 closed in night? No; give me that spear, son of Lamgal; Calthon
 will defend his brother!"

"A thousand warriors," replied the maid, "stretch their spears
 round ear-borne Colmar. What can Calthon do against a host so
 great? Let us fly to the king of Morven, he will come with war."

While Colmar is helpless in distress?
 Shall I flee to the great Bens of storms,
 And Colmar without ray of light?
 120 I will not flee. Give me thy spear,
 Lamgal's son of song-renowned feasts;
 Beside his brother Calhon will abide."

"Full thousand warriors," said the lovely maid,
 "With mighty spears surround the cars;
 125 What can young Calhon of the towers
 Against a multitude of men in arms?
 Flee we to the king of the great mountains.
 Hither with battle he will come;
 His hand at all times is spread forth
 130 To the lorn ones lost in woe;
 His sword, as lightning, is around the weak.
 Rise, son of the warlike Ramor;
 The night will vanish, bootless to the chief.
 Rise; day will behold thy steps;
 135 The great-brave of shields shall fall in youth."

In haste rose up the chief with sighs,
 His tears for Colmar rolling down.
 He came to Selma of storms,
 Unwitting of the beauty of the maid.

but at length
 consents to ac-
 company her.

His arm is stretched forth to the unhappy; the lightning of his sword is round the weak. Arise, thou son of Rathmor! the shadows will fly away. Arise, or thy steps may be seen, and thou must fall in youth!"

The sighing hero rose; his tears descend for car-borne Colmar. He came with the maid to Selma's hall; but he knew not that it

140 Bha ceann-bheairt air an eudann chaoin ;
Mhosgail broilleach gu baoth fo chruaidh.

^a The hero
came—*i.e.*
Fingal.

Theiring o àrd sheilg an treun ;^a
Chunnas coigrich gun bhèud 'n a chòir,
Mar dhà dhearrsa o shoillse speur.

145 'An talla nan ceud slige còrr,
Chual' an rìgh sgeul bròin o Chluthai ;
Chuir e 'shùilean mu 'n cuairt le feirg.
Ghluais mìle mu chòmhrag na Tuaide
'Leth-mhosgladh an cruaidh gun mheirg.

150 Thàinig mi le sleagh o shliabh,
Àrd shòlas a' lasadh 'am chliabh ;
Labhair am mòr rìgh ri Oisian,
Air thoiseach 'am meadhon nan triath.

^b Of feasts
and of cars ;
lit. of festive
or feast cha-
riots.

^c As sunbeam
shining
through the
glen ; or, as
breeze passing
through the
glen. *Aiteal*
signifies " a
beam or ray
of light," also
" a breath of
wind."

" A gath mo threunais," thuir an rìgh,
155 " Shìol Fhionnghail, gu strì tog mo shleagh ;
Gabh gu Tuaid' nan sruth corrach o fhrìth ;
Tearuim Colmar nan carbad fleagh ;^b
Thigeadh do chliù-sa 'am fhianuis,
Mar aiteal 'dol sìos anns a' ghleann,^c
160 Gus an éirich mo smaointean 'an ìosal
Mu mo shìol—mu ùr-chliu nam beann.
Bi-sa, Oisein, mar ghaillium 'an còmhrag,
Gu ciuin, 'us gun mhòrchuis do nàimhdean ;

was Colmal. The helmet covered her lovely face. Her bosom heaved beneath the steel. Fingal returned from the chase, and found the lovely strangers. They were like two beams of light, in the midst of the hall of shells. The king heard the tale of grief, and turned his eyes around. A thousand heroes half rose before him, claiming the war of Teutha. I came with my spear from the hill ; the joy of battle rose in my breast : for the king spoke to

140 A head-piece hid the lovely face,
A bosom heaved unseen 'neath steel.

The hero came down from mountain-chase.^a
Strangers fair were seen coming nigh,
Like two bright gleams from heaven's light.

145 In the hall of hundred festal shells
Heard the king the woeful tale from Clyde ;
He rolled his eyes around in wrath.
Uprose a thousand for the war of Tweed,
Half starting the shining steel.

150 I came with spear from mountain-side,
High joy a-flaming in my breast ;
Spoke the mighty king to Ossian,
Foremost in midst of the brave.

“Light of my valour,” said the king,

155 “Offspring of Fionn, lift thou my spear for war ;
Haste thee to Tweed of steep mountain-streams,
Save Colmar of feasts and of cars ;^b
Let thy renown before me come
As sunbeam shining through the glen,^c
160 Until my secret thoughts look up
To my son—fresh glory of the Bens.
Ossian, be thou as a storm in combat ;
Gentle when (thy) foes lay down their pride.⁷

They reach
Selma, and tell
their tale.

Fingal, en-
raged at the
cruelty of
Duntalmo,
orders his
warriors to
the rescue of
Colmar, and
intrusts the
command to
Ossian, charg-
ing him to
follow the
footsteps of
his father.

Ossian in the midst of a thousand chiefs.

“Sou of my strength,” began the king, “take thou the spear of Fingal. Go to Teutha's rushing stream, and save the car-borne Colmar. Let thy fame return before thee like a pleasant gale ; that my soul may rejoice over my son, who renews the renown of our fathers. Ossian ! be thou a storm in war ; but mild when the foe is low. It was thus my fame arose, O my son ! be thou like Selma's

- Mar so féin ghlan an cliu dhòmhsa ;
 165 Bi-sa, Oisein, mar mhòr-thriath Shelma ;
 'N uair thig dàna nam focala treuna
 Gu talla nan tend, chròm mo shùilean ;
 Tha mo ruighe a' sìneadh gu benman,
 'N uair thig lagaich fo bheud 'am ionnsuidh ;
 170 Mo chlaidheamh 'an còmhnuidh 'g an dìon."^a

^a My sword
is their refuge,
&c. ; or, is
always their
defence.

- Ghluais sòlas o fhocail an rìgh ;
 Chaidh mise gun strì fo armaibh ;
 Ri mo thaobh ghluais Diaran nam frèth,
 'Us Deargo, ard rìgh nan gorm shleagh ;
 175 Tri cheudan o òigridh nan gleann
 An déigh mo cheuman air a' mhagh,
 Na coigrich a' triall ri m' thaobh.
 Chuala Dunthalmo am fuaim
 O astar na cruaidh' gu 'thìr ;
 180 Choithionail e neart na gann Tuaid':^b
 Air tulaich sheas sluaigh gu strì,
 Mar charraigeaen briste le torrunn,
 Ag iadhadh fo fharum nan crann
 Gun duille, 's iad dàithite fo dhonadh ;
 185 Gun sruthan a' tuiteam gu gann
 Air ciaradh 'us fiaradh an còs.

^b The rugged
Tweed—*na
gann Tuaid,
Gann*, here
"rugged,"
very rarely
bears the
meaning.

Bha Tuaid le fuaim a' gluasad mòr

chief. When the haughty come to my halls, my eyes behold them not. But my arm is stretched forth to the unhappy. My sword defends the weak."

I rejoiced in the words of the king. I took my rattling arms. Diaran rose at my side, and Dargo, king of spears. Three hundred

Even so my fame shone clear.
 165 Ossian, be like Selma's mighty chief.
 When the haughty come with swelling words⁸
 To the hall of harps, my eyes are turned away.
 My arm is stretched for cleaving strokes
 When the weak and oppressed draw nigh ;
 170 My sword (is) their refuge and defence." ^a

Sprang gladness from the monarch's words ;
 Full fain I donned my armour ;
 Beside me went Diaran of forests,
 And Dargo, high king of blue spears.
 175 Three hundred of the youth from the glens
 Followed my steps on the field,
 The strangers walking by my side.
 Duntalmo heard the sound
 Of arms approaching his land.
 180 He gathered the force of the rugged Tweed ;^b
 On heights his people stood for combat
 Like rocks all shattered by the thunderbolt
 Which rushes through moaning trees,
 Leafless, and scorched, and scathed ;
 185 The scanty rill no longer drips
 Down their browned, distorted rifts.

Roaring Tweed was rolling full in flood

They speedily set forth, accompanied by Calhon, and Colvala as the son of Langal.

Duntalmo, hearing of their approach, musters his warriors to oppose them.

youths followed our steps : the lovely strangers were at my side. Dunthalmo heard the sound of our approach. He gathered the strength of Teutha. He stood on a hill with his host. They were like rocks broken with thunder, when their bent trees are singed and bare, and the streams of their chinks have failed. The stream

- Roimh nàimhdean garbh nan còrr.
 “Grad imicheadh barda 'n an còir ;
 190 'Tairgeadh còimbrag do sheòid Dhunthàl.”
 Fiamb-gàire fo dhorcha a mhòrehuis,
 'S a ghaisgeacha dòmhail air sliabh,
 Mar nialan air torraibh nan scòr-bheann,
 'N uair bhriseas a' mhòr-ghaath an taobh,
 195 'Sgaoileadh an ciabhan dubh mu'n cuairt.

- Thug iad Colmar òg gu Tuaid,
 Iomadh iall gu cruaidh mu 'n triath.
 Bha 'n gaisgeach 'an ceuman fo ghruaim,
 A shùilean 'dol suas gu thrian,^a
 200 Ag iadhadh mu 'chairdean gu léir.^b
 Sheas sinne fo thréin' nan arm,
 Uisge Thuaid' a' bruaillein le beuc.
 Thàinig Dunthalmo le 'ghorm shleagh ;
 Bhuail e 'n gaisgeach glan 's an taobh ;
 205 Thuit e air bruachan a' mhaigh
 'Am fuil ; 'us chual' sinne gu 'n cùl,^c
 Na h-osna gu dlùth o 'chliabh.

- Leum mi air mo shleagh gun dàil ;^d
 Ghabh Calthonn an snàmh le leum ;
 210 Thuit Tuaid 'us a h-òigridh fo 'r làimh ;
 Thuit duibhre na h-oidheil' air na tréin.

^a His eye for ever upwards turned ; Gael. *gu thrian* ; Macf. “ non-nunquam.”

^b Clinging round all his friends ; more literally, *twining round*, &c.

^c Clear and loud ; lit. *to their back*.

^d Sprang I on my spear—*i.e.* across the river.

of Teutha rolled, in its pride, before the gloomy foe. I sent a bard to Dunthalmo, to offer the combat on the plain ; but he smiled in the darkness of his pride. His unsettled host moved on the hill ; like the mountain-cloud, when the blast has entered its womb, and scatters the curling gloom on every side.

They brought Colmar to Teutha's bank, bound with a thousand

Before stern foes with sharp-edged blades.⁹
 "Straightway let bards to them advance
 190 To offer combat to Duntalmo's men."
 Laughter (lay) beneath his gloom and pride,
 As his warriors crowded the heights,
 Like clouds on pinnacles of jagged Bens,
 When a strong wind breaks their sides,
 195 And scatters their black hair abroad.

To Tweed they brought the youthful Colmar,
 Many thongs fast bound about the chief.
 The hero's steps were under gloom,
 His eye for ever upwards turned,^a
 200 Clinging round all his friends.^b
 In the strength of our arms we stood.
 (Before us) raged the roaring Tweed.
 Duntalmo came with his blue spear,
 (And) smote the blameless hero on the side.
 205 He fell, on the marge of the plain,
 In blood; and we heard, clear and loud,^c
 The groans come frequent from his breast.

Straightway sprang I on my spear;^d
 Calhon took (to) swimming with a bound.
 210 Fell Tweed and her youth beneath our hands;
 Dark night came down on the warriors.

As they reach
 the Tweed
 they send
 bards to sum-
 mon him to
 combat.
 He laughs at
 the proposal,

and slays Col-
 mar before
 their eyes.

They instantly
 cross the
 Tweed, defeat
 Duntalmo and
 his forces, but
 night stops
 the pursuit.

thongs. The chief is sad, but stately. His eye is on his friends; for we stood, in our arms, whilst Teutha's waters rolled between. Duntalmo came with his spear, and pierced the hero's side: he rolled on the bank in his blood. We heard his broken sighs. Calhon rushed into the stream: I bounded forward on my spear. Teutha's race fell before us. Night came rolling down. Duntalmo

a Old . . .
trees; lit. *un-*
young—*neo-*
òg—a negative
mode of strong
affirmation
common in
Ossian.

Shuidh Dunthalmo air àrda scòrr
'Measg coille neo-òg, fo fhuaim;^a
Las fearg ann a ùrla gu mòr,
215 Ri Calthonn còrr nan carbad luath.
Sheas Calthonn féin fo bhròn,
Fo bhròn mu Cholmar, a thuit sìos,
Colmar glan, a thuit 's e òg,
Seal mu-n d' éirich a chliu fo sgiath.

220 Cuir suas fonn ciar a' bhròin,
A bhàird 'tha còrr; tha triath fo luaidh.
Sheas esan fo dharaidh mhòir,
Tric a' tilgeadh air lòn a chruaidh.
Bha rosgan caoin Chaoilmhal fo dheoir,
225 Gu dìomhair, ach mòr m'a gruaidh:
Chunnaic i bàs a h-athar féin,
No tuiteam an tréin o Chluthai.^b

b *i.e.* either
her father or
her lover must
fall in the
combat.

Theich oidhche gu bloigh o an speur;
Thuit sàmhechair 'us dùbhra mu mhagh;
230 Bha 'anam ag aomadh dha féin,
Iadhadh cadail mu threun nan sleagh:
Leth-fhosgladh sùilean do'n triath,
Toirm Thuaide a' fiaradh m'a chluais:
Gun tuar, 's a' luaidh a lotan mòr,
235 Thàinig fuath Cholmair gu leus;

rested on a rock amidst an aged wood. The rage of his bosom
burned against the ear-borne Calthon. But Calthon stood in his
grief; he mourned the fallen Colmar—Colmar slain in youth, before
his fame arose!

I bade the song of woe to rise, to soothe the mournful chief; but
he stood beneath a tree, and often threw his spear on earth. The

- Duntalmo sat on a rugged rock,
 'Mid old and moaning trees ;^a
 Great wrath burned high within his breast
 215 'Gainst Calhon good, of rapid chariots.
 Calhon himself in sorrow stood,
 Sorrow for Colmar who fell down,
 Colmar pure who fell in youth,
 Brief time ere his fame in arms arose.
- 220 " Raise high the gloomy strain of sorrow,
 O skilful bard ! a prince is to be praised."
 (Calhon) stood beneath a great oak-tree,
 Oft casting on the field his spear.
 Colvala's gentle eyes were filled with tears,
 225 (Which rolled) concealed but big, adown her cheek ;
 (For) she saw either her father's death,
 Or the fall of the strong one from Clyde.^b

- Fled night to its half, from the sky
 Silence, and darkness fell round the plain.
 230 (Calhon's) soul was yielding to himself,¹⁰
 Sleep was enfolding the hero of spears.
 The chief half opened his eyes,
 The roar of Tweed was sounding in his ear ;
 Pallid, and showing his deep wounds,
 235 Came the ghost of Colmar to light.

Ossian calls
 on a bard to
 sing the praise
 of Colmar.

Calhon
 mourns for
 his brother ;
 and as his eyes
 were closing
 in sleep the
 spirit of his
 brother ap-
 pears to him,
 reproaching
 him for his

humid eye of Colmal rolled near in a secret tear : she foresaw the fall of Dunthalmo, or of Chutha's warlike chief. Now half the night had passed away. Silence and darkness were on the field. Sleep rested on the eyes of the heroes : Calhon's settling soul was still. His eyes were half closed ; but the murmur of Teutha had not yet failed in his ear. Pale, and showing his wounds, the ghost of Col-

Bha 'aomadh thar triath nan tùr còrr,
'Us mhosgail gann 'us fanu a ghuth.

“ An cadal so do mhae nan sgiath,
Oidheche fo liath, a bhràthair shìos ?
240 Nach d'éirich gu seilge nan sliabh,
'N uair a lean sinn na ciara mu chruaich ?
Cha do dhì-chuimhn' thu Colmar, a thriath,
Ach aig iadhadh a' bhàis m' a òige ;
Tha mi gun tuar fo chruaich an lòn ;
245 Éireadh Calthonn ; là òg ag éirigh ;
Thig Dunthalmo le gnìomh neo-chòir.”

Shiubhail e luath 'am fuaim na gaoith ;
Chunnaic Calthonn a cheuma 's e 'falbh ;
Ghluais esan, fo bhuaireadh, a chruaidh :
250 Ghrad mhosgail caoin Chaolmhal gu bàibh,
'Ceuma 'seachran tro' oidheche, 's i truagh,
Sleagh fhada gun bhuaidh 'n a déigh.
'N uair thàinig e gu carraig an lòn,
'N uair chunnaic a bhràthair gun tuar,
255 Las giorrag 'us fearg m'a chliabh mòr.
Bha osna a' bhàis mu'n cuairt :
Dhùin iad, a' dlùthadh mu 'n triath,
'Us chuir iad fo iallan caol e ;
Chuir iad suas e fo shùilean ciar ;

mar came : he bent his head over the hero, and raised his feeble voice.

“ Sleeps the son of Rathmor in his night, and his brother low ?
Did we not rise to the chase together ? Pursued we not the dark-
brown hinds ? Colmar was not forgot till he fell—till death had
blasted his youth. I lie pale beneath the rock of Lona. O let
Calthon rise ! the morning comes with its beams ; Dunthalmo will

Over the chief of high towers he bent,
And scant and faint his voice arose.

“ Is it sleep to the son of shields,
When night turns grey, and his brother (is) low ?

240 Rose (we) not (both) to the mountain-chase
When we tracked the dun deer round the peaks ?
Never, O chief, wert thou forgetful of Colmar
Until death enfolded his youth.

Pale, on the plain, I lie beneath a rock ;
245 Let Calthon rise ; young day (is) rising ;
Duntalmo will come with dishonouring deed.”

Swift he fled on the sound of the wind ;
Calthon beheld his steps departing ;
Dismayed he started in his arms.

250 Speedy and silent rose Colvala mild,
With mournful step she wandered through the night.
A lengthy spear (trailed) uselessly behind.

When he came to the rock on the plain,
When (he) saw his brother all pale,
255 Grief and rage flamed in his great breast.
The groans of death were around.

They closed (and) pressed about the chief,
And placed him under slender thongs.
With scowling eyes they bound him.

neglect, and urging him to carry off his body, lest it should be dishonoured by further barbarity from Duntalmo.

Calthon, followed by Colvala, goes in quest of the body—is surrounded, overpowered, and bound by the enemy.

dishonour the fallen.” He passed away in his blast. The rising Calthon saw the steps of his departure. He rushed in the sound of his steel. Unhappy Colmal rose. She followed her hero through night, and dragged her spear behind. But when Calthon came to Lona’s rock he found his fallen brother. The rage of his bosom rose ; he rushed among the foe. The groans of death ascend. They close around the chief. He is bound in the midst, and brought to

260 Bha solus mu shliabh a' plaosgadh,
'S an oidheil' ag aomadh o chruaich.

Mhosgail mise féin fo 'n fhuaim ;
Ghrad ghluais mi fo chruaidh mo shinns're ;
Bha Diaran ri m' thaobh aig Thuaid,

265 'Us Deargo, an t-òg ruadh le 'neart.
Triath Chluthai bha againn air falbh ;
Ghluais m' anam gu balbh fo bhròn,
'Us mi fo eagal mu-m' gharbh chliu ;
Bha mòrchuis na treunais 'am chliabh.

270 " 'Shìol Mhòrbheann," thuir mi, " a thriath',
Mar so cha robh sinne riamh 'an còmhrag ;
Cha robh ar sinns're 'an còmhnuidh air sliabh,
'Us coigrich gu'n trian air chòmhnard.
Bha 'n neartsan mar iolair nan speur,

275 Tha 'n cliu mar bheus nam bàrd ;
Tha sinne a' tuiteam gu léir ;
Tha ar cliu do réir mar shamhla.
Cìod 'their rìgh Mhòrbheann nam beum,
Ma thréig Oisian e féin o Thuaid ? "

280 Éireadh bhur cruaidh, a ghaisgeacha treun ;
Leanaibh Oisian fo bheum le fuaim :
Cha till esan gun fharum 'us cliu
Gu Selma nan tùr 's nam buadh."

a Cease to be
himself ; lit.
*forsake him-
self.*

gloomy Dunthalmo. The shout of joy arose, and the hills of night replied.

I started at the sound, and took my father's spear. Diaran rose at my side, and the youthful strength of Dargo. We missed the chief of Clutha, and our souls were sad. I dreaded the departure of my fame. The pride of my valour rose ! " Sons of Morven ! " I said, " it is not thus our fathers fought. They rested not on the

260 About the mountain light was dawning¹¹
As night was gliding off the peaks.

With the noise I was myself aroused ;
Straightway advanced I in my father's steel.
At my side was Diaran by Tweed,

265 And young red Dargo in his strength.
Gone from us was the prince of Clyde.
My soul was moved with sorrow dumb,
And I trembled for my great renown.
The noble pride of valour was within my breast.

270 "Race of great mountains," said I, "ye chiefs,
We never were thus before in war ;
Our sires abode not on hillside
When foemen held the plain in might.
Their strength was as the eagle of the skies,¹²

275 Their fame is as the song of bards ;
But we are falling all away,
And our fame is thus like a shadow.
What will the hero-king of great Bens say
If Ossian should cease to be himself at Tweed ?"

280 Lift high your steel, ye warriors strong !
Follow Ossian with cleaving, crashing blows.
Unsung and nameless he will not return
To Selma of towers and victories."

Ossian, awak-
ened by the
noise, misses
Calhon, and
is greatly
disturbed.

He addresses
his warriors,
charging them
to emulate
the fame of
their ances-
tors, and to
follow him,
who was
determined
to conquer
or die.

field of strangers, when the foe was not fallen before them. Their strength was like the eagles of heaven ; their renown is in the song. But our people fall by degrees. Our fame begins to depart. What shall the king of Morven say, if Ossian conquers not at Teutha ? Rise in your steel, ye warriors ! follow the sound of Ossian's course. He will not return, but renowned, to the echoing walls of Selma."

- Air gorm thonn Thuaidle ghluais o 'n ear
- 285 Madainn ghlan ; sheas Caolmhal fo dheoir ;
 Labhair i mu Chluthai nam fear ;
 Tri chuairt thuit an t-sleagh o 'meoir.
 Las fearg dhomh ri coigreach 's mi 'triall ;
 Bha m' anam gun chiall mu 'n òig-fhear.
- 290 " A mhic làimh 'tha tais gu 'trian,"
 An cuirear còmhrag na Tuaid' le deoir ?
 Cha-n éirich buaidh do thruaigh le bròn ;
 Cha chòmhnuidh do 'n osna an treun.
 Gabh gu Carmun dona nan ruadh,
- 295 Gu ghlasad mu Thuaid an fhéir ;
 Ach fàg-sa na h-airme gu grad,
 'Mhic taise, 's tu lag gun chliu ;
 Togaidh duin' eil' iad 'an còmhrag."

^a Son of the soft hand and the slack. A mhic làimh 'tha tais gu 'trian. "... Mollis prorsus" (Macf.)

- Reub mi sìos a mhàil' o 'gualainn,
- 300 Ùrla shneachd na luaidh ag éirigh ;
 Thuit a scalladh air talamh fo ghruaim.
 'An sàmhchair sheall mis' air na treunaibh ;
 Thuit mo shleagh o m' làimh 'us i fann ;
 Ghluais osna 'an àirde mo chléibhe ;
- 305 'N nair chuala mi 'n òigh a bh' ann,
 Thuit na deoir gu dlùth o threun.^b
 Ceud fàilte air gath glan na h-òige !
 Chuir mise an còmhrag fo ghlasad.

^b The brave one—i.e. Osian himself.

Morning rose on the blue waters of Teutha. Colmal stood before me in tears. She told of the chief of Clutha ; thrice the spear fell from her hand. My wrath turned against the stranger ; for my soul trembled for Calthon. " Son of the feeble hand ! " I said, " do Teutha's warriors fight with tears ? The battle is not won with grief ; nor dwells the sigh in the soul of war. Go to the deer of Carmun, to the lowing herds of Teutha. But leave these arms, thou

- O'er the blue wave of Tweed, from east, advanced
 285 Pure morn ; Colvala stood in tears.
 She spoke of Clutha of heroes ;
 Thrice from her fingers dropped the spear.
 Flamed my wrath against the stranger as I strode ;
 My soul was maddened for the youth.
- 290 " Son of the soft hand and the slack,^a
 Is the fight of Tweed to be fought with tears ?
 Conquest o'er ill will ne'er be gained by grief ;
 Sighing dwells not with the brave.
 Betake thee to worthless Carmun of dun deer,
 295 To saunter round the grassy Tweed ;
 But leave off arms without delay,
 Thou son of softness, weak, and unrenowned ;
 Another than thou shall wield them for war."

- From her shoulder I tore down the mail.
 300 Heaved a snow-white bosom—(theme) of song ;
 Her eyes fell to the ground in sadness.
 I looked in silence to the heroes ;
 My spear fell from my hand, unnerved ;
 Rose a sigh that filled my breast.
- 305 When I heard who the maiden was,
 Fast fell tears from the brave one.^b
 A hundred welcomes to the bright beam of youth !
 I set the battle in motion.

As morning dawned he met Colvala shedding tears, and allowing her spear to fall on the ground.

He reproaches her for cowardice,

and in rage tears off her armour. She is discovered as Colvala. He praises her devotedness, and instantly charges the enemy.

son of fear ! A warrior may lift them in fight."

I tore the mail from her shoulders. Her snowy breast appeared. She bent her blushing face to the ground. I looked in silence to the chiefs. The spear fell from my hand ; the sigh of my bosom rose ! But when I heard the name of the maid, my crowding tears rushed down. I blessed the lovely beam of youth, and bade the battle move !

- A mhic nan còs 'tha àrd 'an cruaidh,
 310 C' uim their Oisian mu Thuaid nam marbh ?
 Cha-n 'eil cuimhn orr' 'an talamh nan stuadh,
 'S cha-n fhaicear an uaigh air blàr.
 Thàinig bliadhna dorch' nan sian,
 Thuit na tomanna sìos gu làr ;
- 315 Cha-n fhaicear Duntharmo, no 'uaigh,
 No 'n t-àit's an d' thuit e fo chruaidh mo làimh.
 Their gaisgeach liath fo chàabh na h-aois,
 A shealladh gu caol 'an oidhche,
 Aig darach fo shoills' 'an talla,
- 320 R'a chloinn 'tha 'teannadh ris, mo ghnìomh.
 'Us gu-n d' thuiteadh le triath na Tuaide.^a
 R'a ghuth tha aomadh claon na h-dìge,
 Tha ioghnadh 'us sòlas 'n an sùilibh.

^a The chief ... fell ; lit. *it was fallen by the chief*—impers. form.

^b Cut the thongs—Gael. *bar-iall*—i.e. the point of the thong—ordinarily shoe-latchet, here used for *iall*, “thong,” evidently from the exigency of rhyme.

- Fhuair mi Calthonn còrr ri daraig,
 325 'Us ghearr mi am bar-iall o 'laimh ;^b
 Thug mi dha a' bheus 'bu ghlaine,
 Àrd ùrla, cruth geal a bha làn :
 Tha 'n tuineadh thall an' talla Thuaid'.

Why, son of the rock, should Ossian tell how Teutha's warriors died ? They are now forgot in their land ; their tombs are not found on the heath. Years came on with their storms. The green mounds are mouldered away. Scarce is the grave of Duntharmo seen, or the place where he fell by the spear of Ossian. Some grey warrior, half blind with age, sitting by night at the

- Son of the cave high on the mountain,
 310 Wherefore should Ossian speak of Tweed of the dead?
 Their memory lives not in the land of waves,
 And their graves are unseen on the plain.
 Dark years of storm have come ;
 The mounds have fallen to the ground.
 315 Neither Duntalmo nor his grave is seen,
 Nor the place where he fell by the sword of my hand.
 Some warrior grey, in dusk of age, will tell,
 (When) his eyesight (is) dim at night,
 By the oak-log which lightens the hall,
 320 My deeds to his sons as they press around him,
 And (how) the chief of Teutha fell.^a
 Youth bend and sidle toward his voice,
 Wonder and joy are in their eyes.

- I found brave Calhon to an oak-tree (bound) ;
 325 I cut the thongs from off his hands.^b
 I gave to him the brightest maiden,
 High-bosomed, full, and fair of form.
 Their home is afar in the hall of Tweed.

He declines to speak of "Tweed of the dead," but says that some grey-headed warrior will tell to his children how Duntalmo fell beneath Ossian's sword.

He rescued Calhon, joined his hand to that of Colvala ; and they occupied Duntalmo's hall.

flaming oak of the hall, tells now my deeds to his sons, and the fall of the dark Dunthalmo. The faces of youth bend sidelong towards his voice. Surprise and joy burn in their eyes. I found Calthon bound to an oak ; my sword cut the thongs from his hands. I gave him the white-bosomed Colmal. They dwelt in the halls of Teutha.

EXPLANATION OF PROPER NAMES

IN

CALHON AND COLVALA.

ALTEUTHA, “the rock or fort of Teutha.” The word *alt* in British, *alt* or *ail* in Irish and Gaelic, signifies anything high—thence rock or cliff; evidently the same with Latin *altus*. Alteutha was the dwelling-place of Duntalmo.

CALHON and COLMAR, sons of Ramor, a chief who dwelt on the Clyde.

CARMUN, a hunter by the Tweed, held in contempt because unfit for war.

COLVALA, *Cool-mhala*, “slender eyebrow,” daughter of Duntalmo. She loved Calhon, and rescued him from captivity.

DARGO, *Dearg*, or *An Dearg*; “the red one,” son of Collath, a companion of Ossian in the expedition to Teutha. Macpherson says he was killed by a boar, and gives, in a note, the lamentation of his wife, Mingala, over his death—a very touching elegy.

DIARAN, another companion of Ossian, and father to Connal, who was unintentionally slain by Crimora.—*Vide* conclusion of “Carriethura.”

DUNTALMO, chief of Alteutha, who murdered Ramor, and his son Colmar—in ferocity of character resembling Starno of Lochlin.

LAMGAL, *Làml-gheal*, "white hand," a chief who dwelt on the Clyde.

TEUTHA, *Tuaid*, "the river Tweed." *An Tuaid* is still the common Gaelic name of the Tweed. Chalmers ('Caledonia,' vol. i. p. 49) says that *Tu-edd*, in British, signifies the "border" or "limit of a country." It is possible there may have been more than one river of this name, just as we find "Carron," "Dee," "Don," &c., common river-names in various parts of the same country, as well as in separate and distant countries.

NOTES TO CALHON AND COLVALA.

¹ "Thou lonely dweller in the cave."

Macpherson, in his "Argument," calls the person thus addressed "one of the first Christian missionaries." It is sufficient to remark that it was not by "dwelling in caves" that the first Christian missionaries made way in any heathen land. But there are no means of determining who or what this "son of the caverns" actually was.

² "The sigh is smothered in my breast."

"'Us an osun fo smachd mo chléibh'."

This is an expression repeatedly used by Ossian in describing the feebleness and sadness of old age. The literal rendering is—

"The sigh is under the mastery of my chest."

Contrasting this with what he says of himself in the days of youth and strength (line 304)—

"Rose a sigh that filled my breast"—

more literally—

"Moved a sigh to the height of my chest"—

the meaning seems to be that the weakness of his aged frame prevented him from heaving the full deep sighs which strong men heave.

³ "The bright gleam has faded from its field ;
Its bosses, woe is me, are dimmed with rust !"

"Thréig an soillse glan a balla,
Tha meirg air a ballaibh, mo dhòruinn !"

Macfarlan translates *a balla* in the first line by "meum murum ;" but "meum" is unwarranted—"ejus" it must be. I understand the

word there to apply to the "face" or "field" of the shield, and *balla* in the second line to its "bosses." It is possible, however, that *balla* in both lines may refer to the "bosses," although it must be said that the repetition implied in this rendering is foreign to the usual manner of Ossian.

⁴ "Came the foreign race of Galls."

"Thàinig sìol eoigrich nan Gall."

As observed at p. 74, *Gall* appears to have been usually applied to foreigners or strangers generally. Here, however, it seems to denote a particular race of foreigners; but the poem affords no clue to their nationality.

⁵ "Raised the bards both chant and song."

"Thog bàrdan na duana 's na dàin."

These two words *duan* and *dàin* are often used synonymously, but at times with a considerable difference of meaning. *Duan* signifies song or poem generally; but it also signifies an "oration," and is applied to a division or "canto" of a poem—while its diminutive *duanay* denotes poetry of a light and joyous character, as a "catch" or "glee." *Dàin*, on the other hand, is applied exclusively to poetry of a grave and solemn nature, and, in a secondary sense, signifies, like the Latin "carmen," "prophecy," or a "decree of fate." Thus "Tha e 'an dàin domh"—"It is in a *song* to me," or concerning me—means, "It is fated to me." Nor is it unworthy of remark that "fate" itself ("fatum") signifies "what has been spoken," while from the same root comes the Gaelic *Fàidh*, the name for a "prophet."

⁶ "When he saw the boys with none to love."

"'N uair chunnaic e sìol gun luaidh."

"Cum vidit ille ejus semen sine laude."—MACFARLAN.

The word *luaidh* signifies to "mention," to "celebrate," or "praise," and, in a secondary sense, that which calls forth praise, that which is highly valued—*i.e.*, the object of love. Thus it is very frequently used, both in poetry and prose, for "love;" *mo luaidh*—*i.e.*, "my love." I have translated it in this latter sense in the line before us, as the most suitable to the circumstances of the orphan boys of Ramor, to whom no object of love was left.

7 "Gentle when thy foes lay down their pride."

"Gu ciuin 'us gun mhòrchuis do nàimhdean."

Lit. "Gentle and without pride thy foemen."

This is a somewhat difficult line, and would be rendered clearer by making it "Gu ciuin 'n uair gun mhòrchuis do nàimhdean." I direct attention to it, however, as an instance of the elliptical style so frequently to be met with in Ossian. No verb or copula is here used. Throughout this poem many similar examples are to be found: *e.g.* in the first line, "Glan guth nam fonna do thréin"—"Sweet the voice of songs to brave ones;" line 33, "Great (was) Ramor 'mid the chiefs;" or line 76, "Silent tears (were) on the maiden," &c.; and in other poems three and four lines of similar construction may be met with.

This independence of the verb, along with the frequent omission of accessory words—adverbs, prepositions, and pronouns—which is so constantly met with throughout Ossian, will strongly remind the Biblical scholar of the elliptical and irregular character of the Hebrew of the Old Testament. The Gaelic of Ossian, in these respects, bears evident marks of belonging to a very early state of society—a state bordering on what has been called the "Eocene period of language."

8 "When the haughty come with swelling words

To the hall of harps, my eyes are turned away."

"'N uair thig dàna nam focala treuna

Gu talla nan teud, chròm mo shùilean."

I believe the translation given in the text is probably the true one. At the same time, the words may be rendered—

"When come the songs in words of power

To the hall of harps, my eyes bend down."

And it is not improbable that Fingal might mention his honouring of the bards as what had helped to make his renown so bright.

9 "Before stern foes with sharp-edged blades."

"Nàimhdean nan còrr."

The word *còrr* has a great variety of meanings, which it is needless to discuss. Among these, "pointed," "sharp" (whence *còrr*, as the general name for the crane tribe), frequently occurs, and I have taken it here as the most probable. Macfarlan makes it "opacitatum insolitarum." Macpherson has only "the gloomy foe" for the whole line.

¹⁰ "Calhon's soul was yielding to himself."

The meaning of this expression is, that Calhon was able to compose himself to sleep; but it must be remarked as singular that his "soul" and "self" should be spoken of as distinct from each other. This is, however, quite according to modern Gaelic usage. If a man becomes a prey to anxiety, so that he cannot rest, a Highlander does not say that *the man is anxious*, but that "his mind has got the better of him;" and a very common "wise saw" is, "that it's a bad thing for a man when his mind gets the upper hand." What exact conception of the "personality" or "individuality" may have led to this mode of speaking I know not, but I do not think that such materialism as would subject the mind in all things to the body is implied in it. It rather refers to the mind disregarding actual, existing objects, and giving way to self-created and chimerical fears.

¹¹ "About the mountain light was dawning,
As night was gliding off the peaks."

The Gaelic word beginning the first line is *silas*, meaning "joy" or "gladness." I have ventured to change this into *solas*, "light"—a change which the context evidently requires; for Calhon's enemies were not on the mountain, but on the plain (line 244), consequently their joy could not be said to be around the mountain. But the "dawning of the light" describes very beautifully the time at which Calhon was overpowered, and corresponds with Ossian's speedy advance to his rescue soon as the morning advanced over the blue wave of Tweed (line 284).

¹² "Their strength was as the eagle of the skies."

So in "Oinammerhul," line 70—

"Thy voice is strong as Cra-Lodin;"

and many similar instances may be quoted. The strength of the heroes is not compared, as it would be in modern language, to the strength of the eagle, but directly to the eagle himself, as the strength of Ossian's voice is compared to the powerful spirit of Lodin. This is a proof, in addition to the many which I have already pointed out, of the antiquity of the language of Ossian; and while I have not met in this poem of "Calhon," &c., with any construction unexampled elsewhere, archaic terms appear in it more frequently than in any of the others, so that I have no doubt of its being among the oldest in the collection.

F I N G A L

D U A N I,

ARGUMENT.

“Cuthullin (general of the Irish tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) sitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a castle of Ulster (the other chiefs having gone on a hunting party to Cromla, a neighbouring hill), is informed of the landing of Swaran, king of Lochlin, by Moran, the son of Fithil, one of his scouts. He convenes the chiefs; a council is held, and disputes run high about giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Togorma, and an intimate friend of Cuthullin, was for retreating, till Fingal, king of those Caledonians who inhabited the north-west coast of Scotland, whose aid had been previously solicited, should arrive; but Calmar, the son of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connaught, was for engaging the enemy immediately. Cuthullin, of himself willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar. Marching towards the enemy, he missed three of his bravest heroes, Fergus, Duchomar, and Cathba. Fergus arriving, tells Cuthullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting episode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac. The army of Cuthullin is descried at a distance by Swaran, who sent the son of Arno to observe the motions of the enemy, while he himself ranged his forces in order of battle. The son of Arno, returning to Swaran, describes to him Cuthullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage, but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuthullin, according to the hospitality of the times, sends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feast, by his bard Carril, the son of Kinfena. Swaran refuses to come. Carril relates to Cuthullin the story of Grudar and Brassolis. A party, by Connal's advice, is sent to observe the enemy, which closes the action of the first day.”—M.

F I O N N G H A L.

D U A N I.

SHUIDH Cuchullin aig balla Thùra,
 Fo dhùbhra craoibh dhuille na fuaim ;
 Dh'aom a shleagh ri carraig nan còs,
 A sgiath mhòr r'a thaobh air an fleur.
 5 Bha smaointean an fhir air Cairbre,
 Laoch a thuit leis 'an garbh-chòmhrag,
 'N uair thàinig fear-coimhead a' chuain,
 Luath mhae Fhithil nan ceum àrd.

“Éirich, a Chuchullin, éirich,
 10 Chì mi loingear threun o thuath !
 Grad ghluais, a chinn-uidhe na féile :
 'S mòr Suaran, is lionmhor a shluagh !”

“A Mhòrain,” thuir an gorm-shùileach treun,
 “Bu lag thu féin, 'us chrith thu riamh ;
 15 'N ad eagal is lionmhor nàmhaid ;
 'Mhic Fhithil, 's e Fionnghal a th' am,
 Àrd churaidh nan ciar bheann.”

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

F I N G A L.

D U A N I.

CUCHULLIN sat beside the wall of Tura,¹
 In shade of a leafy, sounding tree ;
 His spear aslant against the rock of clefts,
 His ample shield beside him, on the grass.
 5 The thoughts of the man were on Cairbar—
 A hero slain by him in combat fierce—
 When came the watchman of ocean,
 Fi-hil's fleet son of bounding step.

“ Arise, Cuchullin, arise !

10 I see great galleys from the north.
 Quickly rise, thou chief of festive cheer ;
 Great is Swaran, numerous his host ! ”

“ Moran,” said the blue-eyed strong one,
 “ Weak and trembling thou hast ever been ;

15 The foe is numerous in thy fear.
 Son of Fi-hil, it is Fingal,
 High hero of dark-brown mountains.”

Cuchullin, sitting by the wall of Tura, is informed by Moran, the ocean-scout, of the approach of the hostile fleet of Swaran, king of Lochlin.

Cuchullin believes that it is the friendly fleet of Fingal.

“ Arise ! ” says the youth ; “ Cuthullin, arise ! I see the ships of the north ! Many, chief of men, are the foe. Many the heroes of the sea-borne Swaran ! ” “ Moran ! ” replied the blue-eyed chief, “ thou ever tremblest, son of Fithil ! Thy fears have increased the foe. It is Fingal, king of deserts, with aid to green Erin of streams.”

DUAN I.

^a Thou delight of strangers. "Cynosure of strangers" would bring out the meaning better; but the term is not in keeping with the language of Ossian.

Ceann-uidhe is used in various meanings.

- "Chunnaic mi 'n ceannard," thuir Mòran ;
 "Coimeas do 'n charraig an triath,
 20 A shleagh mar ghiubhas air seòr-bheinn,
 Mar ghealaich ag éirigh a sgiath :
 Shuidh e air carraig 's an tràigh
 Mar an ceò 'tha thall air a' bheinn.
 'S lìonmhor, a chinn-uidhe nan dàimh,^a
 25 Làmh chòmhraig a dh'éireas leat féin,
 Garbh laoiach, a's cruadalaich' beum,
 'S géire lann 'an cleasachd nan saoi :
 Ach 's lìonmhoire gaisgich 'us tréin,
 'Tha 'g iadhadh mu Thùra na gaoith."
 30 Fhreagair an sonn mar thonn air carraig,
 "Cò 's an talamh so 's cosmhuil rium féin ?
 Cha seasadh do ghaisgich 'am fhianuis ;
 Ach thuiteadh gu h-ìosal fo m' làimh.
 Cò es' a thachradh ri m' lann,
 35 Ach Fionnghal, rìgh Shelma nan sian ?
 Là, ghabh sinn 'an glacaibh a chéile
 Air Meallmor, 's bu treun ar spàirn,
 Thuit coille fo chòmhrag nach géilleadh ;
 Thionndaidh sruith, 's chrìothnaich an càrn :
 40 Tri làith' dh'ùraich an strì,
 Chrith laoiach 'bu treun, air cùl lann :
 An ceathramh, thuir Fionnghal an rìgh,

"I beheld their chief," says Moran, "tall as a glittering rock. His spear is a blasted pine; his shield the rising moon! He sat on the shore, like a cloud of mist on the silent hill! Many, chief of heroes! I said, many are our hands of war. Well art thou named the Mighty Man: but many mighty men are seen from Tura's windy walls."

He spoke, like a wave on a rock, "Who in this land appears like

- " I saw their leader," said Moran ;
 " Like to a rock is the prince ;
 20 His spear like pine on jagged Ben ;
 Like the rising moon his shield.
 He sat on a rock by the shore,
 Like the mist over yonder on the mountain.
 Many, thou delight of strangers,^{a 2}
 25 The war-hands which will rise with thee—
 Stalwart warriors of heaviest stroke,
 Of sharpest blade in the sport of the brave ;
 But more are the heroes and strong ones
 Who gather round Tura of winds."
- 30 Answered the brave one like wave on rock :
 " Who in this land is like unto me ?
 Thy heroes cannot stand before me,³
 But shall fall low beneath my hand.
 Who is he dares to meet my sword,
 35 Save Fingal, king of Selma of storms ?
 Once, when we grappled together,
 On Melmor in struggle strong,
 Trees fell in the unyielding fight,
 Streams turned back and shook the cairn.
 40 Three days was the strife renewed ;
 Trembled warriors strong beneath their arms.
 On the fourth, said Fingal, the king,

DUAN 1.

Moran declares that he had seen Swaran, who was accompanied by a numerous force.

Cuchullin boasts of his own great strength, matched by that of Fingal alone ; and describes a combat which he had sustained for three successive days against Fingal.

me ? Heroes stand not in my presence : they fall to earth from my hand. Who can meet Swaran in fight ? Who but Fingal, king of Selma of storms ? Once we wrestled on Malmor ; our heels overturned the woods. Rocks fell from their place ; rivulets, changing their course, fled murmuring from our side. Three days we renewed the strife ; heroes stood at a distance and trembled. On the fourth,

DUAN I.

- ‘Thuit ceannard a’ chuain ’s a’ ghleann.’
 ‘Cha do thuit,’ ’s e fhreagair mi féin.
 45 ‘Géilleadh Cuchullin do ’n triath
 A’ s tréine na gailleann nan sliabh.’
 ‘N e mis!’ thuirt an gorm-shùileach treun,
 ‘Cha ghéill mi do dhuine ’tha beò.
 Cuchullin cho gailbheach ris féin,
 50 Mòr ’an còmhrag, no ’m bàs gun seòd.’

- “’Mhic Fhithil, glac-sa mo shleagh,
 Buail sgiath Sheuma fo smal ’us gruaim;
 Chi àrd i air balla nan sleagh;
 Cha b’e sanas na sìth a fuaim.
 55 Buail sgiath Sheuma, ’mbic Fhithil, gu grad;
 Gairm gaisgich o bhàd ’s o choill’.”

- Bhuail e ’n sgiath bhallach gu grad;
 Fhreagair gach bad agus coill’,
 Shiubhail eaismeachd tro’ ’n doire gun stad;
 60 Chlisg féidh ’us earba ’s an fhraoch;
 Leum Curtha o charraig na fuaim;
 Ghluais Conall ’bu chruadalach sleagh;
 Dh’fhàg Faobhui an eilid ’s an ruaig;
 Thill Crùthgheal gu Tìra nam fleagh;
 65 A Rònain, cluinn sgiath nam blàr,

Fingal says that the king of the ocean fell! but Swaran says he stood! Let dark Cuthullin yield to him that is strong as the storms of his land!

“No!” replied the blue-eyed chief, “I never yield to mortal man! Dark Cuthullin shall be great or dead! Go, son of Fithil, take my spear. Strike the sounding shield of Semo. It hangs at

DUAN I.

- ‘The ocean-chief has fallen in the glen.’
 ‘He has not fallen,’ I replied.
 45 ‘Let Cuchullin yield him to the prince,
 Who is stronger than the mountain-storm.’⁴
 ‘Is it I?’ said the blue-eyed brave one;
 ‘I yield not unto living man.
 Cuchullin (is) terrible as he,
 50 Great in combat, or in cloudless death.’

- “Son of Fi-hil, take my spear,
 Strike Semo’s shield in gloom, and frown.
 (Thou) wilt see it high on the wall of spears;
 No harbinger of peace its sound.
 55 Son of Fi-hil, straightway strike the shield of Semo;
 Summon the warriors from brake and wood.”

- Forthwith he struck the spotted shield,
 Answered each brake and wood;
 Surged the sound through forest onward;
 60 Started stags and roes amid the heather;
 Sprang Curha off the sounding rock;
 Stirred Connal of hardiest spear;
 Fovi left the hind in chase;
 Crugel turned back to Tura of feasts.
 65 Ronan, hearken to the shield of battles;

He orders
 Moran to
 strike his
 shield, and to
 gather his
 warriors.

The shield is
 struck, and
 the warriors
 called.

Tura’s rustling gate. The sound of peace is not its voice! My heroes shall hear and obey.” He went. He struck the bossy shield. The hills, the rocks reply. The sound spreads along the wood: deer start by the lake of roes. Curach leaps from the sounding rock, and Connal of the bloody spear! Crugal’s breast of snow beats high. The son of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the shield

DUAN I.

^a Echoing
Cromlee; lit.
Cromlee of
voice.

- Caismeachd àrd Chuchullin, a Chlùthair ;
A Chalmair, o 'n chuan thig a nall ;
Le d' chruaidh thig a nall, a Lùthair.
'Mhic Foinne, 'gharbh-churaidh, éirich ;
70 A Chairbre, o Chromleac a' ghuth ;^a
Lùb do ghluin, 'Fhiochi na féile,
A Chormaic, o Léna nan sruth.
Sìn do shlios àluinn, a Chaoilte,
(Air astar o Mhòra gu dian),
75 A's gile na 'n cobhar, 'tha sgaoilte
Air muir o ghaillinn nan sian.

- Chìteadh gaisgich nan àrd gluìomh
'Teurnadh sìos o 'm fiar-ghlinn féin,
Gach anam a' losgadh ri cuimhne
80 Gach còmhraig a dh'aom o shean ;
An sùile 'lasadh, 'g iadhadh borb
Mu nàmhaid dhorca Innis-fàil,
Gach làmh' 'bu tréin', 'an ceann gach laimn,
Caoir dhealan a' dearsadh o 'n cruaidh.
85 Mar shruth a' taomadh o gharbh ghleann
Dh'aom na suinn o chruaich nam beann,
Gach triath 'n àirm 'athar nam buadh,
A ghaisgich dhubh ghruamach 'n a dhéigh,
Mar cho-thional uisge nan stuadh

of war, said Ronnar! the spear of Cuthullin, said Lugar! Son of the sea put on thy arms! Calmar lift thy sounding steel! Puno, dreadful hero, arise! Cairbar from thy red tree of Cromla! Bend thy knee, O Eth! descend from the streams of Lena. Ca-tol stretch thy side as thou movest along the whistling heath of Mora: thy side that is white as the foam of the troubled sea, when the dark

- (To) Cuchullin's loud war-note, Clu-ar ;
 From ocean come over, O Calmar ;
 With thy steel come onward, Luhar ;
 Thou son of Foni, champion stout, arise ;
 70 Thou Cairbar from echoing Cromlee ;^a
 Bend thy knee, thou Fiochi of feasts ;
 Cormac (come) from Lena of streams ;
 Stretch thy graceful form, thou Ca-olt—
 (Pressing from Mora with speed)
 75 (Form) whiter than foam which drifts
 On the sea under stormy shower.

- Seen were heroes of high deeds
 Coming down from their winding glens.
 Each spirit burns as it recalls
 80 Each battle of the time of old.
 Their eyes, a-flaming, roll fiercely round
 The gloomy foe of Innis-Fail.
 Each stalwart hand on hilt of each blade ;
 Showers of sparks are flashing from their steel.
- 85 As a torrent rolling through rugged glen,
 From the mountain-heights the heroes sped,
 Each chief in armour of famous sirc,
 (With) his dark-frowning warriors behind him,
 As multitude of waters in the clouds⁵

DUAN I.

They are described as they hasten down from the hill, where they had been following the chase.

winds pour it on rocky Cuthon.

Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds ! Their souls are kindled at the battles of old ; at the actions of other times. Their eyes are flames of fire. They roll in search of the foes of the land. Their mighty hands are on their swords. Lightning pours from their sides of steel. They come like streams from

DUAN I.

- 90 Mu'n cuairt do dhealain nan speur.
 Chluinnteadh fuaim nan arm 's gach ceum,
 Meaghal mhìolechon 'cleasadh àrd,
 Duain 'g am mùchadh anns gach beul,
 Gach enraidh treun ag iarraidh blàir.
- 95 Chrith Cromleac air aghaidh nam beann,
 'N uair ghabh iad am fraoch fo 'n ceann ;
 Sheas iad air aomadh nan sliabh,
 Mar cheò an fhoghair, 's e liath,
 'Dhùineas mu 'n aonach gu léir,
- 100 'S a cheanglas a cheann ris an speur.

“Ceud fàilte,” thuirte ceannard nan triath,

“Air sìol àluinn nan caol-ghleann,

Ceud fàilte air sealgair nam fiadh.

Tha cleas eile ag òrigh fo 'r ceann ;^a

- 105 Tha nàmhaid mu chromadh a' chuain
 Ag iadhadh gu luath mu'n tràigh.
 'M buail sinn sìol Lochlin nan stuadh,
 No-m fàg sinn Éirinn do'n dàimh ?
 'Chonaill, a chinn-iuil nam fear,
- 110 'Mhòr ghaisgich 'n àm briseadh sgiath,
 'S hionmhor còmhrag ri daoine o 'n ear,
 An tog thu sgiath d'athar, a thriath ?”

^a Before us
 rises sport ;
 lit. *under our*
head rises, &c.

the mountains ; each rushes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle, in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven. The sounds of crashing arms ascend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequal bursts the song of battle. Rocking Cromla echoes round. On Lena's dusky heath they stand, like mist that shades the hills of autumn ; when broken and dark

90 Around the lightnings of heaven.
 The clang of arms was heard in every step ;
 The bay of stag-hounds in high-bounding glee ;
 Songs a-murmuring in each mouth—
 Each champion strong demanding war.

95 Cromlee trembled on the mountain-face
 As they strode across the heather.
 Stood they on the slope of hills
 Like mist that is hoary in autumn,
 Which wraps the mountain round and round,
 100 Binding its head unto the skies.

“ A hundred welcomes,” said the chief of brave
 To the noble race of narrow glens— [ones
 “ A hundred welcomes to the hunters of deer ;
 Before us rises sport of other kind.”

Cuchullin
 welcomes
 them as they
 arrive, lays
 before them
 the question
 of resistance
 or submission
 to Swaran,
 and first asks
 the opinion
 of Connal.

105 A foe is in the bay of ocean,
 Speedily winding round the shore.
 Shall we smite the race of Loehlin of the waves ?
 Or yield up Erin to the stranger !
 Connal, thou leading guide of men—
 110 Warrior great amid breaking of shields—
 Who hast ofttimes fought with the men from east,
 Wilt thou lift thy father’s shield, O prince ?”

it settles high, and lifts its head to heaven !

“ Hail,” said Cuthullin, “ sons of the narrow vales ! hail, hun-
 ters of the deer ! Another sport is drawing near : it is like the
 dark rolling of that wave on the coast. Or shall we fight, ye sons of
 war ! or yield green Erin to Loehlin ? O Connal ! speak, thou first
 of men ! thou breaker of the shields ! thou hast often fought with
 Loehlin : wilt thou lift thy father’s spear ?”

DUAN I.

- “’Chuchullin,” thuir esan gu ciuin,
 “Tha sleagh Chonaill ’an comh-strì gear;
 115 Bu shòlas leam, ’s b’e mo chliu
 ’Bhi ’leagadh gu dlùth nan ceud.
 Ged iarradh mo làmh an blàr,
 Tha mo ebridh’ gu sàmhchair Éirinn.
 ’Thriath a’s tréine ’th’ aig Cormac ’bu shàr,
 120 Faic loingeas nàmhaid ag éirigh,
 ’G éirigh suas air iomall tràigh,
 Mar choill’ air Léga nan saoi;
 Mar choill’ tha loingeas nan dàimh,
 A’ géilleadh mu seach do an ghaoith.
 125 ’Chuchullin, tha Conall gu sìth;
 Thoir èis do Shuaran nan long;
 Sheachnadh Fionnghal féin an strì,
 Àrd cheannard shìl Alba nan sonn,
 Fionnghal, a sgapadh na seoid,
 130 Mar charraid nan sian ri fear,
 ’N uair bheucas sruth Chòna nan tòrr,
 ’S a’ Mhòr-bheinn ’an trusean nan speur.”

a Away with
 peace; lit.
 out of my pre-
 sence the peace.

- Thuir Calmar, “As m’ fhianuis an t-sìth;”
 Sìnbhladh Conall gu ’mhùig-mhonadh féin:
 135 Biodh a shleagh ris an cilid a’ strì,
 ’N àite tachairt ’an carraid nan ceud;
 Lean-sa ’n os bhallach air Cromla,

“Cuthullin!” calm the chief replied, “the spear of Connal is keen. It delights to shine in battle; to mix with the blood of thousands. But though my hand is bent on fight, my heart is for the peace of Erin. Behold, thou first in Cormac’s war, the sable fleet of Swaran! His masts are many on our coast, like reeds in the Lake of Lego. His ships are forests clothed with mist, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in

DUAN I.

Connal declares for peace,

setting forth the superior force of the enemy.

Calmar spurns the proposal, and declares for war.

“Cuchullin,” he answered calmly,

“The spear of Connal is keen in conflict.

115 My joy and my glory have been
To strike down hundreds side by side ;
(But) though my arm demands the fight,
My heart is for the peace of Erin.
Thou bravest chief of Cormac who was great,

120 Behold the foemen’s fleet appearing,
Appearing high on the verge of the shore,
Like the forest of Lego of brave ones.
As a forest are the ships of the stranger,
Bending by turns to the wind.

125 Cuchullin ! Connal is for peace.
Give tribute to Swaran of ships.
Fingal himself would shun the war,
High chief of Alba’s hero-race—
Fingal who scatters the valiant ones

130 As conflict of storms the grass,
When the torrent roars through rugged Cona,
And the great Benis(clothed)in the robe of theskies.”

Calmar said, “Away with peace ;”

Let Connal depart to his own misty hill.

135 Let his spear wage war with the hind,
Instead of clashing in the conflict of hosts.
Chase thou the spotted deer on Cromla ;

battle. Connal is for peace ! Fingal would shun his arm the first of mortal men ! Fingal, who scatters the mighty, as stormy winds the heath ; when streams roar through echoing Cona, and night settles with all her clouds on the hill !”

“Fly, thou man of peace !” said Calmar ; “fly !” said the son of Matha ; “go, Connal, to thy silent hills, where the spear never brightens in war ! Pursue the dark-brown deer of Cromla : stop with

DUAN I.

^a Leader of men, and of strangers—*i. e.* of native and auxiliary troops.

- Siùbhladh d'iuthaidh tro' carba Léna.
 Thusa, 'mhie Sheuma an àigh,
 140 'Chinn-fheadhna nam fear 's nan dàimh,^a
 Sgap 'us ruaig sìol Lochlin nan long ;
 Bris co-thional coigrich nan tonn,
 Gus nach éirich eathar air sàil
 Le seòl no comas nan ràmh.
 145 Mu mhuir ghàirich Innis-thore
 Éireadh gaoth Éininn gu h-àrd,
 Cromadh an dubh-osag shuas—
 Tuiteam le tannais gu bàs,
 Nan leanuinn am fiadh cho luath
 150 Ri teas-chòmhrag chruaidh nan lot."

^b "Rugadh buaidh."—*E. M'L. Thugadh buaidh.*

- “ Òg mhie Mhathais, nior dhiùlt riamh
 Còmhrag nan sgiath ; 's bha mi dlùth
 Ri m' chàirdean 'an carraid nan sleagh ;
 Ged a bha, cha d'iarr mi cliu.
 155 Rugadh buaidh 'am fhianuis 's a' bhlar,^b
 Thog gaisgich an ruaig 'us lean.
 Thusa, 'mhie Sheuma 'bu shàr,
 Cuimhnich Cormac 'us 'àit' o shean ;
 Thoir cùs do Shuaran 'us tìr,
 160 Gu'n gluaiseadh Fionnghal a nall.

thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena. But, blue-eyed son of Semo, Cuthullin, ruler of the field, scatter thou the sons of Lochlin ! roar through the ranks of their pride. Let no vessel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore. Rise, ye dark winds of Erin, rise ! roar, whirlwinds of Lara of hinds ! Amid the tempest let me die, torn, in a cloud, by angry ghosts of men ; amid the tempest let Calmar die, if ever chase was sport to him, so

- Thine arrow pierce the roe of Lena.⁶
 Thou son of Semo, the renowned—
 140 Thou leader of (thy) men, and of strangers—^a
 Scatter and rout the race of Lochlin of ships;
 Shatter the hosts of the strangers of waves,
 Till not a boat shall float on sea,
 Under a sail or power of oar.
 145 On the roaring tide of Innistore
 Let the wind of Erin rise high—
 Let the black blast stoop down from above.
 May I fall to death by spectre-(power)
 If as eager I follow the deer,
 150 As the hot, hard conflict of wounds.”

- “ Young son of Mathas, (I) never shunned ⁷
 The clash of shields; and I stood hard by
 My friends amid the crashing of spears;
 Nevertheless, I sought not renown.
 155 In my presence victory in war was born; ^b
 Heroes routed and pursued (their foes).
 Thou son of Semo, who was great,
 Remember Cormac and his place of old;
 Give land and tribute to Swaran,
 160 Till Fingal comes across (the sea);

DUAN I.

Connal repeats
his advice.

much as the battle of shields!”

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

DUAN I.

Ma's sòlas le d'anam an strì,
Sud i 'thogas an t-sleagh 's an lann."

- "Leam-sa 's taitneach," thuirte ceannard nan triath,
"Cruaidh-fharum nan sgiath 's nan lann,
165 Cho taitneach ri torrann nan sliabh,
'N nair a thuiteas uisg' earraich gu mall.
Éireadh sìol Éirinn nam buadh ;
Sùibhladh soilleir mu 'n cuairt gaeh dream ;
Gluaiseadh thairis 's an fhraoch gu luath,
170 Mar ghath gréin' air cruaich nam beann,
'N nair dh'éireas gaoth an iar o thonn,
A' tional gu trom nan nial ;
Cluinnear fuaim air Mòr-bheinn nan tom,
'S air daraig, 's i lom s' an t-sliabh.
175 C' àite 'bheil mo chàirdean cruaidh,
Neart mo làmh 'an cunnart riamh ?
C' àite Cathbaid 'bu ghlaime snuagh,
Dubhehomar nam buadh, an triath ?
'N d'fhàg thu mi, 'Fhearghuis 'bu chòrr,
180 'S an sruth mòr so 'tional ri m' thaobh,
A laoch 'an sòlas nam fléagh, 's bu mhòr
'N àm ernadail ? A mhic Ròsa nam faobh,
An tig thu mar earba o Ghalmar,
Mar cilid o aomadh nan sliabh ?

and spear. My joy shall be in the midst of thousands; my soul shall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

"To me," Cuthullin replies, "pleasant is the noise of arms! pleasant as the thunder of heaven, before the shower of spring! But gather all the shining tribes, that I may view the sons of war! Let them pass along the heath, bright as the sunshine before a storm;

(But) if thy soul delight in war,
There the hand will raise the spear and sword."

- "Pleasant to me," said the leader of heroes,
"The hard ringing of shield and of spear—
165 Pleasant as thunder of the mountains,
When the spring-rain slowly falls.
Let Erin's conquering race arise;
Let every clan come clearly forth to view;⁸
Quickly move across the heath,
170 Like sunbeam on the mountain-height
When west wind rises off the wave,
Massing heavily the clouds;
Sound is heard on the mountain of peaks,
And in leafless oak-tree on the hill.
175 (But) where are my hardy friends,
Ever the strength of my arm in danger?
Where Cabad of the fairest form?
(And) Du-chomar, the conquering chief?
Hast thou left me, Fergus the faultless,
180 When this great torrent swells around me;
Thou foremost in the joy of feasts, and great
In the hour of hardship? Son of spoil-winning Rosa,
Wilt thou come as a roe from Galmar—
As a hind from the slope of the hills?"

DUAN I.

Cuchullin
decides for
war, orders
an immediate
advance
against the
enemy, but
misses three
of his leading
warriors, Ca-
bad, Du-cho-
mar, and
Fergus.

when the west wind collects the clouds, and Morven echoes over all her oaks! But where are my friends in battle? the supporters of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-bosomed C athbar? Where is that cloud in war, Duch omar? Hast thou left me, O Fergus! in the day of the storm? Fergus, first in our joy at the feast! son of Rossa! arm of death! comest thou like a roe from Malmor?

DUAN I.

185 Ceud fàilt' air mac Ròsa mheannnaich,
Ciod am bròn a th'air d'anam, a thriath ?”

“ A Chuchullin, tha ceithir clachan
Air Cathbaid taisgte 's an uaigh ;
Chuir mo làmhsa sìos fo ùir

190 Dubhchomar 'bu ghruamach snuadh.
Bha thusa, 'Chathbaid, 'mhic Armin,
Mar ghréim a'dearrsadh 's a' bheinn.
'Us thusa, 'Dhubhchomair nan garbh-bheum,
Mar cho-thional uisge nan speur.

195 A Mhùirne, 'bu ghlaine measg òighean,
Sèimh do chadal 'an còs nan càrn ;
Thuit 'an dùbhra rìm an t-sluaigh,
Mar reul 'dealradh 's an oidheche 'an gleann ;
Bi 'dh fear-uidhe 'n a aonar 'am bròn,

200 'N nair thuiteas an solus gann.”

“ Aithris,” thuir an gorm-shuileach treun,
“ Mar thuit gaisgich nam beum 'am bàs.
'N do thuit iad le Lochlin 's a' bheinn,
'N cruaidh chòmhrag ri ceud 's a' bhlar ?

205 Ciod eile 'chumadh na laoich
Anns an talla chaol gun leus ?”

like a hart from thy echoing hills ? Hail, thou son of Rossa ! what shades the soul of war ?”

“ Four stones,” replied the chief, “ rise on the grave of Cãthba. These hands have laid in earth Duchõmar, that cloud in war ! Cãthba, son of Torman, thou wert a sunbeam in Erin ! And thou, O valiant Duchõmar ! a mist of the marshy Lano ; when it moves on the plains of autumn, bearing the death of thousands along.

185 All hail to the son of high-spirited Rosa !
 What grief is on thy soul, O hero ?”

“ Cuchullin, four stones are placed
 On Cabad buried in the grave.
 My hand has laid in dust

190 Du-chomar of the frowning mien.
 Thou Cabad, son of Armin, wast
 Like the sun in splendour on the hill ;
 And thou Du-chomar of the crashing blows,
 Like multitude of waters from the skies.

195 Morna, brightest among maidens,
 Peaceful thy sleep in the cave of cairns.
 Fell in darkness the people’s love,
 Like star that shines at night in the glen ;
 The lonely wayfarer bewails

200 When fails the scanty light.”

“ Tell,” said the blue-eyed brave one,
 “ How fell the cleaving warriors in death.
 Fell they by Lochlin on the mountain,
 In hardy fight with hundreds in war ?

205 What else could detain the heroes
 In the narrow rayless house ?”

DUAN I.

Fergus ar-
 rives, and
 tells that the
 other two
 are dead.

Cuchullin
 asks how they
 had fallen.

Morna ! fairest of maids ! calm is thy sleep in the cave of the rock !
 Thou hast fallen in darkness, like a star that shoots across the
 desert, when the traveller is alone, and mourns the transient beam !”

“ Say,” said Semo’s blue-eyed son—“ say, how fell the chiefs of
 Erin ? Fell they by the sons of Lochlin, striving in the battle of
 heroes ? Or what confines the strong in arms to the dark and nar-
 row house ?”

DUAN I.

“ Thuit Cathbaid fo lann Dhubhchomair
 Aig daraig, a’s fuaimniche sruth.
 Thàinig gu doire nan còs,
 210 ‘S labhair e ri òigh ‘bu shèimh.

“ ‘ A Mhùirne, a’s glaine measg nam mnà,
 ‘Nighean àluinn Chormaic an àigh,
 C’ar son ‘an cròm nan clach leat féin,
 ‘An còs creige ‘ad aonar ‘s a’ bheinn ?
 215 Tha sruthan a’ toirm ri d’ thaobh,
 Seana chraobh a’ fuaim ri gaoith,
 Bruaillean na linne ud thall,
 Neoil chiar mu mhullach nan càrn.
 Thu féin mar shneachd air an t-sliabh ;
 220 Mar cheò Chromla ‘lùbadh do chiabh
 A’ casadh suas ris a’ bheinn
 Ri dearrsa gréine o ‘n iar.
 Mar charraig ghil tha d’ uehd tlàth
 Air taobh Bhrano nan sruth làn.’

225 “ ‘N sin thuirt òigh a b’ àille ciabh,
 ‘Cia as, ‘fhir a’s gruamaiche ‘dhaoine ?
 Bu dorcha do mhala riamh ;
 Dearg do shùil a nis, ‘s cha-n fhaoin i.
 Am fac thu Suaran air cuan ?
 230 Ciod a chuala tu mu ‘n nàmhaid ?’

“ Cathba,” replied the hero, “fell by the sword of Duchômar, at the oak of the noisy streams. Duchômar came to Tura’s cave ; he spoke to the lovely Morna. Morna, fairest among women, lovely daughter of strong-armed Cormac ! Why in the circle of stones ? in the cave of the rock alone ? The stream murmurs along. The old tree groans in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee ; dark are the clouds of the sky. But thou art snow on the heath ; thy hair is

“ Cabad fell beneath Du-chomar’s blade,
 By an oak near the sounding torrent.
 (He) came to the wood of caves,
 210 And spake to a maiden who was gentle.

“ ‘ Morna, most lovely among women,
 Graceful daughter of great Cormac,
 Why by thyself in the circle of stones,
 In hollow of rock on the hill alone ?
 215 Rivers are sounding around thee ;
 The agèd tree is moaning in the wind ;
 Turmoil is on yonder loch ;
 Clouds darken round the tops of cairns ;
 Thyself (art) like snow on the hill—
 220 Thy waving hair like mist of Cromla,
 Curling upwards on the Ben,
 ’Neath gleaming of the sun from the west ;
 Thy soft bosom like the white rock
 On bank of Brano of white streams.’

225 “ Then said the maid of loveliest locks,
 ‘ Whence (art thou), grimmest among men ?
 Gloomy always was thy brow ;
 Red is now thine eye, and boding ill.
 Sawest thou Swaran on the ocean ?
 230 What hast thou heard about the foe ?’

DUAN I.

Fergus tells
 that Du-cho-
 mar met
 Morna,
 daughter of
 Cormac, alone
 on the hill,
 and spoke to
 her.

She, struck
 by the gloomi-
 ness of his
 looks, asks if
 he had seen
 the fleet of
 the enemy.

the mist of Cromla, when it curls on the hill, when it shines to the beam of the west. Thy breasts are two smooth rocks seen from Branno of streams. Thy arms, like two white pillars, in the halls of the great Fingal.”

“ From whence,” the fair-haired maid replied, “from whence, Duchômar, most gloomy of men ? Dark are thy brows and terrible ! Red are thy rolling eyes ! Does Swaran appear on the sea ? What

DUAN I.

^a To the maid
—i. e. to her
whom he was
addressing.

^a Young gal-
lant; lit.
young sap-
ling.
Gallan, Gael.

“ ‘Tha mise, ’Mhùirne, o ’n bheinn,
O dhoire earb’ nan leum àrd ;
Nior chual’ air nàmhaid leam féin.

- Thuit tri féidh fo mo làimh,
235 A nighean Chormaic, a’s àille snuagh,
Mar m’ anam mo rùn do ’n òigh ;“
Thuit fiadh dhuit, a làngh-gheal, fo m’ ehruaidh,
’Ainnir àluinn, do ’n géill na sloigh.’

- “ ‘A Dhubhchomair,’ thuirte òigh ’bu shèimh,
240 ‘Cha-n ’eil mion de m’ rùn dhuit féin,
Dorèh’ do mhala, ’s duirche do ghnè ;
Do chridhe mar charraig ’s a’ bheinn ;
Ach ortsa, ’mhic Armin, mo rùn,
’Shàr Chathbaid, tha Mùirne ’n déigh.
245 Mar dhearrsa na gréin’ tha do chùl,
’N uair thogas a’ mhùig o shléibh.
Am facadh leat Cathbaid, an triath,
Òg ghallan ’an astar nan sliabh ?”
Tha nighean Chormaic, sonn nach mairg,
250 ’Feitheamh tilleadh a rùn o ’n t-seilg.’

“ ‘Is fada dh’fheitheas tu, ’Mhùirn,’
Thuirte Dubhchomar gu ciar borb,
‘Is fada dh’fheitheas tu, ’Mhùirn,

of the foe, Duchómar?” “From the hill I return, O Morná! from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I slain with my bended yew; three with my long-bounding dogs of the chase. Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my soul! I have slain one stately deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.” “Duchómar!” calm the maid replied, “I love thee not, thou gloomy man! Hard is thy heart of rock; dark is thy

“ ‘ Morna, from the mountain I have come ;
 From the forest of high-bounding roes.
 Nought has been heard of the foe by me ;
 Three deer have fallen to my hand.
 235 Cormac’s daughter of fairest mien,
 As my soul is my love to the maid.^a
 For thee, White-hand, a deer fell by my steel,
 Lovely maid to whom all do yield.’

“ ‘ Du-chomar,’ said the gentle maiden,
 240 ‘ No spark of love have I for thee ;
 Dark (is) thy brow, darker thy spirit ;
 Thy heart (is) as the mountain-rock ;
 But unto thee, Armin’s son, my love,
 Brave Cabad, does Morna cleave.
 245 Like gleaming of the sun are thy locks,
 When rises the mist off the mountain.
 Has Cabad the prince been seen by thee,
 Young gallant travelling the hills ?^b
 The daughter of Cormac, hero true,
 250 Waits the return of her love from the chase.’

“ ‘ Long shalt thou wait, O Morna,
 Said Du-chomar, dark and stern—
 ‘ Long shalt thou wait, O Morna,

DUAN 1.

He answers
 that he had
 not seen them,
 and declares
 his love to
 her.

She answers
 that her love
 was given to
 Cabad, for
 whom she
 was waiting
 on the hill.

Du-chomar
 tells her that
 she must wait
 long for
 Cabad,

terrible brow. But C  thba, young son of Torman, thou art the love of Morna. Thou art a sunbeam, in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of C  thba!”

“Long shall Morna wait,” Duch  mar said, “long shall Morna wait for C  thba! Behold this sword unsheathed! Here wanders the blood of C  thba. Long shall Morna wait. He fell by the

DUAN I.

- Ri mac Armin nam fiar cholg.
 255 Seall air lann a's glaine beum,
 Fuil Chathbaid a' leum gu 'chùil ;
 Thuit leam do ghaisgeach 'bu treun ;
 'S fhada dh'fheitheas tu féin, a Mhùirn.
 Togam-sa clach air do rùn,
 260 'Nighean Chormaic nan gorm sgiath.
 Cròm air Dubhchomar do shùil,
 Tha 'làmh mar thorrann nan sliabh.'

“ ‘N do thuit mac Armin gu bàs,
 Bhris, le guth a gràidh, an dìgh.

- 265 ‘N do thuit air an tulaibh àird
 Laoch a b' àille measg an t-slàigh !
 Ceann-feadhna nan seòd 's an t-seilg,
 Nàmhaid beumnach cuain nan dàimh ?^a
 'S dorcha Dubhchomar 'n a fheing,
 270 Is fuileach dhomh féin a làmh.

'S nàmhaid dhomhsa ; ach sin dhomh 'n lann,
 'S annsa dhomh Cathbaid 'us 'fhuil.'^b

“ Thug e an gorm-lann d' a deoir :

- Ruith i 'chruaidh 'bu gheur tro' 'thaobh.
 275 Thuit e aig a shruthan mòr :
 Shm e 'lamh, 'us chluinnteadh 'ghlaodh.

^a To ocean
strangers ;
lit. *to the
ocean of
strangers.*

^b Dear to me
is Cabad and
his blood. I
have here ven-
tured to sacri-
fice strict
grammatical
accuracy to
the natural
expression of
passion.

stream of Branno ! On Croma I will raise his tomb, daughter of blue-shielded Cormac ! Turn on Dubhchomar thine eyes ; his arm is strong as a storm.” “ Is the son of Torman fallen ? ” said the wildly-bursting voice of the maid. “ Is he fallen on his echoing hills, the youth with the breast of snow ? The first in the chase of hinds ?

For the fiery son of Armin !

- 255 Look at this blade of cleanest sweep—
 To its very hilt sprang Cabad's blood.
 Thy strong hero has fallen by my hand ;
 Long shalt thou wait, O Morna !
 I will raise a stone over thy beloved.

- 260 Daughter of Cormac of blue shields,
 Bend on Du-chomar thine eye ;
 His hand is as thunder of the mountains.'

“ Has the son of Armin fallen in death ?’

Exclaimed the maid in voice of love.

- 265 ‘ Has (he) fallen on the mountain high,
 The brave one, fairest of the people ?
 Leader of strong ones in the chase,
 Foe of cleaving blows to ocean-strangers ?’^a
 Dark is Du-chomar in his wrath ;

- 270 Bloody to me is thy hand ;
 Mine enemy (thou art) ; but reach me the sword—
 Dear to me is Cabad and his blood.’^b

“ To her tears he yielded the blue blade :

She ran the sharp steel through his side ;

- 275 He fell beside his great streams ;
 He stretched his hand, and his cry was heard :

DUAN 1.

whose life-
 blood was on
 his sword ;
 and again asks
 her to “ bend
 her eye ” on
 himself.

She asks for
 the sword,
 dear to her
 on account of
 Cabad's blood.

He gives it to
 her, and she
 plunges it in
 his breast.

The foe of the strangers of ocean ? Thou art dark to me, Duchômar ;
 cruel is thine arm to Morna ! Give me that sword, my foe ! I love
 the wandering blood of Cathba !”

He gave the sword to her tears. She pierced his manly breast !
 He fell, like the bank of a mountain-stream, and stretching forth his

DUAN I.

‘Nighean Chormaic nan gorm-bhall sgiath,
 Ghearr thu tòs mo thriall o chliu ;
 Is fuar an lann, a reul nan triath,
 280 Is fuar ’am chliabh e, ’Mhùirn !
 Thoir mise do Mhoina an òigh
 (’S mi a h-aisling ’an seled na h-oidheche) ;
 ’Thogail mo chùirn measg an t-slàigh ;
 Chi sealgair mo chliu ’an soillse ;
 285 Ach tarrauing an lann o m’ thaobh,
 ’S fuar leam am faobhar, a Mhùirn !’

“ Thàinig i gu deurach mall,
 O ’thaobh a tharrauing an lann.
 Reubadh leis a broilleach bàn.
 290 Thuit i, ’us sgaoil a ciabh air làr ;
 Thaom sìos gu fuaimear an fhuil ;
 Bu dearg a cruth air a làimh ghil.”

“ Na cluinneam na ’s mò mu ’n òigh,”
 Thuirt ceannard a’ chòmhraig ’an Éirim,
 295 “ Sìth do dh’anam nan garbh sheòd,
 Nach b’fhaoin gleus ’an iomairt lann.
 Sìubhladh iad mu m’ charbad mòr,
 Faiccam an seled air neoil nan gleann ;
 Biodh m’ anam ’an còmh-stri treun,
 300 Mar thorrann nan speur mo làmh.

hand, he spoke : “ Daughter of blue-shielded Cormac ! Thou hast slain me in youth ! The sword is cold in my breast : Morná, I feel it cold. Give me to Moína the maid. Duchòmair was the dream of her night ! She will raise my tomb. The hunters shall raise my fame. But draw the sword from my breast. Morna, the steel is cold !” She came, in all her tears, she came ; she drew the sword from his breast. He pierced her white side ! He spread her fair

‘Daughter of Cormac of blue-spotted shields,
 Thou hast barred my youthful course from fame.
 Cold is the blade, thou star of chiefs ;
 280 It is cold in my breast, O Morna !
 Give me to the maiden, Moina
 (I am her dream ’mid haze of night) ;
 She will build my cairn among the hosts ;
 The hunter will see my renown in light.
 285 But draw the blade from my side—
 Cold I feel the edge, O Morna !’

“Tearful and slowly she drew nigh
 To draw the blade from his side.
 He pierced her snowy breast ;
 290 She fell, and her hair was spread on the ground ;
 The blood poured gurgling down ;
 Red was its hue on her white hand.”

“Let me hear no more of the maid,”
 Said the leader of Erin’s war ;
 295 “Peace to the souls of the heroes stern,
 Of skill and strength in wielding brands.
 Let them move around my great car ;
 May I see their shades on clouds of the glens ;
 Let my soul in battle be strong ;
 300 Like thunder of heaven my arm.

DUAN I.

He falls, and
 entreats her
 to draw the
 sword from
 his breast.

She draws
 nigh to do
 so, and he
 slays her.

Cuchullin
 prays that
 the shades of
 the warriors
 may be around
 him for
 strength in
 the battle,
 and Morna
 as a moon-
 beam after the
 battle closes.

locks on the ground ! Her bursting blood sounds from her side :
 her white arm is stained with red. Rolling in death she lay. The
 cave re-echoed to her sighs.

“Peace,” said Cuthullin, “to the souls of the heroes ! their deeds
 were great in fight. Let them ride around me ou clouds. Let them
 show their features of war. My soul shall then be firm in danger ;
 mine arm like the thunder of heaven ! But be thou on a moonbeam,

DUAN I.

a Begin the fight; lit. let battle move.

b *Iarnaiddh* is, in all the dictionaries, translated "iron," but in common conversation it is used to denote a dark-red colour, and I have translated it accordingly.

- Bi-sa mar ghath gealaich, a Mhùirn,
 'N àm sealladh mo shùl gu gearr,
 'N uair shuidhicheas m'anam as ùr,
 'S a dh'ìslicheas farum a' bhlàir.
- 305 Gluaiseadh gach dream; gluaiseadh còmhrag,^a
 Freasdaibh mòr charbad nan triath,
 Cuir dà shleagh ri m' thaobh air chòmhlà;
 Tog romham air chòir an sgiath.
 Leanaibh na steud-eich air chòmhnard,
- 310 Tha 'n siubhal gu mòthar 's gu luath.
 Biodh m'anam 'an spionnadh le sòlas,
 'N uair dh'éireas a' chòmh-stri mu 'n cuairt."

- Mar thaomas sruth cobharach liath
 O chruaich iarnaiddh Chromlaich àird,^b
- 315 An torrunn a' siubhal 's an t-sliabh,
 'S a' chiar oidheche air leth nan càrn,
 'Us tannais fhuar nan snuagh glas
 A' coimhead o iomall nam fras,
 Cho garg, cho mòr, cho borb, cho luath,
- 320 Dh'imich cruadal sìol na h-Éirinn,
 An ceannard mar mhòr-thòrc a' chuain,
 A' tarruing nam fuar-thonn 'n a dhéigh,
 A' taomadh a threunnais mar stuaidh:
 Fo 'shiubhal chritheadh an tràigh.

O Morna! near the window of my rest, when my thoughts are of peace, when the din of arms is past. Gather the strength of the tribes! Move to the wars of Erin! Attend the car of my battles! Rejoice in the noise of my course! Place three spears by my side: follow the bounding of my steels! that my soul may be strong in my friends when battle darkens round the beams of my steel!"

Be thou as a beam of the moon, O Morna!
 When my eyesight begins to fail;
 When my soul reposes anew,
 And the noise of battle dies.

- 305 Advance each clan; begin the fight.^a
 Equip the great chariot of chiefs.
 Beside me place two spears together;
 Before me raise the shield, as due;
 Follow the fleet steeds on the plain—
 310 Stately and speedy is their step;
 Let my soul be strong in joy,
 When the conflict rises around.”

- As pours the foaming, hoary flood
 From the dark-red peak of Cromla high^b—
 315 Thunder travelling the mountain-side,
 Dusky night half covering the cairns,
 And spirits cold and wan
 Peering through fringe of the showers—
 So fierce, so great, so stern, so swift,
 320 Rushed on the hardihood of Erin's race;
 Their leader as great whale of ocean,
 Drawing the cold waves behind him,
 Pouring out his strength like billows;
 Beneath his going shakes the shore.

DUAN I.

He orders his
 army to ad-
 vance.

Description of
 the host and
 their leader.

As rushes a stream of foam from the dark shady deep of Cromla, when the thunder is travelling above, and dark-brown night sits on half the hill. Through the breaches of the tempest look forth the dim faces of ghosts. So fierce, so vast, so terrible rushed on the sons of Erin. The chief, like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows pursue, poured valour forth, as a stream, rolling his might

DUAN I.

- 325 Chuala sìol Lochlin am fuaim
 Mar shruth gàireach fuar a' gheamhraidh.
 Bhuail Swaran a' sgiath gu luath,
 Thuirt ri mac Àirn 'bha teann air,
 "Chuinneam toirm air thaobh nam beam,
 330 Mar chuileig fheasgair nan cleas mall ;
 Sìol Éirinn nan colg a th' ann,
 No doinionn nan sian 's a' choill' ;
 'S cosmhuil ri Gorm-mbeall am fuaim,
 Mu-n éirich gailleann a' chuain àrd.
 335 Gabh an t-aonach, 'mbic Àirne, gu grad,
 Gabh fradharc air bad agus sliabh."

- Dh'fhalbh 'us thill e gealtach, dlùth,
 Chitheadh claon a shùil 'n a cheann ;
 A chridh' a' clisgeadh ri 'thaobh,
 340 A labhairt baòth, briste, mall.

- "Éirich-sa, 'shionaidh nan tonn,
 A shàr cheannaird nan donn sgiath,
 Chì mi sruth chlar-bheann nan tom,
 Chì mi sìol Éirinn 's an triath.
 345 Carbad ! carbad garbh a' chòmhraig,
 'Gluasad thar còmhnaird le bàs ;

along the shore. The sons of Lochlin heard the noise, as the sound of a winter-storm. Swaran struck his bossy shield; he called the son of Arno: "What murmur rolls along the hill, like the gathered flies of the eve? The sons of Erin descend, or rustling winds roar in the distant wood! Such is the noise of Gormal, before the white tops of my waves arise. O son of Arno ascend the hill; view the

- 325 The race of Lochlin heard the noise,
 Like roaring cold torrent of winter.
 Swaran straightway struck his shield,
 And said to Arno's son who was near him,
 "I hear a sound on the mountain-side,
 330 Like evening flies in drony dance.⁹
 It must be Erin's fiery sons,
 Or the stirring of storm in the wood,
 Like the resounding Gormal,
 Ere ocean-tempest rises high.
 335 Take the hill, thou son of Arno, with speed—
 Close scan both brake and hill."

He went, and trembling soon returned ;
 His eye was seen asquint in his head ;
 His heart (was) throbbing against his side ;
 340 His words (were) wandering, broken, halting.

"Rise, thou ruler of ocean—
 True leader of dark-brown shields !
 I see the stream of knolly dark-brown hills—
 I see the sons of Erin and their chief.
 345 A chariot ! the great chariot of war,
 Moving over the plain with death !

dark face of the heath !"

He went. He, trembling, swift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high against his side. His words were faltering, broken, slow. "Arise, son of ocean ! arise, chief of the dark-brown shields ! I see the dark, the mountain-stream of battle ! The deep-moving strength of the sons of Erin ! The car, the car of

DUAN I.

Swaran, hearing the noise of their approach, sends his scout, Arno's son, to reconnoitre.

He returns, overwhelmed with terror, and describes Cuchullin's great war-chariot,

DUAN I.

Carbad cuimir, luath Chuchullin,
 Sàr-mhac Sheuma nan cruaidh chàs.
 Tha 'earr a' lùbadh sìos mar thonn,
 350 No cèd mu thom nan carragh geur,
 Solus chlachan-buadh mu 'n cuairt
 Mar chuan mu eathar 's an oidhche.
 Dh'iuthar faileusach an crann.
 Suidhear ann air cnàmhan caoin,
 355 'S e tuineas nan sleagh a th' ann,
 Nan sgiath, nan lann, 's nan laoch.

“ Ri taobh deas a' mhòr-charbaid
 Chithear an t-each meannach, séidear,
 Mac ard-mhuingeach, cliabh-fharsaing, dorcha,
 360 Ard-leumach, talmhaidh na beinne ;^a
 'S farumach fuaimear a chas ;
 Tha sgaileadh a dhosain shuas
 Mar cheathach air àros nan os ;
 Bu shoilleir a dhreach, 's bu luath
 365 'Shiubhal ; Sithfada b'è 'ainm.

“ Ri taobh eile 'charbaid thall
 Tha each fiarasach nan sram,^b
 Caol-mhuingeach, aigeannach, brògach
 Luath-chasach, srònach nam beann.
 370 Dubh-sròngheal a b'ainm air an steud-each,

^a Strong-bodied ; lit. *carthy*. Applied to men, as it frequently is, it signifies “ broad-chested,” “ stout-bodied.”

^b *Fiarasach*, “ arch-necked,” or, it may be, “ fiery-tempered.”

war comes on, like the flame of death ! the rapid ear of Cuthullin, the noble son of Semo ! It bends behind like a wave near a rock ; like the sun-streaked mist of the heath. Its sides are embossed with stones, and sparkle like the sea round the boat of night. Of polished yew is its beam ; its seat of the smoothest bone. The sides are replenished with spears ; the bottom is the footstool of heroes ! Before the right side of the ear is seen the snorting horse ! The

The shapely swift ear of Cuchullin,
 True son of Semo of hardy deeds.
 Behind, it curves downward like a wave,
 350 Or mist enfolding a sharp-peaked hill ;
 The light of precious stones about (it),¹⁰
 Like the sea in wake of boat at night.
 Of shining yew is its pole ;
 Of well-smoothed bone the seat :
 355 It is the dwelling-place of spears,
 Of shields, of swords, and heroes.

“ On the right of the great chariot
 Is seen a horse high-mettled, snorting,
 High-crested, broad-chested, dark,
 360 High-bounding, strong-bodied son of the Ben ;^a
 Springy and sounding his foot ;
 The spread of his forelock on high
 Is like mist on the dwelling of deer ;
 Shining his coat, and speedy
 365 His pace—Si-fadda his name.¹¹

“ On the other side of the car
 Is an arch-necked snorting horse,^b
 Thin-maned, free-striding, deep-hoofed,
 Swift-footed, wide-nostrilled son of the mountains—
 370 Du-sron-gel the name of the gallant steed.

DUAN I.

and his two
 horses, Si-fadda
 (long-stride)
 and Du-sron-
 gel (black,
 with starred
 or white face).

high-maned, broad-breasted, proud, wide-leaping, strong steed of the hill. Loud and resounding is his hoof ; the spreading of his mane above is like a stream of smoke on a ridge of rocks. Bright are the sides of the steed ! his name is Sulin-Sifadda !

“ Before the left side of the car is seen the snorting horse ! The thin-maned, high-headed, strong-hoofed, fleet, bounding son of the hill : his name is Dusronnal, among the stormy sons of the sword !

DUAN I.

- Làin mhìle dh'iallan tana
 'Ceangal a' charbaid gu h-àrd,
 Cruaidh chabstar shoilleir nan srian
 'N an giallaibh fo chobhar bàin ;
 375 Tha clachan-boillsge, le buaidh,
 'Cromadh suas mu mhuing nan each—
 Nan each 'tha mar ched air sliabh
 A' giùlan an triath gu 'chliu.
 'S fiadhaiche na fiadh an colg,
 380 Co làidir ri iolair an neart ;
 Tha 'm fuaim mar an geamhradh borb
 Air Gorm-mheall mùchta fo shneachd.

- “ 'S a' charbad chithear an triath
 Sàr mhae treun nan geur laun,
 385 Cuchullin nan gorm-bhallach sgiath,
 Mae Sheuma, mu-n éireadh dàn.
 A ghruaidh mar an t-iuthar caoin,
 A shùil nach b' fhaoin a' sgaoileadh àrd
 Fo mhala chròm, dhorcha, chaol ;
 390 A ehiabh bhuidhe 'n a caoir m'a cheann,
 'Taomadh mu ghnùis àluinn an fhir,
 'S e 'tarruing a shleagh o 'chùl.
 Teich-sa, 'shàr cheannaird nan loug,
 Teich o 'n t-sonn, 's e 'figh'n a nall
 395 Mar ghaillinn o ghleann nan sruth ! ”

A thousand thongs bind the ear on high. Hard polished bits shine
 in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs, bright studded with gems, bend
 on the stately necks of the steeds. The steeds that like wreaths of
 mists fly over the streamy vales ! The wildness of deer is in their
 course, the strength of eagles descending on their prey. Their noise
 is like the blast of winter, on the sides of the snow-headed Gormal.

Full thousand slender thongs
 Fasten the chariot on high ;
 The hard bright bit of the bridle,
 In their jaws foam-covered, white.

375 Shining stones of power
 Wave aloft with the horses' manes—
 Horses, like mist on mountain-side,
 Which onward bear the chief to his fame.
 Keener their temper than the deer,

380 Strong as the eagle their strength.
 Their noise is like winter fierce,
 On Gormal smothered in snow.

“ In the chariot is seen the chief,
 True-brave son of the keen brands,

385 Cuchullin of blue-spotted shields,
 Son of Semo, renowned in song.
 His cheek like the polished yew ;
 His clear far-ranging eye,
 Under archèd, dark, and slender brow ;

390 His yellow hair down-streaming from his head,
 Flows round his glorious face,
 As he draws his spear from his back.
 Flee, thou great ruler of ships !
 Flee from the hero who comes on

395 As a storm from the glen of torrents ! ”

DUAN I.

He describes
 Cuchullin
 himself sitting
 in his car,

and urges
 Swaran to
 immediate
 retreat.

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

DUAN I.

- “C’uin a theich mi?” thuirt rìgh nan long,
 “C’uin a theich Swaran nan donn sgiath?
 C’uin a sheachnadh leam cunnart trom,
 ’Mhic Àirne ’bu dona riamh?
 400 Dh’fhuiling mi gailleann nan speur
 Air cuan beucach nan geur fhras;
 Dh’fhuiling mi còmhrag ’bu treun.
 C’uim an teichinn féin o’n chath,
 ’Mhic Àirne ’bu taise làmh?
 405 Éiribh mo mhíltean air an t-sliabh,
 Taomaibh mar ghàirich a’ chuain,
 ’N uair chromas an osag o’n nial.
 Éireadh Lochlin nan lann mu m’ chruaidh.
 Bithibh mar charragh ’an cois sàil’
 410 ’An talamh nan ràmh agam féin,
 A thogas an giubhas gu h-àrd
 ’An còmh-stri ri gaillinn nan speur.”

- Mar thoirm fhoghair o dhà bheinn,
 Gu ’chéile tharruing na suinn;
 415 Mar shruth làidir o dhà chreig
 ’G aomadh, ’taomadh, air an réidh,
 Fuaimear, dorcha, garbh ’s a’ bhlàr
 Thachair Immisfàil ’us Lochlin.
 Ceannard a’ spealt-chleas ri ceannard,

“When did I fly?” replied the king. “When fled Swaran from the battle of spears? When did I shrink from danger, chief of the little soul? I met the storm of Gornal, when the foam of my waves beat high. I met the storm of the clouds; shall Swaran fly from a hero? Were Fingal himself before me, my soul should not darken with fear. Arise to battle, my thousands! pour round me like the echoing main! Gather round the bright steel of your king; strong

- “ When did I flee ? ” said the king of ships ;
 “ When fled Swaran of brown shields ?
 When did I shun a heavy danger,
 Thou son of Arno, worthless evermore ?
 400 I have withstood the tempest of the sky,
 On roaring sea of bitter showers ;
 I have withstood stern battle’s (shock) ;
 Why from combat should I shrink,
 Arno’s son of softest hand ?
 405 Rise up, my thousands, on the mountain-side !
 Rush ye like roar of ocean,
 When the blast bends down from the cloud.
 Rise, Lochlin of swords, around my steel !
 Be ye as cliffs by the salt-sea shore
 410 In my own native land of oars,
 Which raises its pines aloft
 In struggle with storms of the skies.”

- Like roar of autumn from two Bens,
 Against each other rushed the warriors.
 415 Like strong torrents from two crags
 Sweeping, flooding over the plain,
 Loud-sounding, dark, (and) rough in battle,
 Encountered Innis-fail and Lochlin ;
 Chief with chief at cleaving sword-play.

DUAN I.

Swaran, indignant at the suggestion, orders his army to advance without delay, charging them to be strong as the rocks of Lochlin.

The hosts engage.

The conflict is described.

as the rocks of my land ; that meet the storm with joy, and stretch their dark pines to the wind ! ”

Like autumn’s dark storms, pouring from two echoing hills, toward each other approached the heroes. Like two deep streams from high rocks meeting, mixing, roaring on the plain ; loud, rough, and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Innis-fail. Chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man ; steel, clanging, sounds on

DUAN I.

- 420 'Us duine 'n aghaidh gach duine :
 Bha cruaidh a' screadan air cruaidh,
 Bha clogaidean shuas 'g an sgoltadh,
 Fuil a' dòrtadh dlùth mu 'n cuairt,
 Taifeid a' fuaim air mìn iuthar,
 425 Gathan a' siubhal tro' 'n speur.
 Sleaghan 'bualadh—tuiteam thall.

- Mar dhealain oidheche 's a' bheinn,
 Mar onfha beucach a' chuain,
 'N nair ghluaiseas an tonn gu h-àrd,
 430 Mar thorrann air cùl nan cruach,
 Bha gruaim 'us farum a' bhlàir.
 [Ged bliodh ceud bàrd Chormaic ann
 'S an dàn a' togail a' bhlàir,
 Cha b' urrainn aithris ach gann
 435 Gach column gun cheann, 'us bàs.]
 Bu lionn bàs fhear 'us thriath,
 Am fuil a' sgaoileadh air an t-sliabh.

- Bi'bh brònach, a shìol nan dàn,
 Mu Shithàluinn nan garbh-thriath.
 440 Tog-sa 'Eibhir, d'uchd bàn
 Mu shàr Àrdan nan colg fiar ;
 Mar dhà cilid, thuit o 'n bheinn
 Fo làimh Shuarain nan donn sgiath ;
 'N nair ghluais ro' 'n hìltean gu treun,

steel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood bursts and smokes around. Strings murmur on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night. As the noise of the troubled ocean, when roll the waves on high ; as the last peal of thunder in heaven,—such is the din of war ! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give the fight to song ; feeble

- 420 Man confronting man ;
 Steel was griding on steel,
 Helms cloven on high,
 Blood quick-spilling all around,
 Bow-string twanging on smooth yew,
 425 Darts speeding through the sky,
 Spears clashing, (men) falling.¹²

- Like lightning of night on the hill,
 Like the bellowing wrath of ocean
 When the billow rises high,
 430 Like thunder at the back of the mountains,
 Were the grimness and din of the fight.
 [Though Cormac's hundred bards were there
 Extolling the battle in song,¹³
 Hardly could they recount
 435 Each headless trunk and each death.]
 Many were the deaths of men and chiefs,
 Their blood on the hill wide-flowing.

- Mourn ye, ye sons of song,
 For Sihalin of great chiefs (descended).
 440 Evir, heave thy white bosom
 For brave Ardan of warlike soul.
 They fell like two hinds on the hill,
 By hand of Swaran of brown shields,
 When (he) strode before his thousands in strength,

DUAN I.

Sihalin and
 Ardan, two
 of the chiefs
 of Ireland,
 fall by the
 hand of
 Swaran.

was the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times !
 For many were the deaths of heroes ; wide poured the blood of the
 brave !

Mourn, ye sons of song, mourn the death of the noble Sitháilin !
 Let the sighs of Fiöna rise, on the lone plains of her lovely Ardan.
 They fell, like two hinds of the desert, by the hands of the mighty

DUAN I.

- 445 Mar thannas 'an speur nan nial,
 Tannas, a shuidheas 'an seledò,
 Leth-dheanta de cheò o thuath,
 'N uair dh'aomas maraiche, nach beò,
 Sealladh bròin air bhàrr nan stuadh.
- 450 Nior chaidil do làmh ri d' thaobh,
 'Thriath Innis nan caoin shian ;
 Do lann air astar nam faobh
 Mar dhealan a' lasadh gu dian,
 'N uair thuiteas an sluagh 's a' ghleann,
- 455 'Us aghaidh nam beann 'n an caoir.
 Shrann an Dubh-sròngheal thar seoid,
 Nigh Sithfad' a bhròg 'am fuil.
 Luidh gaisgich 'n a dhéigh gu leòir,
 Mar choill' air Chromla nan tuil,
- 460 'N uair ghluaiseas osag tro' 'n fhraoch
 Le tannais fhaoin na h-oidhche.

Bi deurach air carragh nam fuaim,
 'Nighean uasal Innis nan long ;
 Lùb do ghnùis àluinn thar chuan,
 465 Thus', a's glaine na taibhs' air thom,
 A dh'éireas suas gu mòthar mall,
 Mar ghath-gréin air sàmhchair nam beann ;

Swaran ; when, in the midst of thousands, he roared ; like the shrill spirit of a storm. He sits dim, on the clouds of the north, and enjoys the death of the mariner. Nor slept thy hand by thy side, chief of the isle of mist ! many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuthullin, thou son of Semo ! His sword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the sons of the vale ; when the people are blasted and fall, and all the hills are burning around. Dusronnal snorted

445 Like spirit in the sky of clouds—
 A spirit which sits in haze,
 Half formed of mist from the north,
 When the dying sailor bends
 A look of woe on the crest of the waves.

450 Nor slept thy hand by thy side,
 Lord of the isle of seasons mild ;
 Thy spear was in the path of prey
 Like lightning fiercely flaming,
 When fall the people in the glen,
 455 And the face of the hills foams in torrents.
 Du-sron-gel snorted over brave men.
 Si-fadda bathed his hoof in blood.
 Behind him fell full many heroes,
 Like a forest in Cromla of floods,
 460 When through the heather flies a blast
 With the empty spectres of night.

Tearful be thou on sounding rock,
 Noble daughter of the isle of ships ;
 Bend thy fair face over the ocean,
 465 Thou purer than a spirit on the hill
 Which rises on high, stately and slow,
 Like sunbeam on the silence of the hills.

DUAN I.

Cuchullin's
 prowess is
 described,

who slew
 many heroes—

over the bodies of heroes. Sisadda bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them, as groves overturned on the desert of Cromla ; when the blast has passed the heath, laden with the spirits of night !

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Inistore ! Bend thy fair head over the waves, thou lovelier than the ghosts of the hills ; when it moves, in a sunbeam, at noon, over the silence of

DUAN I.

a What has left thee so wan, &c. This line appears to be unconnected with the contest.

b He will never spill; lit. *he will never strike.*

c Crashing; more literally, *bellowing.*

- Thuit, 's ghrad thuit e 's a' bhàr,
 Tha òig-fhear do ghràidh gum tuar
 470 Fo lann Chuehullin 'bu shàr—
 Ciod 'dh'fhàg thu cho bàn 's cho fuar? ^a
 Cha ghluais e gu cruadal gu bràth,
 Cha bhuail e fuil àrd nan saoi: ^b
 Thuit Treunfhear, òg Threunfhear, gu bàs;
 475 'Oigh, cha-n fhaic thu do ghràdh a chaoidh.
 Tha 'mhìolchoin a' caoineadh gu trom
 Aig baile, 's chi iad a thaibhse.
 Tha 'bhogha gun taifeid, 's e lom;
 Air tom tha farum a' bhàis.
- 480 Mar dh'aomas mìle tonn gu tràigh,
 A ghluais fo Shuaran na làimh:
 Mar thachras tràigh ri mìle tonn,
 Thachair Éirinn ri Suaran nan long.
 Sin far an robh guthan a' bhàis,
 485 Toirm gàire-cath, 'us cruaidh,
 Sgiathan 's màile brist' air làr,
 Lann 's gach làimh, 'n a dhealan shuas,
 Fuaim a' bhlàir o thaobh gu taobh,
 Còmhrag beucach, creuchdach, teth, ^c
 490 Mar chend ord a' bualadh baoth
 Caoir o 'n teallach dhearg mu seach.

Morven! He is fallen! thy youth is low! pale beneath the sword of Cuthullin! No more shall valour raise thy love to match the blood of kings. Trenar, graceful Trenar died, O maid of Inistore! His grey dogs are howling at home! they see his passing ghost. His bow is in the hall unstrung. No sound is in the hill of his hinds!

- Fell he—fell he early in the battle—
 The youth of thy love is pale,
 470 Beneath the brand of Cuchullin redoubted.
 What has left thee so wan and so cold? ^a
 To deeds of daring he will never move ;
 He will never spill the noble blood of heroes : ^b
 Trenar, young Trenar, fell in death.
- 475 Maiden, thou never more shalt see thy love.
 His stag-hounds howl mournfully
 At home, as they behold his ghost.
 His bow is without string, and bare ;
 On the hill is the shriek of his death.
- 480 As come down a thousand waves on the shore,
 Rushed the invaders under Swaran ;
 As meets the shore a thousand waves,
 (So) Erin met Swaran of ships.
 There were the voices of death,
- 485 The noise of battle-shout, and crash of arms,
 Shield and mail (lay) shivered on the field,
 In every hand a blade like lightning-flash on high,
 The noise of battle (spread) from side to side,
 Crashing, gashing, red-hot fight, ^c
- 490 Like hundred hammers madly striking
 Spark-shower from the ruddy fire, by turns. ¹⁴

DUAN I.

among others,
 Trenar, for
 whom the
 maiden of his
 love is called
 to mourn.

A description
 of the further
 progress of
 the battle.

As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sounds of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness ; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that rise, by turns, on the red son of the furnace. Who

DUAN I.

^a With straining eyes; lit. *with squinting eyes.*

^b Ply their work; lit. *bend on high.*

^c A battle without victory—*i. e.* a drawn battle.

- Co sud air Léna nan sliabh?
 Co 's duirche 's as fiadhaiche gruaim?
 Co 's cosmhuil ri nial 'bu chiar,
 495 Lann gach triath mar thein' air stuaidh?
 Tha bruailean air aghaidh nan tom,
 Chrith carragh nan tonn air tràigh.
 Co 'th' ann ach Sùaran nan long,
 'S triath Éirinn mu-n éireadh dàin?
 500 Tha sùil nan slògh ag amharc claon ^a
 Air suinn nach b'fhaoin ag aomadh suas. ^b
 Thuit oidhche air còmhrag nan laoch,
 Cheil comh-stri nan saoi gun bhuaidh. ^c

- Air a' bheinn air fad an fraoich
 505 Chàrnadh le Daorghlas an t-sealg,
 A leagadh le iomart nan laoch,
 Mu-n d' fhàg iad aonach nan dearg.
 [Bha ceud fear a' tional an fhraoich,
 Deich a' lasadh chaoir-theine suas,
 510 Tri cheud 'taghadh chlachan caoin,
 Ceud a' cosgairt na sithinn gu luath;]
 Chìteadh cèd mu 'n cuairt 'us fleagh.
 'N sin thuirt ceann-uidhe na féile,
 Triath Éirinn an anam mhòir,
 515 E 'g aomadh air sleagh ag éirigh,
 Ri mac Fhéna, 'm bard 'bu chòrr.

are these on Lena's heath, these so gloomy and dark? Who are these like two clouds, and their swords like lightning above them? The little hills are troubled around; the rocks tremble with all their moss. Who is it but Ocean's son and the ear-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they see them dim on the heath. But night conceals the chiefs in clouds, and

- Who are these on Lena of hills ?
 Who of darkest, fiercest frown ?
 Who are like a murky cloud,
 495 Each hero's blade like fire on wave ?
 Trouble is on the mountain-side,
 Trembles the rock of breakers on the shore.
 Who are they but Swaran of ships,
 And the lord of Erin, song-renowned ?
 500 With straining eyes the hosts behold ^a
 The mighty warriors ply their work. ^b
 Fell night on the conflict of heroes,
 Shrouding a battle without victory. ^c

- On the hill, along the heath,
 505 Dorglas piled the chase,
 Brought down by toil of warriors,
 Ere they left the mountain of red (deer) ;
 [A hundred men were gathering heather,
 Ten, kindling flaming fires on high,
 510 Three hundred, choosing stones of smoothness,
 A hundred, deftly dressing flesh of deer.]
 Smoke and feast were seen all round.
 Then spoke the generous chief,
 Lord of Erin, large of heart
 515 (Leaning on a spear, as he rose),
 To Fena's son, a master-bard.

DUAN I.

At length
 Cuchullin and
 Swaran meet
 hand to hand,

but night
 leaves the
 combat un-
 decided.

A feast of
 venison is
 prepared for
 Cuchullin's
 heroes.

ends the dreadful fight !

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

DUAN I.

a My friendly
hest; lit. *my*
word without
heather—i.e.
without wrath.
Fide "Carric-
Thura," note
16.

- “ A Charuill o ’n àm o shean
C’uim a sgaoil a’ chuirn dhomh féin,
’Us rìgh Lochlin nan colg sean
520 Air tràigh Éirinn gun fhleagh ’s a’ bheinn ?
’S fada fiadh Lochlin o ’n laoch,
A thalla faoin ’us fada thall.
Thoir m’ fhocal do’n t-saoi gun fhraoch ;^a
Gairm ceannard nan long a nall ;
525 Thigeadh o iomairt nan tonn
Gu cuirn Éirinn nam fleagh fial ;
Cluinneadh e fuaim nan tom
’S a’ choill’ ’s an oidhche fo nial ;
’S farumach, fuaimear a’ ghaoth
530 A tha ’taomadh o ’chuan féin.
Moladh e clàrsaichean caoin
’Us fonn o na laoich ’s a’ bheinn.”

- Gbluais Carul ’bu shèimh glòir ;
Ghairm ceannard nan donn sgiath.
535 “ Éirich o bhian nan tore mòr,
Éireadh Suaran, rìgh nan sliabh,
Tha sòlas slige na féile
Mu thriath Éirinn, ’s guirme sùil.”
Fhreagair mar thoirn mhùchta, mhall
540 Air Cromla, ’n uair mhosglas gaath.

upon his beamy spear, and spoke to the son of songs ; to Carril of other times, the grey-haired son of Kinfena. “ Is this feast spread for me alone and the king of Lochlin on Erin’s shore ; far from the deer of his hills, and sounding halls of his feasts ? Rise, Carril of other times ; carry my words to Swaran. Tell him from the roaring of waters, that Cuthullin gives his feast. Here let him listen to the sound of my groves, amidst the clouds of night. For cold and bleak

- “Carul of the olden times,
 Why spread a feast for me alone,
 When Lochlin’s king of well-proved arms
 520 On Erin’s shore is fasting on the hill ?
 Far are the deer of Lochlin from the chief,
 Far away, and empty is his hall.
 To the brave one bear my friendly hest ;^a
 Hither call the leader of the ships.
 525 Let him come from the tossing of the waves
 To Erin’s feast of generous banquets.
 Let him hear the voice of the knolls
 Amid the wood while night is under cloud.
 Boisterous and blustering is the wind
 530 Which blows from his native ocean.
 Let him praise the soft-toned harps,
 And song from warriors of the hills.”

- Went Carul of mild discourse,
 He called the hero of brown shields.
 535 “Rise from the hides of great boars ;
 Let Swaran, king of hills, arise.
 The joyance of festive shells
 Surrounds the Erin-chief of bluest eye.”
 (He) answered like sound muffled and slow
 540 On Cromla when wakens the wind.

the blustering winds rush over the foam of his seas. Here let him praise the trembling harp, and hear the songs of heroes !”

Old Carril went, with softest voice. He called the king of dark-brown shields ! “Rise from the skins of thy chase ; rise, Swaran, king of groves ! Cuthullin gives the joy of shells. Partake the feast of Erin’s blue-eyed chief !” He answered like the sullen sound of Cromla before a storm. “Though all thy daughters, Inis-fail,

DUAN I.

He hospitably
 sends Carul,
 his bard, to
 invite Swaran
 to the feast.

DUAN I.

- “Ged thigeadh òighean Innis-fàil
 Le ’n lànhan bàn mar shneachda caoin,
 An broillich gheal ag éirigh àrd,
 Sùilean tlàth ag ìadhadh gaoil,
 545 ’An so a dheanadh Suaran tàmh
 Mar mhìle creag ’an Lochlin àigh ;
 ’An so, gu’n tig dearrsa o ’n ear
 A shoillseadh Chuchullin gu bàs.
 Is taitneach gaoth Lochlin leam fhéin ;
 550 A thog beucail a’ chuain mhòir,
 ’Labhairt measg nam bearta treun
 Le cuimhne mo choille ’bu chòrr,
 Coille Ghorm-mheall, a b’ uaine snuagh,
 A lùbas ma seach fo ’n ghaoith,
 555 Fuil chraobhach air sleagh nam buadh—
 Fuil thore ciar nan confhadh baoth.
 Thoireadh Cuchullin domh cìs—
 Cathàir Chormaic nan gorm sgiath ;
 Mur toir, ’n uair dh’ùraicheas strì,
 560 Bi ’dh leam Fàl air uisg ’us sliabh.” ^a

^a *Fail*, con-
 tracted for
 “Innisfail.”

“’S brònach an guth,” thuirt am bàrd,
 “A thug Suaran nan donn sgiath.”
 “Is brònach dha féin a mhàin,”
 Fhreagair mac Sheuma an triath.

should stretch their arms of snow ; should raise the heavings of their
 breasts, and softly roll their eyes of love ; yet, fixed as Lochlin’s
 thousand rocks, here Swaran should remain ; till morn, with the
 young beams of the east, shall light me to the death of Cuthullin !
 Pleasant to my ear is Lochlin’s wind ! It rushes over my seas ! It
 speaks aloft in all my shrouds, and brings my green forests to my

- "Though the maids of Innisfail should come
 With their white hands like spotless snow,
 Their white bosoms rising high,
 Their soft warm eyes inviting love,
 545 Here shall Swaran abide,
 Like thousand crags in goodly Lochlin ;
 Here, till comes brightness from the east
 To light Cuchullin to death.
 Sweet to me is the wind of Lochlin,
 550 Which rouses the roar of great ocean,
 Which speaks, amid my gallant masts,
 Remembrance of my mighty forests,
 Gormal's forests of greenest hue,
 Which bend by turns before the gale,
 555 When bubbling blood is on my deadly spear—
 The blood of tawny madly-raging boars.
 Cuchullin must render tribute unto me—
 The throne of Cormac of blue shields.
 If not, when battle is renewed,
 560 *Fail** shall be mine, both stream and hill." ^a

"Sad is the answer," said the bard,
 "Given by Swaran of brown shields."
 "Sad to himself alone,"
 Answered Semo's princely son.

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

"Sad is the sound of Swaran's voice," said Carril of other times.
 "Sad to himself alone," said the blue-eyed son of Semo. "But, Carril,

DUAN I.

Swaran chur-
 lishly refuses
 the invitation,
 and vows
 Cuchullin's
 death.

DUAN I.

- 565 “Charuill, tog do ghuth gu h-àrd
 Air gach linn a bh’ann nach beò ;
 Caithear oidheche ann am mìn-dhàn ;
 Faighear gàirdeachas ’s a’ bhròn.
 ’S iomadh saoi ’us òigh ’bu chaoin
 570 ’Ghluais o thùs ’an Innis-fàil.
 Is taitneach dàin air na laoiach
 O thaobh Alba nam fuaim àrd,
 ’N uair dh’aomas farum na séilg
 Fo ghuth Oisein nan caomh-rann,
 575 ’S a fhreagras aonach an deing
 Sruth Chòna nan toirm mall.”

- Thuir Carull, “ ’s an àm o shean
 Thàinig a nall neart a’ chuain,
 Mile long air tuinn o ’n ear
 580 Gu Ullin ghuirm-ghlais nan stuadh.
 Dh’èirich sinns’re Innis-fàil
 ’An coinneamh nam fear o thuath.
 Bha Cairbre, an garbh churaidh, ann,
 ’Us Cridh’-mòr, a b’aille de ’n t-sluagh.
 585 Dh’ùraich iad mu ’n tarbh ’bu bhàn,
 A chit’ ’m beinn Ghulbuinn so shuas,
 Leag gach fear a’ chòir a’ b’fharr,
 Ghluais am bàs o lannan cruaidh.

raise the voice on high ; tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in song, and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love have moved on Inis-fail : and lovely are the songs of woe that are heard in Albion’s rocks ; when the noise of the chase is past, and the streams of Cona answer to the voice of Ossian.”

- 565 "Carul, raise thy voice on high,
 About all the ages gone ;
 Pass the night in soothing song ;
 In sorrow let joy be found.
 Many the goodly brave and fair
- 570 Have moved erewhile in Innisfail ;
 Pleasing the songs about heroes
 From the shore of sounding Alba,
 When the noise of the chase goes down,
 Sung by Ossian of sweet strains,
- 575 As re-echoes the mountain of red (deer)
 To Cona's stream of murmurs slow."

- Said Carul, "In the time of old
 The strength of ocean came over—
 A thousand keels on eastern wave—
- 580 To dark-green Ullin of towers.
 Uprose the race of Innisfail
 To withstand the men of the north.
 Cairbar, stalwart warrior, was there,
 And Crinnor, goodliest of the host.
- 585 They strove anew for the white bull
 Seen on Ben-Gulbin on high.
 Each man pled his right as best,
 Death went forth from blades of steel.

DUAN I.

Cuchullin
 asks Carul to
 sing of the
 ages that are
 gone.

Carul tells the
 tale of Cairbar
 and Crinnor,
 two heroes
 who had quar-
 relled about
 the possession
 of a white
 bull that
 grazed on
 Ben-Gulbin.

Enemies from
 the north in-
 vaded Ulster.
 The two war-
 riors stood
 together in
 battle, and
 defeated the
 foe, but

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

DUAN 1.

“ Chaidh iad taobh ri taobh air ghleus,
 590 'Us ghéill dàimh a' chuain 's a' bhàr.
 Co b' annsa na fir 'bu treun,
 Cridh'-mòr 'us Cairbre 'bu shàr.
 B' fhearr naeh eualas air tarbh rianh
 Air Gulbuinn riabhaich an fhraoich.
 595 Chunnaic iad e anns an t-shiabh,
 'S dh'ùraich trom-dhorran nan laoch.

“ Bhuail iad aig Lùbar a chéile,
 Thuit Cridh'-mòr air fear 'n a fhuil.
 Thàinig Cairbre gu talla na féile
 600 Gu Bràigh-soluis 'bu chaoin guth,
 Pinthar ghasd' a' ghaisgich féin.
 Air Cridh'-mòr bha fonn na h-òigh,^a
 Fear òg do 'n robh dìomhair a gràdh,
 I deurach, 's e 'n còmhrag an t-slòigh,
 605 A' feitheamh a phillidh o 'n bhàr ;
 Chìteadh o 'trusean nasal
 A h-uchd naibhreach mar ghealach oidheh',
 'N uair bhios a h-ìomall a' gluasad
 O duibhre a tuair gu soillse.
 610 Cho caoin ri clàrsach a beul,
 'N àm togaìl nam fonn le bròn.
 Bu leath-sa an t-sùil mar reul—

^a The maiden's heart; lit. the maiden's song—in a secondary sense, *desire*.

point of their steel! Side by side the heroes fought; the strangers of Ocean fled; whose name was fairer on the hill than the name of Cairbar and Grudar! But ah! why ever lowed the bull on Golbun's echoing heath? They saw him leaping like snow. The wrath of the chiefs returned!

“On Lubar's grassy banks they fought; Grudar fell in his blood. Fierce Cairbar came to the vale where Brassolis, fairest of his sisters,

“Shoulder to shoulder they had fought,
 590 The ocean-strangers yielded in the fight.
 Who more loving than the men so brave,
 Crimor and Cairbar the renowned?
 Good that a bull had ne'er been heard of
 On russet Gulbin of heather!
 595 They saw him on the mountain-side,
 And the warriors' deep wrath returned.

“They struck each other at Lubar;
 Fell Crimor on the grass in blood.
 Came Cairbar to the hall of feasts,
 600 To Brasolis of mellow voice,
 The hero's own fair sister.
 On Crimor was the maiden's heart,^a
 A youth who owned her secret love.
 She wept when he joined the war-host;
 605 (She) waited his return from the field.
 From her graceful robe was seen
 Her bosom proud, like moon of night,
 What time its rim comes forth¹⁵
 From darkness of its shade to light.
 610 Musical as a harp her mouth,
 At the time of raising mournful songs.
 Hers was the eye like a star—

DUAN I.

again seeing
 the white bull,
 they renewed
 the quarrel,
 and Crimor
 was slain.

Cairbar took
 his shield
 home, and
 told Brasolis,
 his sister, to
 hang it in his
 hall.

all alone, raised the song of grief. She sung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her secret soul! She mourned him in the field of blood; but still she hoped for his return. Her white bosom is seen from her robe, as the moon from the clouds of night, when its edge heaves white on the view, from the darkness which covers its orb. Her voice was softer than the harp to raise the song of grief. Her soul was fixed on Grudar. The secret look of her eye was his.

DUAN I.

‘C’ uin a thig thu ’n ad airm, a sheoid ?’

“ ‘Gabhsa, ’Bhràigh-soluis,’ thuirt Cairbre—

615 “ Gabh sgiath bhallach a’ gharbh-chòmhraig,

Tog suas ’s an talla nach meirg i ; “

De na h-airm ’bu nàmhaid dhomhs’ i.’

Bhuail cridhe ’bu tlàth ri ’taobh.

Dh’fhalbh a snuagh ’us bhris i tro’ ’n fhraoch,

620 Fhuair e marbh ; ’us dh’èug i ’s an t-sliabh ;

’N so féin, a Chuchullin, tha ’n ùir,

’S caoin iuthar ’tha ’fàs o ’n uaigh.

Bu ghlan thu, ’Bhràigh-soluis, o ’n mhuir,

B’ àille Cridh-mòr o chùl nan cruach.

625 Cumaidh bàird ’ur cuimhne araon,

Fhad ’s a thaomas an caol o chuan.”

“ ’S binn do ghuth, a Charuill, dhomh féin.”

Thuirt triath Éirinn ’bu ghorm sùil ;

“ ’S binn d’fhocail, a bhàird, ’s a’ bheinn,

630 Ag éirigh o àm nan cliu ;

Iad cosmhuil ri braon nan sian,

’N uair sheallas a’ ghrian air raon,

Caol fhailens a’ siubhal air sliabh,

’S an osag gu mall ’s gu caoin.

635 Buail clàrsach, ’mhic F’héna, buail ;

When shalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war ?”

“ Take, Brassolis,” Cairbar came and said—“ take, Brassolis, this shield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe ! Her soft heart beat against her side. Distracted, pale, she flew. She found her youth in all his blood ; she died on Cromla’s heath. Here rests their dust, Cuthullin ! these lonely yews sprung

‘When wilt come in thine arms thou brave one?’

DUAN I.

“‘Take thou, Brasolis,’ said Cairbar—

615 ‘Take the studded shield of combat stern,
Place it high in the hall in brightness; “
It was the armour of my foe.’

Throbb’d a tender heart against her side.

Her colour went; and through the heath she rush’d.

620 (She) found him dead; she died upon the hill.

In this same spot, Cuchullin, is their dust,

And fresh the yew-tree grows upon their grave.

Bright wert thou, Brasolis, from the sea;

Stately was Crimor from behind the Bens;

625 Bards will preserve your memories as one,
Long as flows the tide of ocean.”

“Pleasing is thy voice to me, O Carul!”

Said the blue-eyed chief of Erin.

“Pleasing thy words, O bard, on the hill!

630 Which rise from the days of renown;

They are like balmy, timeous showers,

When looks the sun upon the lea,

A slender shadow flits along the hill,

And the breeze is slow and gentle.

635 Strike the harp, thou son of Fena, strike!

She had loved Crimor. On thus hearing of his death, she rush’d to the hill, and died beside him.

from their tombs, and shade them from the storm. Fair was Brasolis on the plain! Stately was Grudar on the hill! The bard shall preserve their names, and send them down to future times!”

“Pleasant is thy voice, O Carril,” said the blue-eyed chief of Erin. “Pleasant are the words of other times! They are like the calm shower of spring, when the sun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O strike the harp in praise of my

DUAN I.

- Mol, a Charuill, mo luaidh 'tha thall,
 Dèd-gréine Dhùn-scàthaich nan stuadh,
 Ainnir bhràigh-gheal, nan rosg mall,
 Ise 'dh'fhàg mi 'n Innis an t-slàigh,
 640 Òg-bhean bhanaid chòrr mhic Sheuma.
 An tog thu aghaidh nan snuagh caoin
 O 'n charraig a' coimhead mo sheoil ?
 Cha-n fhaic thu ach a' mhuir fhaoin,
 Cha-n e cobhar nan tonn do sheoid ;
 645 Fàg a' charraig, 'us oidheche mu 'n cuairt ;
 Tha osag nan cruach mu d' cheann.
 Cha till mi o achadh gun bhuaidh,
 Am feadh 's a mhaireas an ruaig 's a' ghleann.
 A Chonaill, le eachdraidh air còmhrag
 650 Cuir ainnir nan triath air cùl ;
 Àille 's glaine fo chiabh òr-bhuidh
 Nighean Shorghlain 's àirde cliù."

- Fhreagair Conall nan glòir mall :
 "Cuir faire air coigric a' chuin,
 655 Cuir gaisgich 's an doire ud thall,
 Ag amharc air Suaran nan stuadh.
 'Chuchullin, tha m' anam gu sìth,
 Gu tighin o Alba nam beann
 Laoich ghasda le Fionnghal an rìgh,
 660 Ceann ghaisgeach 'an strì nan gleann."

love, the lonely sunbeam of Dunsaith ! Strike the harp in the praise of Bragéla ; she that I left in the Isle of Mist, the spouse of Semo's son ! Dost thou raise thy fair face from the rock to find the sails of C'uthullin ? The sea is rolling distant far ; its white foam deceives thee for my sails. Retire, for it is night, my love ; the dark winds sing in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feasts ; think of the times that are past. I will not return till the storm of war

- Carul, praise my distant love,
 The sunbeam of Dunscath of waves,
 White-bosomed one of placid eye,
 Her whom I left in the isle of hosts,
 640 The modest, matchless bride of Semo's son.
 Dost raise thy face of gentle look
 From the rock to desery my sails ?
 Thou seest nought but the empty sea
 The ocean-foam is not thy hero's (sail).
 645 Quit the rock. Night surrounds thee ;
 The mountain-blast is about thy head.
 Without victory, I shall not leave the field
 As long as chase continues in the glen.
 Connal, do thou, with warlike story,
 650 Set aside the daughter of chiefs—
 Beauty fairest of gold-yellow hair,
 Daughter of Sorglan, highest in renown.”

- Connal of staid speech replied :
 “ Set sentinels against the ocean-foe,
 655 Place warriors in yonder wood,
 To watch over Swaran of the waves.
 Cuchullin ! my soul is for peace,
 Until from Alba of Bens there come
 True warriors, with Fingal, king,
 660 First of heroes in the war of the glens.”

is ceased. O Connal ! speak of war and arms, and send her from my mind. Lovely with her flowing hair is the white-bosomed daughter of Sorglan.”

Connal, slow to speak, replied, “ Guard against the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the strength of Swaran. Cuthullin ! I am for peace till the race of Selma come ; till Fingal come, the first of men, and beam, like the sun,

DUAN I.

Cuchullin calls on Carul again to praise Bragela, his wife, whom he himself apostrophises tenderly ;

but suddenly he orders Connal to sing a “ warlike story,” in order to banish her from his thoughts.

Connal answers by advising him to send out sentinels to watch Swaran's motions ;

DUAN I.

Bhuail e, le caismeachd, an sgiath.
 Dh'ìmich faire air thaobh nan sliabh.
 Luidh slòigh air aomadh fraoich
 Fo reultan 's gaoth na h-oidheche ;
 665 Tannais churaidh 'thuit 's a' bhàr,
 Neoil ghruamach mu 'n cuairt a' snàmh,
 'Us fada thall air sàmhechair Léna
 Chluinntear éigh a' bhàis.

on our fields!" The hero struck the shield of alarms, the warriors of the night moved on! The rest lay in the heath of the deer, and slept beneath the dusky wind. The ghosts of the lately

He struck, with warning note, the shield.
 A guard set forth to the mountain-side.
 The host lay on the heathery slope,
 Beneath the stars and winds of night.
 665 Ghosts of the brave who fell in battle
 (And) sullen clouds were swimming round ;
 While far away, on the stillness of Lena,
 Was heard the moan of death.

DUAN I.

which is done
 accordingly.

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

D U A N II.

ARGUMENT.

“The ghost of Crugal, one of the Irish heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretells the defeat of Cuthullin in the next battle ; and earnestly advises him to make peace with Swarau. Connal communicates the vision ; but Cuthullin is inflexible : from a principle of honour he would not be the first to sue for peace, and he resolved to continue the war. Morning comes ; Swaran proposes dishonourable terms to Cuthullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obstinately fought for some time, until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole Irish army gave way. Cuthullin and Connal cover their retreat : Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are soon followed by Cuthullin himself, who descries the fleet of Fingal making towards the coast ; but, night coming on, he lost sight of it again. Cuthullin, dejected after his defeat, attributes his ill success to the death of Ferda, his friend, whom he had killed some time before. Carril, to show that ill success did not always attend those who innocently killed their friends, introduces the episode of Comal and Galvina.”—M.

D U A N 11.

- LUIDH Conall aig sruth nam fuaim
 Fo 'n daraig gun duill' air crann ;
 Ri cloich mu 'n robh còinneach uaine
 Dh'aom ceannard nan triath a cheann.
- 5 Measg an fhraoich, 'an trusean dubh,
 Chualas leis guth na h-oidhche,
 O laoich luidh e fada thall,
 Gun eagal air mac nan lann.
 Chunnaic an gaisgeach 'n a shuain
- 10 Sruth caoirtheach o chruaich nam beann ;
 Shuidh Crùthgheal air dearrsa gu 'chùl,
 Saoi a thuit le clin 's a' ghleann ;
 Thuit e fo Shuaran nan long
 A' còmhrag 'an carraid nan sonn.
- 15 Bha 'aghaidh mar ghath na gealaich ;
 Bha 'carradh de nial nan tom ;
 'Dhà shùil mar éibhlean 's a' bhealach.^a
 'N a bhroilleach bha lot mar tholl.
 " 'Chrùthghil ! " thuirt Conall 'bu shàr,

^a Like embers, &c.—probably the embers of a decaying watch-fire.

CONNAL lay by the sound of the mountain stream, beneath the aged tree. A stone, with its moss, supported his head. Shrill through the heath of Lena he heard the voice of night. At distance from the heroes he lay ; the son of the sword feared no foe ! The hero beheld, in his rest, a dark-red stream of fire rushing down from the

D U A N II.

- CONNAL lay by a sounding stream,
 Beneath an oak of leafless branch ;
 Against a stone which was green with moss
 The chief of brave men leaned his head.
- 5 Amid the heath, in robe of blackness,
 Was heard by him the voice of night.
 From (other) warriors he lay far off ;
 Fearless (was he) the son of swords.
 The hero, in his sleep, beheld [erag ;
- 10 A foamy-hissing fire-stream from the mountain-
 Crugel sat in brightness behind (it)—
 A chief who fell with glory in the glen ;
 He fell beneath Swaran of ships,
 Fighting in the battle of heroes.
- 15 As a beam from the moon was his visage ;
 His robe was of the clouds of the hill ;
 His eyes like embers in the (mountain) pass.^a
 In his breast was a gaping wound.
 “Crugel,” said undaunted Connal,

The ghost of
 Crugel slain
 in battle ap-
 pears before
 Connal as he
 slept at a
 distance from
 the army.

hill. Crugal sat upon the beam, a chief who fell in fight. He fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast! “Crugel,” said the mighty Connal, son of Dedgal

DUAN II.

20 “ Mhic Gheugail o àird’ nan sliabh,
Com’ tha thu cho glas o’ n bhlàr,
Cho brònach, fhir-bhrisidh nan sgiath ?
Le eagal cha d’ chaochail do shnuagh.
Cìod ’thionndaidh do thuar, a Chrùthghil ? ”

25 Leth-fhaicte, ’briseadh gu deoir
Shìn e ’lamh mhòr thar an laoch,
Thog e le spàirn a ghuth-beoil,^a
Mar Leug-ghaoith ’an cuiseig no ’m fraoch.

“ Tha m’ anam, a Chonaill, air tom,

30 Mo cholunn aig tonn na h-Éirinn.
Chaoidh cha labhair, a cheannaird nan sonn ;
Cha-n fhaicear air lom mo cheuman ;
Mar aiteal air Cromla nan sliabh,
Mar fhaileus ’tigh’n sìos o chedò.

35 ’Chonaill ’mhic Cholgair a thriath,
Chi mi nial dhaoine nach beò ;^b
Nial a’ bhàis air machair Léna,
Sìol Éirinn a’ tuiteam thall.
Grad-fhàg, a chinn-uidhe na féile,

40 Raon nan tannas ; na bi mall.”
Mar ghealaich a’ dubhadh ’s an speur
Ghabh e dha féin a’ ghaoth.

“ Fuirich,” thuirt Conall ’bu chòrr,

^a The voice of his mouth. *Guth-beoil*, and *guth-cinn*, “mouth-voice,” and “head-voice,” are often used in Gaelic for what in English may be translated simply by “voice.”

^b Lifeless men; lit. *men who live not*.

famed on the hill of hinds ! “ Why so pale and sad, thou breaker of the shields ? Thou hast never been pale for fear ! What disturbs the departed Crugal ? ” Dim, and in tears, he stood and stretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego !

“ My spirit, Connal, is on my hills : my corse on the sands of

- 20 "Gegel's son from mountain-heights,
Wherefore art thou so wan from the battle,
So sad, thou breaker of shields?
Through fear thy visage never blanched;
What has changed thine aspect, Crugel?"
- 25 Half seen, (and) bursting into tears,
Over the hero he stretched his great hand;
With effort he raised the voice of his mouth,
Like Lego's wind through reed or heather.
- "Connal, my soul is on the hill;
30 My body by the wave of Erin.
Prince of the brave (I) never more shall speak;
On field my step shall never more be seen.
(I am) like a breeze on Cromla of heath—
Like shadow coming down from mist.
- 35 Connal, son of Colgar, noble,
I behold a cloud of lifeless men^b—
The cloud of death on field of Lena;
The sons of Erin falling down.
Chief of the generous, quit with speed
- 40 The field of phantoms: be not slow."
Like the moon when darkening in the sky,
He took unto himself the wind.
- "Stay," said the matchless Connal,

DUAN II.

Connal fear-
lessly ques-
tions him as
to the cause
of his sadness.

He answers
that he fore-
saw the death
of the sons of
Erin, and
counsels Con-
nal to forsake
the battle-field
of Lena;

and vanishes
on the wind.

Erin. Thou shalt never talk with Crugal, nor find his lone steps in the heath. I am light as the blast of Cromla. I move like the shadow of mist! Connal, son of Colgar, I see a cloud of death: it hovers dark over the plains of Lena. The sons of green Erin must fall. Remove from the field of ghosts." Like the darkened moon he retired, in the midst of the whistling blast. "Stay," said the

DUAN II.

“ Mo charaid dìleas dubh-dhearg féin,
 45 Leig uait an gath teine, ’fhir mhòir.
 Cia an talla do chòmhnuidh ’s a’ bheinn ?
 Fuirich, ’mhie Chromla na gaoith.
 Cia ’n t-aonach a’s uaine tom,
 Cia ’n còs ’bheil tuinidh an t-saoi ?
 50 C’àite ’n aom thu ’an codal a’s trom ?
 Nach cluinnear thu ’m farum nan sian,
 Measg toirm a’ taomadh o ’n bhàr ?
 C’uin a chithear do chleasan dian ?
 ’S lag tannas air aghaidh nan càrn.”

55 Db’éirich Conall ’bu mhìn glòir ;
 Shiubhail e mòr ’n a àirm ;
 Bhual sgìath Chuchullin ’bu chòrr,
 Chlisg ceannard a’ chòmhraig o ’toirm.

“ Carson,” thuir gaisgeach a’ charbaid,
 60 “ Thig Conall nan garbh-bheum o ’n fhraoch ?
 Nan éireadh mo shleagh gu d’ mharbhadh,
 Bu dorran air m’anam, a laoich.
 Labhair, ’mhie Cholgair ’bu treun,
 Tha d’fhocal mar ghréin a’ soillseadh.”

65 “ ’Mhie Sheuma, ’tro’ ’n oidhche dhuilbh

mighty Connal ; “ stay, my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, son of the windy Cromla ! What cave is thy lonely house ? What green-headed hill the place of thy repose ? Shall we not hear thee in the storm ? in the noise of the mountain-stream ? when the feeble sons of the wind come forth, and, scarcely seen, pass over the desert ? ”

DUAN II.

Connal asks him where he dwelt in the mountain-caves. Receiving no answer, he goes to Cuchullin, relates the vision,

“ My own, my faithful, dark-red friend ;
 45 Forsake the firebeam, mighty one.
 What hall in the Ben is thine abode ?
 Stay, son of Cromla of winds !
 What mountain has the greenest knoll ?
 What cave is the home of the brave ?
 50 Where dost thou recline in thy, deep slumber ?
 Shalt thou not be heard in the roar of storms ?
 In the din from the field of battle ?
 When shall be seen thy daring feats ?
 Weak is a ghost on the brow of cairns ! ”

55 Connal of gentle speech arose,
 Great in his armour forth he strode.
 He struck the shield of brave Cuchullin ;
 The war-chief started at the sound.

“ Wherefore,” said the hero of the chariot,
 60 “ Comes hard-smiting Connal from the heath ?
 Had my spear been raised to thy slaying,
 Sore pained would be my soul, thou brave one.
 Speak, thou son of stalwart Colgar ;
 Thy word is as the sun in his shining.”

65 “ Son of Semo, through the black night,

The soft-voiced Connal rose, in the midst of his sounding arms. He struck his shield above Cuthullin. The son of battle waked. “ Why,” said the ruler of the ear, “ comes Connal through my night ? My spear might turn against the sound ; and Cuthullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Connal ; son of Colgar, speak ! thy counsel is the sun of heaven ! ” “ Son of Semo ! ” replied the chief,

DUAN II.

Thàinig Crùthgheal o chòs nan càrn ;
 Chìteadh na reultan tro' 'chruth,
 'N uair a dh'éirich a ghuth le spàirn.
 'S e teachdair a' bhàis a th' ann.

- 70 Bha 'labhairt gu mall mu 'n uaigh ;
 Iarr sìth, a thriath Éirinn nan lann,
 No teich thar Léna o 'n chuan."

"Chualadh le Conall a ghuth!"

Thuirt triath Éirinn 'bu mhòr brìgh ;

- 75 "Bha reulta 'dealradh tro' 'chruth!
 'Mhic Cholgair, a dh'iarras sìth ;
 Is gaoth 'bh'air do chluais, a ghaigich,
 Agus toirm nan allt mu d' cheann.
 No ma bha Crùthgheal ri 'fhaicinn,
 80 C'uim nach tug e 'm fhianuis fo d'lann ?
 An d'fhiosraich o 'n taibhs' mu 'chòs,
 Mu thalla fir-astair na gaoith ?
 Gheibhteadh fo lann a ghuth-beoil,
 Gach còlas a bha aig an t-saoi.
 85 'S beag còlas an t-saoi, a Chonaill :
 'N diugh féin a bha e 's an t-sliabh,
 Cha b'fhad a shiubhal ; 's bu don' e.
 C'e 'dh'inneadh air bàs nan triath ?"

"Tha astar nan taibhs' air neoil,"

"the ghost of Crugal came from his cave. The stars dim-twinkled through his form. His voice was like the sound of a distant stream. He is a messenger of death! He speaks of the dark and narrow house! Sue for peace, O chief of Erin! or fly over the heath of Lena."

"He spoke to Conall," replied the hero, "though stars dim-twinkled through his form! Son of Colgar, it was the wind that

Came Crugel from the cleft of cairns.
 The stars were seen through his form,
 As he raised his voice with pain.
 The messenger of death he is ;

- 70 His slow discourse was of the grave ;
 Seek peace, thou chief of Erin of arms,
 Or flee over Lena from the sea."

" His voice was heard by Connal ! "

Said the chief of Erin, great in power ;

- 75 " The stars were shining through his form !
 Colgar's son that lovest peace,
 It was the wind in thine ear, O hero,
 And the murmur of waters about thy head.
 Or if Crugel was to be seen indeed,

- 80 Why not bring him with thy spear before me ?
 Didst thou learn from the spirit his cavern—
 The hall of this swift wanderer on the wind ?
 The spear could force his answer from him,
 (And) all that the hero knew.

- 85 Scant is the knowledge of the hero, Connal.
 This very day he was upon the field ;
 Brief has been his course, and bad ;
 Who is he to tell the death of great ones ? "

" The path of spirits is on clouds,"

DUAN II.

and again
 recommends
 peace.

Cuchullin
 ridicules the
 visit of the
 ghost, and
 says that Con-
 nal was de-
 ceived by the
 sound of the
 wind and the
 streams.

murmured across thy ear. Or if it was the form of Crugal, why didst thou not force him to my sight? Hast thou inquired where is his cave? The house of that son of wind? My sword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from Crugal. But small is his knowledge, Connal; he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills! who could tell him there of our fall?" " Ghosts

DUAN II.

a Discreet and sage ; lit. of great sense.

- 90 Thuirt Conall 'bu mhòr ciall ;^a
 “ Air gaoith chithear suinn nach beò ;
 Tha 'n tunaidh 'an còs nan sliabh ;
 'N am fois bì'dh an sanas ri 'chéile,
 'S an labhairt mu bhàs nam fear.”
- 95 “ Biodh an labhairt mu bhàs nam fear,
 'H-uile fear ach ceannard Éirinn.
 Cha teich mi o Shuaran o 'n lear ;
 Ma 's fheudar tuiteam, éiridh m' uaigh,
 Aig iomairt nan stuadh, fo dhànaibh.
- 100 Taomaidh sealgair deoir o 'ghruaidh ;
 Bì'dh bròn a' toinneadh mu Bhràì-gheal,
 Ainnir àillidh, 'b' àirde chiaibh.^b
 Cha-n eagal bàs ach ruaig ;
 Chunnaic Fionnghal mo bhuidh 's a' bhàr.
- 105 'Thannais fhaoin nan carragh geur,
 Feuch dhomh thu féin gun dàil ;
 Thig thus' air dealan nan speur,
 'Us faiceam mo bheud 'ad làimh :
 Cha teich mi o Shuaran, a thaibhs',
- 110 'Fhaileis catruim na fàs ghaoith.
 Éirich, 'mhic Cholgair, 'us buail
 Sgiath bhallach nam fuaim àrd :
 Eadar dà shleagh chithear shuas.
 Éireadh laoiach nam buadh gun dàil,

b *Ainnir*, in modern usage, signifying “maiden,” is here and elsewhere in Ossian applied to a married woman. Probably it means a young woman, married or unmarried.

fly on clouds, and ride on winds,” said Connal's voice of wisdom.
 “ They rest together in their caves, and talk of mortal men.”

“ Then let them talk of mortal men ; of every man but Erin's chief.
 Let me be forgot in their cave. I will not fly from Swaran ! If fall
 I must, my tomb shall rise, amidst the fame of future times. The
 hunter shall shed a tear on my stone ; sorrow shall dwell round the

90 Said Connal, discreet and sage ;
 “ On the wind are seen the brave who live not ;
 Their home is in the mountain-clefts ;
 In their rest they converse together,
 And their speech is of the death of men.”

DUAN II.

Connal asserts that the vision was in accordance with the known habits of spirits.

95 “ Let their speech be of the death of men ;
 Of every man save the chief of Erin !
 I will not flee from Swaran on the field.
 If fall I must, my tomb shall rise,
 With song, beside the surging waves.
 100 The hunter will shed abundant tears.
 Grief shall coil around Bragēla,
 The lovely maid of bosom high.^b
 It is not death but flight I dread.
 Fingal has seen my prowess in war.
 105 Thou empty shade of craggy peaks,
 Show thyself to me without delay ;
 Come on the lightning of heaven ;
 Let me see my doom in thy hand.
 From Swaran I will not flee, thou phantom,
 110 Thou light shadow of hollow wind.
 Rise, son of Colgar, and strike
 The loud-resounding bossy shield,
 Between two spears (it) is seen on high.
 Let the dauntless heroes swiftly rise,

Cuchullin, disregarding all he says, resolves to continue the war.

He orders his shield to be struck.

high-bosomed Bragēla. I fear not death ; to fly I fear ! Fingal has seen me victorious ! Thou dim phantom of the hill, show thyself to me ! Come on thy beam of heaven, show me my death in thine hand ; yet I will not fly, thou feeble son of the wind ! Go, son of Colgar, strike the shield. It hangs between the spears. Let my warriors rise to the sound, in the midst of the battles of Erin.

DUAN II.

115 Measg còmh-stri 'us blàir na h-Éirinn.
Ge fada 'n a thighin a nall
Fionnghal o innis nau gaoth,
Buaileam, a Chonaill, 'am blàr,
'Us tuiteam fo lann nan saoi."

120 Sgaoil air an leathad an fhuaim ;
Dh'éirich laoiich nam buadh fo airm,
Mar bhriseas cùl dùbh-ghorm nan stuadh^a
'S an taif fo bhruaillein nan stoirm ;
Sheas iad gu mòr air an fhraoch

125 Mar dharaig 's am faobh mu 'n ceann,^b
'N nair chluinnear fo reotha a' ghaoth,
Duille thioram a' taomadh tro' 'n ghleann.
Ghlas faobhar nan nial air Cromla ;
Chrith an là air aomadh a' chuain,

130 An gorm-cheathach a' snàmh air aonach,
'Ceileadh Innisfàil 's a sluaigh.

"Éiribh fo m' chaismeachd gu luath,"

Thuirt ceannard nan donn-sgiath,
"Éiribh, 'shìol Lochlin nan stuadh ;

135 Dh'fhàg Éirinn fo ruaig an sliabh.
Leanaibh tro' Léna nan gleann,
Gabh, a Mhòrlaimh, tigh Chormaic fo d' cheann,

^a The dark-blue back of waves—*ἐυρέα νῶτα θάλασσης* is used both by Homer and Hesiod.

^b With their spoils around their heads—*i.e.* branches and leaves.

Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of his stormy isles ;
we shall fight, O Colgar's son, and die in the battle of heroes !"

The sound spreads wide. The heroes rise, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They stood on the heath, like oaks with all their branches round them ; when they echo to the stream of frost, and their withered leaves are rustling to the wind ! High

115 Amid the conflict and battles of Erin,
 Though long in his coming over
 Is Fingal from the isle of winds,
 I will strike, O Connal, in war,
 And fall by the blade of the brave."

120 Spread the sound around the hill ;
 Rose valiant heroes under arms,
 As breaks the dark-blue back of waves ^a
 On ocean wildly tossed in storm.
 Stood they in greatness on the heath,

125 Like oak-trees with their spoils around their heads, ^b
 When the wind is heard amid frost, ¹
 And withered leaves whirl through the glen.
 Greyed the edge of the clouds on Cromla ;
 Flickered the day on the curve of ocean ;

130 The blue mist floated on the heights,
 Hiding Innisfail and her hosts.

" Rise to my war-cry with speed,"
 Said the leader of dusky shields :

" Ye race of Lochlin of waves arise ;

135 Erin, in rout, has fled the hill ;
 Pursue through Lena of glens,
 Speed, Morla, to the house of Cormac ;

DUAN II.

His warriors
 mustered at
 the sound,
 when the day
 was just
 dawning.

Swaran also
 sounds the
 war-note,
 orders pursuit
 of Cuchullin's
 army, but
 sends forward
 Morla to offer
 terms of peace.

Cromla's head of clouds is grey. Morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue mist swims slowly by, and hides the sons of Inis-fail !

" Rise ye," said the king of the dark-brown shields, " ye that came from Lochlin's waves ! The sons of Erin have fled from our arms ; pursue them over the plains of Lena ! Morla, go to Cormac's

DUAN II.

Géilleadh do Shuaran nam buadh,
 Mu-n tuit iad 's an uaigh fo 'lann,
 140 'S faoin sanas a' bhàis 'an Éirinn."

Dh'éirich iad mar scaoth o 'n chuan,
 'N uair bhuaileas an stuadh an tràigh.
 Mar mhìle sruth bha toirm an t-sluaigh,
 'N àm tachairt 'an Cona an àigh,
 145 An garbh-eas, a' briseadh o 'n oidhche,
 Fo dhearsa soillse na gréine.
 Mar thaomas faileus dùbhra dùinte
 Air aomadh mùgach foghair thall,
 Cho gruamach, dorcha, dlùth, gun chùntas,
 150 Shiubhail Lochlin mòthar, mall.
 Mar thore ciar air cruaidh nam beann,
 Ghluais 'n a airm àrd rìgh nan lann ;
 Air taobh a' ghaisgich chìteadh sgiath
 Mar thein' 'an oidheh' air leac nan sliabh,
 155 An saoghal dorcha, sàmbach, faoin,
 Fear-siubhail crìtheach 'coimhead claon
 Air tannas baoth 's an dearsa.
 Chithear thall an càrn fo seclò,
 'S na daraig mhòr a dh'fhàs air.
 160 Chuir osag, o bhruaillein a' chuain,
 Fo ruaig an ceathach o 'n chàrn ;

hall. Bid them yield to Swaran; before his people sink to the tomb, and silence spread over his isle." They rose rustling like a flock of sea-fowl, when the waves expel them from the shore. Their sound was like a thousand streams that meet in Cona's vale, when, after a stormy night, they turn their dark eddies beneath the pale light of the morn.

Yield (they) to victorious Swaran,
 Ere they fall in the grave beneath his blade,
 140 And the warning of death prove vain to Erin."

DUAN II.

Description of
 the host of
 Lochlin and
 of Swaran.

They rose like a flock of birds from ocean,
 When breaks the billow on the shore.
 The noise of the host was like thousand streams,
 When meeting in goodly Cona,
 145 As the raging torrent springs from night,
 Into the bright shining of the sun.
 As rakes a dark dense cloudy shadow
 Along the face of autumn's sombre slope,
 So grim, so dark, compact, and countless,
 150 Marched Lochlin onward, stately, slow.
 Like tawny boar on mountain crag,
 Moved in his arms the high king of brands ;
 On the warrior's side was seen a shield,
 Like fire of night on mountain-ledge,
 155 The world in darkness, silent, void ;
 The trembling traveller eyes askance,
 A fitful spectre in the gleam.
 Beyond are seen in mist the crag,
 And the giant oaks which o'er it grew.
 160 A blast from the angry ocean
 Chased the mist from the cairn ;

The rising of
 the mist before
 them reveals
 the host of
 Erin.

As the dark shades of autumn fly over hills of grass : so gloomy, dark, successive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the stag of Morven, moved stately before them the king. His shining shield is on his side, like a flame on the heath at night ; when the world is silent and dark, and the traveller sees some ghost sporting in the beam ! Dimly gleam the hills around, and show

DUAN II.

Chunnas sìol Éirinn nam buadh,
 Mar charragh ri stuaidh nan ràmh
 'N àm seach'rain do mharaich o 'èòlas,
 165 'S e brònach mu chaochladh nan speur.

“Siubhail, a Mhòrlaimh, gu luath,”
 Thuirt rìgh Lochlin nan stuadh àrd ;
 “Taing sìth do dhaoine fo ruaig ;
 Sud shuas iad mu chruaich nan càrn,
 170 Taing sìth a bheiream do rìghrean,
 'N uair chromas an cinn fo lann,
 'N déigh an gaisgich a thuiteam 's an strì,
 'S òigh mhìn gu deurach 's a' ghleam.”

Thàinig Mòrlamh mòr mac Shàthair ;
 175 Bu mhòr, 's bu mhòthar a cheum,
 Gu labhairt ri triath Éirinn 'bu shàr
 Measg coimhthional àrd nan treun.

“Gabh sìth o Shuaran, 's thoir èis,”
 Thuirt gaisgeach nach mìn glòir ;
 180 “Gabh sìth a bheirear do rìghrean,
 'N uair thuiteas 'an strì na slòigh.
 Fàg Éirinn nan sruth 's nan raon :
 Do bhean, 'us cù caol an fhéidh,

indistinctly their oaks ! A blast from the troubled ocean removed the settled mist. The sons of Erin appear, like a ridge of rocks on the coast ; when mariners, on shores unknown, are trembling at veering winds !

“Go, Morla, go,” said the king of Lochlin, “offer peace to these ! Offer the terms we give to kings when nations bow down to our

Seen was the gallant race of Erin,
 Like a cliff by the wave of oars,
 When the sailor loses his way,
 165 And bewails the change of the skies.

“Morla, go forward with speed,”
 Said Lochlin’s king of towering waves ;
 “Grant terms of peace to men in flight ;
 They are there on high, amid mountain crags.
 170 Grant peace as I grant to the kings,
 Who bow their heads beneath the spear,
 When fall their warriors in fight,
 And gentle maids are weeping in the glen.”

Came mighty Morla, son of Sa-ar—
 175 Great and stately was his stride—
 To speak with Erin’s dauntless lord,
 ’Mid the high gathering of the brave.

“Take peace from Swaran, tribute yield,”
 Said the warrior of haughty speech ;
 180 “Take the peace which is granted to kings,
 When their hosts have fallen in war.
 Yield Erin of rivers and plains,
 Thy wife, and the slim dog of the deer,

DUAN II.

Morla offers
 Cuchullin
 peace on his
 surrendering
 to Swaran the
 sovereignty
 of Erin, his
 wife Bragëla,
 and his match-
 less dog Lu-a.

swords ; when the valiant are dead in war ; when virgins weep on the field !” Tall Morla came, the son of Swarth, and stately strode the youth along ! He spoke to Erin’s blue-eyed chief among the lesser heroes. “Take Swaran’s peace,” the warrior spoke, “the peace he gives to kings, when nations bow to the sword. Leave Erin’s streamy plains to us, and give thy spouse and dog. Thy

DUAN II.

Bràigheal, uchd-àluinn a' s caoin,,
 185 Luath, a dh'fhàgas a' ghaoth 'n a dhéigh,
 Tairg sin ; oir is lag do làmh,
 Gabh smachd ; na bi dàn, 's bi beò."

"Innis do Shuaran nan sgiath,
 Cha do ghéill mi riamh, 's cha ghéill.
 190 Bheiream an cuan do an triath,
 No uaigh d' a shlòigh 'an Éirinn.
 An là sin cha tig gu bràth
 'Bheir dearrsa mo ghràidh gu tuath,
 'S cha teich, 'an Lochlin nan càrn,
 195 Àrd-chabrach na seilg o Luath ?" ^a

^a High-antlered deer ;
 lit. *the high-antlered one of chase.*

"Fhaoin cheannaird a' mhòr charbaid,"
 Thuirt Mòrlamh, " bheil d'àirm ro' 'n rìgh,
 An rìgh le 'luingeas o 'gharbh-choill,
 'Thogadh 'n innis mu 'n d' dhùisg an strì ?
 200 'S cho beag Éirinn nan tom uaine
 Do cheannard a' chuain fo stoirm."

"Am focail géilleam do Mhòrlamh,
 Mo lann do neach beò cha ghéill.
 Bì' dh Éirinn fo chumhachd Chormaic.
 205 Fhad 's a bhios deò annam féin.

spouse high-bosomed, heaving fair ! Thy dog that overtakes the wind ! Give these to prove the weakness of thine arm ; live then beneath our power !"

"Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, Cuthullin never yields. I give him the dark-rolling sea ; I give his people graves in Erin. But never shall a stranger have the pleasing sunbeam of my love.

Bragēla, fair-bosomed, mild,
 185 (And) Lu-a, who outstrips the wind.
 Offer these, for feeble is thy hand.
 Yield thee ; be not headstrong ; live.”

“ Tell thou to Swaran of shields,
 I yielded never, and will never yield.
 190 I will give the ocean to the king,
 Or a grave to his hosts in Erin.
 The day will never come till doom,
 Which bears my bright love to the north ;
 And never in Lochlin of cairns shall flee
 195 High-antlered deer from Lu-a.”^a

“ Vain chief of the great chariot,”
 Said Morla, “ are thine arms against the king—
 The king whose fleet, from his own great woods,
 Could bear away the isle which raised the feud ?
 200 So small is Erin of green hills
 To the ruler of the ocean in storm.”

“ In words I yield to Morla,
 My spear yields not to living man.
 Erin shall be under Cormac’s sway,
 205 While breath remains in me.

DUAN II.

He spurns the
proposal.

No deer shall fly on Lochlin’s hills before swift-footed Luäth.” “ Vain ruler of the car,” said Morla, “ wilt thou then fight the king ? The king whose ships of many groves could carry off thine isle ? So little is thy green-hilled Erin to him who rules the stormy waves ! ” “ In words I yield to many, Morla ; my sword shall yield to none. Erin shall own the sway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuthullin live ! O

DUAN II.

- 'Chonaill, 'chinn-fheadhna nam fear,
 Chual thu Mòrlamh nam faoin-ghlèir ?
 'Bheil sìth dhuit ri daoine o'n lear,
 'Fhir-bhrisidh nan sgiath mòr ?
 210 'Thannais Chrùthghil nam faoin ghleus,
 C' uim a thog thu dhomh féin am bàs ?
 Tuiteam 'an tigh caol gun leus
 Measg sòlais nan treun-dhàn.
 Togaibh, a shìol Éirinn nam buadh,
 215 Gach garbh-shleagh 'us iuthaidh geur.
 Buailibh dàimh Lochlin o thuath,
 Mar thannais a nuas o 'n speur."

- Dorcha, beucach, colgach, dùinte
 Thaom iad dlùth o dhùbhra a' bhlaire,
 220 Mar chedò 'an gleann a' s doimhne mùig,
 'N uair thig na stoirm o chùl nan càrn
 Air sàmhechair chiuin na gréine.
 'N a airm ghluais Cuchullin féin,
 Mar thannas speur 'an iomall neoil,
 225 'Earradh dearg de dhealan geur,
 'S gach gaoth 'bu treun 'n a làimh ro mhòir.
 Bha Carull anus an doire shuas,
 Stoc nam buadh a' fuaim 'n a làimh,
 'Thogail anama mòr an t-sluaigh
 230 Le cruaidh bhrosnachadh nan dàn.

Connal, first of mighty men, thou hearest the words of Morla!
 Shall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the shields?
 Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didst thou threaten us with death?
 Thy narrow house shall receive me, in the midst of the light
 of renown. Exalt, ye sons of Erin, exalt the spear and bend the
 bow! rush on the foe in darkness, as the spirit of stormy
 nights!"

- Connal, thou leader of men,
 Thou hast heard vainglorious Morla.
 Art thou (still) at peace with the men from ocean,
 Thou breaker of the mighty shields ?
- 210 Crugel's shade of vain designs,
 Wherefore consign me unto death ?
 I shall fall into the narrow rayless house
 Amid the solace of heroic songs.
 Lift high, ye race of conquering Erin,
- 215 Each rugged spear and pointed dart !
 Smite Lochlin-foemen from the north,
 Like spectres downward from the skies."
- Dusky, shouting, stern, and firm,
 Close they rushed from the dusky plain ;
- 220 Like mist in glen of deepest gloom,
 When tempests burst from the back of cairns
 On the mild quietude of the sun.
 In his armour strode Cuchullin,
 Like spirit of the skies on skirt of cloud,
- 225 His red robe of lightning keen,
 And each strong wind in his mighty hand.
 Carul was in the wood above,
 The signal-horn of victories sounding in his hand,
 To stir the great souls of the host
- 230 With the strong incitement of the (battle-) songs.

DUAN II.

and orders his
 army to ad-
 vance.

Description of
 the army.

Carul, who by
 music and
 song was
 inciting the
 heroes to ac-
 tion, describes
 the slaying by

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

DUAN II.

- “C'àite,” thuirt am beul 'bu bhinn,
 “C'àit' 'n do shìn thu féin, a Chrùthghil ?
 'N ad huidhe air an fhonn gun bhrìgh,
 'S do thigh grinn gun slige chùbhraidh ?
 235 'S dubhach bean Chrùthghil fo dheoir
 'N a coigreach 'an talla a' bhròin.
 C' i sud mar dhearrsa air sliabh,
 Air aghaidh chiar nan nàmhaid ?
 C' i, ach Deò-gréine nan ciabh,
 240 Bean Chrùthghil a's àillidh bràghad !
 Tha 'falt air a' ghaoith 'n a déigh ;
 'S dearg a sùil, 's is caol a guth.
 'S glas Crùthgheal 'an astar an fhéidh ;
 'An còs na creige tha 'chruth.
 245 Thig e gu m' chluais 'am fhois ;
 'S lag a ghuth 's an oidheche,
 Mar sheillein ag iadhadh mu chloich,
 Mar chuileig 'an iomall soillse.^a
 Ach thuit Deò-gréine mar nial
 250 'Am madainn chiar 's' an àrd-bheinn.
 Tha lann Lochlin 'n a caoin-chliabh.
 Thuit rùn nan triath, a Chairbre ;
 Thuit i, 'Chairbre, do chliu,
 Sàr ghallan ùr na h-òige.”

^a On the rear of light—*i.e.* in the twilight, as light is departing.

“Where,” said the mouth of the song, “where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth; the hall of shells is silent. Sad is the spouse of Crugal! She is a stranger in the hall of her grief. But who is she that, like a sunbeam, lies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena, lovely fair, the spouse of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is shrill.

- “Where,” said the melodious mouth—
 “Where hast thou stretched thee, Crugel;
 Lying all strengthless on the ground,
 Thy pleasant house without the fragrant shell?
 235 Mournful is Crugel’s wife in tears—
 A stranger in the house of sorrow.
 Who is she like a gleam on mountain-side,
 Before the dark front of the foe?—
 Who but Deo-grain’ of waving locks,
 240 Crugel’s wife of bosom fair.
 Her hair is on the wind behind her;
 Red is her eye, and faint her voice.
 Pale is Crugel in the haunts of deer;
 In the cleft of the rock is his Form.
 245 To my ear he comes in my repose;
 Feeble is his voice at night,
 Like a bee that wheels around a stone;
 Like a fly upon the rear of light,^a
 But Deo-grain’ has fallen as a cloud,
 250 In gloomy morn on mountain high.
 In her smooth breast is Lochlin’s spear.
 Fallen is the love of heroes, Cairbar;
 Cairbar, she who was thy pride is fallen,
 A sapling goodly, blooming, fresh.”

DUAN II.

the men of
 Lochlin of
 Deo-grainè,
 the widow of
 Crugel.

Pale, empty, is thy Crugal now! His form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of rest; he raises his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain bee; like the collected flies of the eve! But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the sword of Lochlin is in her side. Cairbar, she is fallen, the rising thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours!”

DUAN II.

- 255 Chuala Cairbre fuaim a' bhròin,
 Shiubhail mar mhòr-thore a' chuain ;
 Chunnaic e 'nighean gun dedò,
 Dh'aom e tro' mhilltean an t-sluaigh.
 Thachair ri Lochlin a lann ;
- 260 O cheann gu ceann las an còmhrag,
 Mar cheud gaoth 'an coille mhòir
 'An Lochlin nan tòrr 's nan tonn ;
 Mar cheud teine 'n giùbhsaich chòrr
 Air cheud beinn 'an tìr nan long ;
- 265 Cho beucach, creuchdach, lionor, mòr,
 Thuit aghaidh an t-slòigh fo 'airm.
 Mar chluarain ghearr Cuchullin daoine ^a—
 Bha Éirinn ag aomadh fo Shmaran.
 Thuit Curthach fo làimh nach caoimhneadh,
- 270 'Us curaidh nach b' fhaoin 'an Cairbre.
 Tha Mòrlann a chaoidh fo phràmh,
 Chrith thu fo 'n bhàs, a Chaoilte,
 Bha d' fhuil air do bhràighe bàn,
 Do chiabh bhuidhe air làr 's i sgaoilte.
- 275 'S an àit anns 'n d' thuit an sonn,
 'S tric a chuir e air lom cuirm,
 'S tric o 'n chlàrsaich bhuail e fonn,
 'S a mhìolchoin 's an tom a' gairm,
 'N nair bha òig-fhir nan caol-ghleann
- 280 'Cur taifeid air crann na seilg.

^a The transition here from the havoc made by Cuchullin to the defeat of his hosts is so very rapid as to lead to the belief that some lines are lost.

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful sound. He rushed along like ocean's whale. He saw the death of his daughter : he roared in the midst of thousands. His spear met a son of Lochlin ! battle spread from wing to wing ! As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves ; as fire in the pines of a hundred hills ; so loud, so ruinous, so vast the ranks of men are hewn down. Cuthullin cut off heroes like thistle ;

- 255 Cairbar heard the sound of sorrow ;
 Rushed (he) on like a great whale of ocean.
 He saw his daughter without spark (of life) ;
 He swept through thousands of the host.
 Met his spear with Lochlin,
 260 From end to end the battle flamed,
 Like hundred winds in a great forest,
 In Lochlin of mountains and waves—
 Like hundred fires in pine-wood high,
 On hundred Bens in the land of ships,
 265 So loud, so gashing, manifold, and great,
 Was the fall of men before his arms.
 Cuchullin mowed down men like thistles ^a—
 Erin was yielding to Swaran.
 Fell Curach under hand which spared not,
 270 And Cairbar warrior strong.
 Morlan sleeps for evermore ;
 Thou didst quiver in death, O Ca-olt !
 Thy blood flowed over thy white neck ;
 Thy yellow locks on earth are spread.
 275 In the place where the brave one fell,
 Ofttimes had he spread the feast,
 Oft had struck music from the harp ;
 His stag-hounds on the hill gave tongue
 When the youth of the narrow glens
 280 Fitted the string to the hunting-bow.

DUAN II.

Her father,
 Cairbar, hear-
 ing of this,
 rushes fiercely
 against the
 enemy,
 slaughtering
 many of them.

The engage-
 ment becomes
 general ; Swa-
 ran prevails.

Swaran wasted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, Cairbar of the bossy shield ! Morglan lies in lasting rest ! Ca-olt trembles as he dies ! His white breast is stained with blood ; his yellow hair stretched in the dust of his native land ! He often had spread the feast where he fell. He often there had raised the voice of the harp : when his dogs leapt around for joy, and the youths of the chase prepared the bow !

DUAN II.

- Dh'ìmich Suaran, rìgh nam buadh,
 Mar mhòr-shruth fuar nam fàs-bheann,
 'N uair thuiteas a' bhruach le 'luas
 'S na cùirn a' gluasad 's a' ghleann.
- 285 Sheas Cuchullin treun 'n a chomhair,
 Mar chruaich mhòir mu-n sgaoil an nial :
 Bhi cleasachd na gaoithe mu 'scòrr,^a
 'S a' ghiùbhsach chòrr air taobh nan sliabh
 'S a' ehlach -mheallain a' breabadh air creig ;^b
- 290 Seasaidh creag 'n a neart gu h-àrd
 'Cur fasgaidh air tlàth-ghleann Chòna.

- Mar sin bha Cuchullin nam buadh
 'Cur fasgaidh air sluagh na h-Éirinn.
 Mar fhuaran caoin a thaomas sruth,
 295 Dhòirt an fhuil mu 'n cuairt do 'n laoch.
 Thuit Éirinn air àros nan cruth,
 Mar shneachda fo ghréin 's an fhraoch.

- “Shìol Éirinn,” thuirt Crùthmal gun tuar,
 “Tha Lochlin 's an ruaig 'n ar déigh.
 300 C' uim sheasas mar chuisseig ri stuaidh ?
 Grad theichibh gu cruaich an fhéidh.”
 Theich esan mar fhiadh 's an fhireach,
 A shleagh mar bhioran ri 'thaobh.

Still Swaran advanced as a stream that bursts from the desert. The little hills are rolled in its course ; the rocks are half sunk by its side ! But Cuthullin stood before him, like a hill, that catches the clouds of heaven. The winds contend on its head of pines ; the hail rattles on its rocks. But, firm in its strength, it stands and shades the silent vale of Cona ! So Cuthullin shaded the sons of

^a *Scoor* (written scùrr or scòrr) is the common Gaelic name in the West Highlands for the sharp summit of a high hill. *Scaur* occurs in old Scotch ballads, and is used by Tennyson to denote a steep broken face of a hill ; but is probably the same word originally with the Celtic *scùrr*.

^b The hail rebounds against the rock ; lit. *kicks, &c.*

DUAN II.

Swaran swept on, the conquering king,
 Like great, cold torrent of the desert Bens,
 When falls the bank before its force,
 And cairns are swept along the glen.

- 285 Cuchullin stood firm before him,
 Like cloud-dispersing, massive crag ;
 Raves the wind around its *scoor*,^a
 And 'mid lofty pines on the mountain-side,
 While the hail rebounds against the rock :^b
 290 The crag in its strength stands on high
 Sheltering the warm glen of Cona.

Thus did dauntless Cuchullin
 Shelter the host of Erin.

- Like stream from ever-flowing spring,
 295 Poured blood around the brave one.
 Fell Erin in the dwelling-place of ghosts,
 As snow on heath beneath the sun.

- “ Sons of Erin,” said Crumal, pale,
 “ Lochlin presses on our rear ;
 300 Why stand like reeds against the waves ?
 Quick flee we to the craggy heights of deer.”
 He fled like deer in the forest,
 His spear like a twig by his side.

Crumal proposes a general flight, but is followed by very few.

Erin, and stood in the midst of thousands. Blood rises like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around. But Erin falls on either wing, like snow in the day of the sun.

“ O sons of Erin,” said Grumal, “ Lochlin conquers on the field. Why strive we as reeds against the wind ? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds.” He fled like the stag of Morven ; his spear is a

DUAN II.

a Of dastard deed; lit. of bad spoil—*i.e.* bad at spoiling, unwarlike, or cowardly.

b Stones of power—*i.e.* gems, which were frequently used as amulets, or charms.

Cha lìonor 'ghabh astar giorraig
 305 Le Crùthmhal 'bu dona faobh,^a
 Thuit iad 'an carraid nan laoch
 Mu charraig an fhraoich air Léna.

Air charbad mòr nan clacha-buadh^b
 Chìteadh shuas àrd-thriath na h-Éirinn;
 310 Mharbhadh leis gaisgich o thuath,
 'S labhair ri Conall na féile.
 “ A Chonaill, àrd-cheann nam fear,
 A dh'altrum gu gleus-bàis mo làmh,
 Ged theich sìol Éirinn o 'n lear,
 315 Cumaidh sinne còmhrag ri dàimh.
 A Charuill o 'n àm a dh'fhalbh,
 Gabh le m' chàirdean do 'n tom ud shuas,
 A Chonaill! seas-sa ri m' lann
 Gu cumail o chall na ruaig.”

320 Leum Conall air carbad nam buadh;
 Chìteadh shuas sgiath mhòr nan treun,
 Mar ghealaich a' dubhadh fo ghruaim,
 Piuthar uaibhreach reul nan speur
 'S i 'g imeachd gu donn o 'n ear,
 325 'S droch caochladh air inntinn nam fear.
 Bha Sithfada 'spàirn ri cruaidh,
 'S an Dubh-sròngheal 'bu luath eum;

trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, chief of the little soul: they fell in the battle of heroes, on Lena's echoing heath. High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin stood. He slew a mighty son of Lochlin, and spoke, in haste, to Connal. “O Connal, first of mortal men, thou hast taught this arm of death! Though Erin's sons have fled, shall we not fight the foe? Carril,

They were few who took the path of fear
 305 With Crumal of dastard deed.^a
 They fell in the conflict of heroes,
 Around the rock of heath on Lena.

In chariot great of stones of power^b
 Erin's noble chief was seen on high.
 310 He had slain warriors from the north,
 And (he) spoke to Connal of feasts :
 "Connal, great leader of men,
 Who hast trained my arm to skill in slaying,
 Though Erin's sons have fled the plain,
 315 We shall maintain the fight with the foe.
 Carul, (who art) from time that is gone,
 Lead thou my friends up yonder hill.
 Connal, stand thou by my blade,
 To save the retreat from disaster."

320 Sprang Connal on the splendid car ;
 On high was seen the great shield of heroes,
 Like moon, when darkening under gloom,
 Haughty sister of the stars of heaven,
 When dusky she travels from cast,
 325 Foreboding evil change to minds of men.
 Si-fadda strained against the hill,
 And Du-sron-gel fleet of pace.

son of other times, carry my friends to that bushy hill. Here, Connal, let us stand, like rocks, and save our flying friends."

Connal mounts the car of gems. They stretch their shields, like the darkened moon, the daughter of the starry skies, when she moves, a dun circle through heaven ; and dreadful change is expected by men. Sithfadda panted up the hill, and Sronnal haughty

DUAN II.

Cuchullin,
 with Connal,
 covers the
 retreat of
 the troops of
 Erin.

DUAN II.

^a The stream of people ; lit. *the drawing of the people*. The figure refers to the rush of water in the wake of the whale.

Mar thuinn mu mhòr-thore a' chuain,
Bha tarruing an t-sluaigh 'n an déigh.^a

- 330 Air taobh Chromla nan cruach àrd
Sheasadh brònach thall sìol Éirinn,
Mar mhòr-choille loisgte gu crann
Fo ghaoith-oidhche air càrn ag éirigh,
O chéile fada, tioram, donn,
- 335 Gun duill' air lom a' fuaim.
Cuchullin fo dharaig thall,
Sàmhach, gaisgeach nan rosg mall,
A ghaoth 'n a fhalt craobhach shuas,
'N uair thàinig fear-coimhead a' chuain,
- 340 Mòran mac Fhithil, am bàrd.
“ An luingeas, an luingeas, a th'ann
O àrd-innis nan ciar-bheann !
Fionnghal, ceann nan slògh, an triath,
Fear-brididh nan donn-sgiath ;
- 345 An cobhar bàn mu thaobh nan long,
Na croinn le siuil mar choill' nan tom
Measg tional trom nan nial.”

Thuir Cuchullin, “ Séid, a ghaoth,
O innis chaomh cheathaich a' chuain ;
350 Gu bàs nam mìltean thig, a shaoi,

stead. Like waves behind a whale, behind them rushed the foe. Now on the rising side of Cromla stood Erin's few sad sons ; like a grove through which the flame had rushed, hurried on by the winds of the stormy night ; distant, withered, dark they stand, with not a leaf to shake in the gale.

Cuchullin stood beside an oak. He rolled his red eye in silence,

Like waves around the great whale of ocean
Was the stream of people behind them.^a

- 330 On the side of Cromla of high peaks,
Mournful, far away, the sons of Erin stood
Like a great forest burned to stems,
In night-wind rising on the cairn,
Far apart (and) scorched (and) brown,
335 Without a leaf to sound on high.
Cuchullin was under an oak apart ;
Dumb was the hero of slow-moving eyes.
The wind raised up his bushy hair,
When he, who watched the ocean, came—
340 Moran, son of Fihil, the bard.
“The ships! the ships are there,
From the high isle of dark-brown Bens!
Fingal, head of hosts, the chief,
The breaker of the dusky shields!
345 The white foam by the side of the ships,
The masts with sails like wood on heights
Amid the heavy massing of the clouds!”

Cuchullin spoke: “Blow thou wind
From the abode of the kindly mist of ocean.

- 350 To death of thousands come, thou hero—

DUAN II.

Description of
the remnant
of them as
they gather
on Cromla.

Moran, the
ocean-scout,
brings news
of the ap-
proach of
Fingal's fleet.

Cuchullin re-
joices at the
prospect of
aid ;

and heard the wind in his bushy hair. The scout of ocean came ; Moran, the son of Fithil. “The ships,” he cried, “the ships of the lonely isles! Fingal comes, the first of men, the breaker of the shields! The waves foam before his black prows! His masts with sails are like groves in clouds!” “Blow,” said Cuthullin, “blow, ye winds that rush along my isle of mist! Come to the death of

DUAN II.

Àrd-rìgh Shelma a's mòr luaidh,
 Tha do shiuil, mo charaid, dhomh féin,
 Mar dhearrsa na maidne o neul,
 Do luingeas mar sholus nan speur,
 355 Thu féin mar theine 'bu chòrr,
 A dhealras gu mòr 's an oidhche.
 A Chonaill, 'chinn-uidhe nan triath,
 'S taitneach ar càirdean 'am bròn.
 Tha 'n oidhche 'tional mu 'n t-sliabh,
 360 C' àite 'bheil Fionnghal nan long!
 Suidheamaid fo 'n dùbhra dhùint,
 'Feitheamh gealaich ùir 'us reul."

Theirinn air a' choill' a' ghaoth,
 Toirm nan eas air cùirn nan sliabh,
 365 Uisg mu Chromla an fhraoich,
 Dearg-reulta 'plaosgadh tro' 'n nial.
 Ro bhrònach air taobh nan sruth
 Shuidh ceannard Éirinn nan triath;
 Conall mac Cholgair r' a làmh,
 370 'Us Carull o 'n àm a dh'fhalbh.

" 'S dona do làmh, a Chuchullin,"^a
 Thuirt mac Sheuma 'bu mhòr feum,
 " 'S dona do làmh, a Chuchulliu,
 O thuit leat do charaid féin ;

^a Untoward is
 thy hand ;
 lit. *bad* or
evil, &c.

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

DUAN II.

Selma's high king of great renown.
 To me thy sails are, O my friend,
 Like shining of the morning out of cloud ;
 Thy ships (are) as the light of heaven ;
 355 Thou thyself art as a glowing fire
 Which shines afar at night.
 Connal, thou chief of the noble,
 Cheering in sorrow are our friends.
 The night is gathering around the hill ;
 360 (But) where is Fingal of ships ?
 Sit we under the close darkness
 Waiting the new moon and the stars."

Wind came down upon the wood,
 The torrents roared on mountain-cairns.
 365 Rain was round Cromla of heather,
 Lurid stars dim-twinkled through the clouds.
 In sorrow deep by the river-side
 Sat the leader of Erin of chiefs ;
 Connal, son of Colgar, by his side,
 370 And Carul from the days that are gone.

"Untoward is thy hand, Cuchullin,"
 Said the son of Semo great in might ;
 "Untoward is thy hand, Cuchullin,
 Since thine own friend fell beneath it.

but, as he
 watches dur-
 ing night, he
 attributes his
 defeat by
 Swaran to
 evil fortune,

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

DUAN II.

^a On the Ben—i.e. while hunting together.

^b Wherefore . . . fell? &c. *How* would seem more appropriate here; but the word is *c' uime*, "wherefore."

^c "Muri's hall" was Cuthullin's home.

375 'Fheairde 'mhic Amuin an àigh,
Bu mhòr dhuit mo ghràdh 's a' bheinn." ^a

"C' uime, 'Chuchullin, 'mhic Sheuma,^b
'Thuit fear-bristidh nan gorm-sgiath?
'S cuimbne," thuirt Conall nam beum,
380 "Sàr-mhae Amuin nam mòr-thriath;
Bu mhòr e, 's b' àluinn a shnuagh,
Mar bhogha nan stuadh 's an speur."

"Thàinig Feaird' o Alb' a nall,
Sàr cheannard nan ceud ghleann;
385 'An talla Mhùire thog e 'lann;^c
Fhuair e càirdeas nach bu ghann;
Bha m' astar 's an t-seilg leis an laoch,
B' àros faraon dhuinn am fraoch.

"Deudgheal, bean Chairbre, 'bha còrr,
390 Triath mòr raon Ullin 'us Àrdbheinn,
B' e solus na sgéimh a còir,
B' e cridh' an talla do 'n àrdan;
Bha 'gaoil do dhearrsa na h-dìge,
Mac Amuin, a b' naise gnè.

395 " 'A Chairbre,' thuirt làmh 'bu chaoin,
'Thoir feudail gu leth dhomh féin;

Ferda, son of Damman, I loved thee as myself!"

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

375 Ferdè, son of noble Ammin,
Strong was my love to thee on the Ben!"^a

"Wherefore, Cuchullin, son of Semo,^b
Fell the breaker of blue shields?
(I remember," said Connal, of cleaving strokes,

380 "Ammin's true son, of high chiefs (sprung).
Great he was, and noble his aspect,
Like the bow of clouds in the sky."

"Ferdè came over from Alba;
Brave ruler of a hundred glens.

385 In Muri's hall he (learned to) wield the sword.^c
No stinted friendship (there) he found;
The hero was my comrade in the chase;
The heather was the harbourage of both.

"Dēd-gel (was) wife to matchless Cairbar,
390 Great lord of Ullin's plain and Ardven.
The light of beauty was her dower,
Her heart was the hall of pride.
She loved that brightness of youth,
Ammin's son of noblest bearing.

395 "'Cairbar,' said (she of) the smooth hand,
'One half the herd bestow on me.'²

DUAN II.

which had pursued him since he had slain Ferdè, the friend of his youth.

Ferdè (from Alba) was brought up with Cuchullin in most intimate friendship.

Dēd-gel, wife of Cairbar, falling in love with him, resolves to leave her husband, and asks for one half of the cattle as her right.

to the chase together: one was our bed in the heath!

Deugala was the spouse of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of beauty, but her heart was the house of pride. She loved that sunbeam of youth, the son of noble Damman. "Cairbar," said the white-armed Deugala, "give me half of the herd. No more I will remain in your halls. Divide the

DUAN II.

Fàgam do thalla, 'fhir fhaoin ;
'Chairbre, thoir dhomh leth 's a' bheinn.'

“ Thuirt Cairbre, ‘Thugadh mac Sheuma
400 Gu leth dhuit an fheadail 's an fhraoch.

'Bhean ghasda, a's àillidh ceuman,
Na faiceam thu féin a chaoidh.

'S-e 'anam-san còmhuidh na còrach,^a
'Gheug-sholuis na mòr-chuis, bi slàn.'

405 “ Dh'fhalbh 'us roinn an fheadail dhoibh ;

Bha 'n tarbh mar shneachd air sliabh.

Thug mi do Chairbre an tarbh.

Dh'éirich àrdan mu rùn nan triath.

“ ‘Mhic Amuin,' thuirt bean 'bu tlàth,

410 ‘ Chuir Cuchullin m' anam fo cheò.^b

Chuinneam, a thriath, air a blàs,

No bitheam air Làbar gun deò ;

B'ìdh mo thannas mu phlaosgadh do shùl,

'Us m' àrdan, a rùn, a' d' dhéigh.

415 Gearr-sa Cuchullin gu 'chùl,'

No fàg mi gun chliu 's a' bheinn.'

“ ‘Lámhgeal,' thuirt an t-òg 'bu treun,

'C' uim' an cuirinn mac Sheuma gu bàs ?

^a “ His soul is the abode of right.” According to the connection, line 403 ought to rank as 401.

^b Darkened my soul ; lit. placed my soul under mist.

herd, dark Cairbar !” “ Let Cuthullin,” said Cairbar, “ divide my herd on the hill. His breast is the seat of justice. Depart, thou light of beauty !” I went and divided the herd. One snow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala rose !

I will quit thy house, thou worthless man ;
Cairbar, give me half (the cattle) on the hill.'

DUAN II.

400 " Answered Cairbar, ' Let Semo's son
Give thee half the cattle on the heath.
Fair dame of the graceful step,
May I never see thee more.
His soul is the abode of right ;^a
Bright branch of pride, farewell !'

Cairbar referred the division to Cuchullin.

405 " (I) went and halved the herd between them.
The bull was as the mountain-snow ;
To Cairbar I adjudged the bull.
The wrath of the love of heroes rose.

He allotted a white bull of rare beauty to Cairbar.

410 " ' Ammin's son,' said the woman bland,
' Cuchullin has darkened my soul.^b
Of his death let me hear, O chief,
Otherwise on Lubar I shall die.
My ghost shall haunt thy half-closed eye,
And my wrath, O love, shall pursue thee.
415 Cleave Cuchullin to the spine,
Or leave me scorned upon the hill.'

Dēd-gel was so enraged at this that she stirred up Ferdè to kill Cuchullin.

" ' White-hand,' said the valiant youth,
' Why should I slay the son of Semo ?

He refused for a time ; at length yields,

" Son of Damman," begun the fair, " Cuthullin hath pained my soul. I must hear of his death, or Lubar's stream shall roll over me. My pale ghost shall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuthullin, or pierce this heaving breast." " Deugala," said the fair-haired youth, " how shall I

DUAN II.

a She lay down
in tears; lit.
she fell on
ears.

'S e caraid mo smaointean e féin ;
420 C' uim' thogainn, a gheug, an lann ?'
Tri lài thuit i air deoir,^a
An ceathramh thog an t-òg a sgiath.

“ ‘ Buaileam mo charaid 'bu chòrr ;
Ach tuiteam 'an tòs 's an t-sliabh.
425 Am b' urrainn domh 'fhaicinn 's an aonach,
'S mi m' aonar—Cuchullin 'us 'uaigh ?'
Rinn còmhrag air raon na Mùire,
'Us sheachain ar lanna lot ;
Bha screadail air elogaid le 'n cùlaobh,
430 'S air sgiathan 'bu dùbh-ghorm cop.
Bha Deudgheal ri gàire aig làimh ;
Thubhairt ri Fearde gun dàil,
' Is lag 'n ad ghlacaibh an crann ;
'S lag do lann, is lag thu 'd òige,
435 Cha choimeas do d'aois a' chruidh,
Fàg a' bhuidh aig sàr mhac Sheuma,'
Mar chreig air thaobh Mheallmhoir an laoch.
'An sùil a' ghaisgich chiteadh deoir.
Labhair e gu fòil 's a' bheimn,
440 'Chuchullin, tog do sgiath chòrr,
Thoir aire, 'fhir mhòir, ort fhéin ;
Tha m'anam fo eallaich 'am bròn
Mu d' fhuil a dhòrtadh, 'fhir thréin.' ”

slay the son of Semo? He is the friend of my secret thoughts. Shall I then lift the sword?" She wept three days before the chief; on the fourth he said he would fight. "I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his sword! Could I wander on the hill alone? Could I behold the grave of Cuthullin?" We fought on the plain of Muri. Our swords avoid a wound. They

He is the friend of my inmost thoughts.

- 420 Why, O branch, should I raise the spear ?
 For three days she lay down in tears ;^a
 On the fourth the hero raised the shield.

“ ‘ I will strike my dearest friend,
 But may I foremost fall upon the hill.

- 425 Could I on the mountain behold,
 When all alone, Cuchullin and his grave ?^b
 (We) fought on the plain of Muri,
 And our swords forbore to wound.
 Clanged their backs on our helmets,

- 430 And on shields of dark-blue boss.
 Dēd-gel was near us, smiling ;
 Without delay she said to Ferdè,
 ‘ Weak, in thy grasp, is the spear ;
 Weak is thy sword, and weak thy youth,

- 435 Unfitting to thine age the steel ;
 Yield victory to Semo’s mighty son.’
 As a rock on Mehmor-side (was) the hērò ;
 In the warrior’s eye might tears be seen.
 Slowly he spoke on the hill :

- 440 ‘ Cuchullin, raise thy mighty shield ;
 Take heed to thyself, thou great one ;
 My soul is laden with sorrow
 For shedding thy blood, thou brave one.’

DUAN II.

and challenges
 Cuchullin.

They fight
 with the flats
 of their swords.

Dēd-gel, who
 came near,
 ridicules the
 youth and
 weakness of
 Ferdè.

Stung by her
 taunts, he
 fights in ear-
 nest, and
 Cuchullin, in
 self-defence,
 kills him.

slide on the helmets of steel, or sound on the slippery shields. Deugala was near with a smile, and said to the son of Damman, “Thine arm is feeble, sunbeam of youth ! Thy years are not strong for steel. Yield to the son of Semo. He is a rock on Malmor.”

The tear is in the eye of youth. He, faltering, said to me, “Cuthullin, raise thy bossy shield. Defend thee from the hand of

DUAN II.

“ Ghluais m’osna, mar ghaoith o chòs,
 445 Dh’éirich àrd, ’s bu gheur a’ chruaidh.
 Thuit dearrsa a’ chòmhraig; fo ’n tòrr
 Tha Fèairde gun deò ’s an uaigh.

“ ’S dona do làmh a Chuchullin,
 O thuit an t-òg duineil fo d’lann.”

450 “ ’S brónach an sgeul, a thriath a’ charbaid,”
 Thuir Carull nam marbh-rann; ^a
 “ Chuir m’anam air ais le farmad
 Gu aimsir a dh’fhalbh, ’s a bh’ ann,
 Na làithean a dh’aom o shean.

455 ’S tric a chual, air Còmhal, sgeul,
 A reub an caraid do-n robh ’ghràdh;
 Bha buaidh air a chruaidh ’am feum,
 ’An còmhrag nan treun ’s a’ bhàr.

“ Bha Còmhal o Alba féin; ^b

460 Thar ceud beinn bu thriath an triath,
 O mhìle sruth dh’òladh fhéidh;
 Chluinnt’ a choin air mìle sliabh;
 Bha ’aghaidh cho sèimh ri òighe,
 Bu bhàs a làmh mhòr do laoiach.

465 Bha ’rùn do ainnir, ’s bu chòrr i,
 Nighean Chomluich nan còrn ’s nam faobh.^c
 B’ is’ an gath-gréine measg mhnà;

^a Carul, who sang of the dead; lit. *Carul of the dead verses, or elegies.*

^b Of Alba’s race; lit. *from Alba itself.*

^c Festive, war-like Comloch; lit. *Comloch of cups and of spoils.*

thy friend. My soul is laden with grief, for I must slay the chief of men!” I sighed as the wind in the cleft of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my steel. The sunbeam of battle fell: the first of Cuthullin’s friends! Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin since the hero fell!

“ Mournful is thy tale, son of the car,” said Carril of other times. “ It sends my soul back to the ages of old, to the days of other

“ Moved my sigh like wind from cavern ;
 445 High rose the steel, and it was sharp :
 The light of battle fell. Beneath the mound
 Lies Ferdè lifeless in the grave.

“ Untoward is thy hand, Cuchullin,
 Since fell the manly youth beneath thy blade.”

450 “ Mournful is the tale, chief of the chariot,”
 Said Carul, who sang of the dead ;^a
 “ (It) carries back my envying soul
 To time which went and was—
 Days which declined of old.

455 Oft has been heard the tale of Comal,
 Who pierced the dear one of his love ;
 (Yet) victory was on his sword at need
 In conflict of the brave in war.

“ Comal was of Alba’s race ;^b

460 Over a hundred mountains ruled the hero ;
 From thousand rivers drank his deer ;
 Heard were his dogs on a thousand hills ;
 His face was mild as a maiden ;
 His mightful hand was death to warriors.

465 He loved a maid exceeding fair—
 Daughter of festive, warlike Comloch.^c
 She was the sunbeam among women ;

DUAN II.

Carul, to cheer Cuchullin, tells the story of Comal, who had accidentally killed his love, Galvina, yet was afterwards victorious in war.

years. Often have I heard of Comal, who slew the friend he loved ; yet victory attended his steel : the battle was consumed in his presence !”

Comal was a son of Albion ; the chief of an hundred hills ! His deer drank of a thousand streams. A thousand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildness of youth ; his hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was she ! the

DUAN II.

^a On the mountain they followed the chase; lit. . . . was the plying of their hands.

^b Void of guile, *gun chli*. *Chli*, which has so many and various meanings, is here, I think, properly translated "frande" by Macfarlan. — *Vile* Note, p. 258.

- Bu duibhe na fitheach a ciabh ;
 Bu luath a coin sheilg air tràigh ;
 470 Chluinnt' a bogh' air ghaoith nan sliabh.
 Bha 'h-anam air Còmhal a'tàmh ;
 'S tric thachair 'an gràdh an sùil,
 S a' mhonadh bha iomairt an làmh,^a
 Bu taitneach an sanas air chùl.
 475 Bu rùn do Ghruamal an òigh ;
 Triath Àrdbheinn nam mòr nial.
 Bha 'aire mu 'h-astar o shòigh,
 Nàmhaid Chòmhal nan gorm-sgiath.
 Aon là o 'n t-seilg, 'us iad sgàth,
 480 Ceo a' cleith na frith o 'n t-sluagh,
 Thachair Còmhal 'us aimir gun chli^b
 'N còs Rònain aig strì nan stuadh,
 Àite-còmhuaidh do Chòmhal o 'n t seilg,
 Dha féin, 'us do airm nam buadh.
 485 Bha ceud sgiath àrd gun mheirg,
 Cend clogaid treun de chruaidh.
 " 'Gabh tunaidd,' thubhairt an t-òg,
 'A Gheahmhìn a's àillidh snuagh,
 'Ghath-soluis a's ainneamh 'an còs ;
 490 Chì mi cabrach mòr mu' n chruaich ;
 Falbhaidh, ach tilleam gun tàmh.'
 'Tha m' eagal mu nàmhaid,' thuirt òigh,

daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a sunbeam among women. Her hair was the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chase. Her bow-string sounded on the winds. Her soul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their course in the chase was one. Happy were their words in secret. But Grumal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Arden. He watched her lone steps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal!

- Her hair was blacker than the raven.
 Fleet by the shore were her stag-hounds ;
 470 Her bow was heard on the mountain-wind ;
 On Comal rested her soul.
 Ofttimes met their eyes in love ;
 On the mountain they followed the chase ;^a
 Sweet were their greetings in secret.
- 475 The maid was (also) loved by Grumal,
 Lord of Ardden of great clouds.
 Her lonely path was marked by him—
 The foe of Comal of blue shields.
 One day, weary from the chase,
 480 Mist shrouding the forest from view,
 Met Comal and the maiden void of guile^b
 In Ronan's cave beside the writhing waves—
 Comal's dwelling when he left the chase—
 His own, and (where he stored) his matchless arms ;
- 485 A hundred shining shields were (there) on high—
 A hundred strong helmets of steel.
- “ ‘ Rest thou here,’ the young man said,
 ‘ Galvina of loveliest mien,
 Sunbeam rarely (to be seen) in cave.
 490 I see an antlered great one on the height ;
 I go, but will return without delay.’
 ‘ I fear an enemy,’ replied the maid ;

DUAN II.

The lovers met
 in the cave of
 Ronan.

He told her
 to rest there
 while he went
 in pursuit of a
 stag seen on
 the height.

One day, tired of the chase, when the mist had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met in the cave of Ronan. It was the wonted haunt of Comal. Its sides were hung with his arms. A hundred shields of thongs were there ; a hundred helms of sounding steel. “ Rest here,” he said, “ my love, Galvina : thou light of the cave of Ronan ! A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go ; but I will soon return.” “ I fear,” she said, “ dark

DUAN II.

- ‘Gruamal mu nach éirich ’an dàn,
 Dha ’s annsa Rònan ’s a chèd.
 495 Ach fuirigheam am measg nan arm
 Gu d’ thilleadh o thoirm na seilg.’
- “ Dh’fhalbh e gu Mòra an fhéidh.
 Chum feuchainn nach d’thréig a ghràdh,
 Chuir ise na h-airm oirre féin,
 500 ’Us luathaich i ’ceum gu tràigh.
 Shaoil e gur nàmhaid a bh’ ann ;
 Bhuail a chridh’ gu h-àrd a chhiabh ;
 Thionndaidh a dhearg-chruth gu bàn,
 Mu ’shùilean bha dorchadas ciar ;
 505 Tharruing e ’m bogha gu ’chùl ;
 Leum o ’thairfid iuthaidh réidh ;
 Thuit Gealmhìn ’n a fuil, a rùn.
 Thàinig, ’s b’fhiadhaich a ghnùis ’s a cheum
 Ghairm air nighin Chomluich nan long
 510 Gun fhreagradh o thom no sliabh,
 ‘ C’ àite ’bheil thu, ’rùn nan sonn,
 ’Ainnir ghasda nan trom-chiabh ? ’
 Bha ’cridhe-sa ’clisgeadh thall
 Mu ’n iuthaidh a dh’ fhàg a làmh,
 515 ‘ An tus’ a nighean Chomluich a th’ ann ? ’
 ’S e ’tuiteam gun dàil mu ’bràigh.
 Fhuair sealgair an dithis a b’ ùr

Grumal my foe : he haunts the cave of Ronan ! I will rest among the arms ; but soon return, my love."

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She clothed her fair sides with his armour ; she strode from the cave of Ronan ! He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high ; his colour changed, and darkness dimmed his eyes.

‘Grumal, who will never rise in song—
 He has regard for Ronan and his cave ;
 495 But I will stay among the arms,
 Till thou return from the sounding chase.’

“ He went to Mora of deer.
 To prove that his love had not failed,
 She decked herself in armour,
 500 And hastened her step to the shore.
 He thought an enemy was there ;
 His heart beat high against his breast ;
 His ruddy hue was changed to wan ;
 Around his eyes was darkness dim ;
 505 He bent the bow to its utmost reach ;
 From his string a polished arrow sped :
 Galvina, his love, fell in her blood.
 (He) came, and wild were his look and step.
 He called the daughter of Comloch of ships ;
 510 No answer came from knoll or hill.
 ‘ Where art thou, love of heroes,
 O lovely maid of heavy locks ?’
 Her heart was quivering before him,
 Around the dart which had left his hand.
 515 ‘ Is it thou, O daughter of Comloch ?’
 As straightway he fell on her neck.
 A hunter found the youthful pair,

DUAN 11.

To test his
 love, she
 clothed herself
 in armour, and
 presented her-
 self as landing
 from the shore.

He, imagining
 her to be Gru-
 mal, his
 enemy, shot
 his arrow and
 killed her.

He drew the bow ; the arrow flew. Galvina fell in blood ! He
 run with wildness in his steps : he called the daughter of Conloch.
 No answer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love ? He
 saw at length her heaving heart, beating around the arrow he threw.
 “ O Conloch’s daughter, is it thou ?” He sank upon her breast !
 The hunters found the hapless pair ; he afterwards walked the hill.

DUAN II.

- 'An àros an fhéidh ri stuaidh.
 Bu dorch a laithean mu 'rùn,
 520 Bu lìonor a cheum mu 'h-uaigh.
 Thàinig luingeas nàimhd' o thuath,
 Bhuaill 'us chuir fo ruaig an dàimh;
 Ag iarraidh 'a bhàis tro' 'n t-sluagh,
 Co a bhriseadh a chruaidh air tràigh?
 525 Thilg e 'airm dhùbh-ghorm air réidh;
 Fhuair iuthaidh a chré gun bhàigh.
 Tha 'chadal, a Ghealmhìn, ri d' thaobh
 Mu iomairt na gaoith air chuan.
 Chi maruich' an uaigh maraon
 530 'S e 'g éirigh air druim nan stuadh."

But many and silent were his steps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought; the strangers fled. He searched for death along the field. But who could slay the mighty Comal? He threw away his dark-brown shield.

In the haunt of the deer by the wave.
 Dark were his days for his love ;
 520 Many his steps around her grave.
 (But) hostile ships came from the north ;
 (He) smote and routed the strangers.
 He sought for death throughout the host.
 Who, on the shore, could break his steel ?
 525 He flung his dark-blue armour on the field ;
 A ruthless arrow found his breast.
 His sleep is by thy side, Galvina,
 Where wrestles the wind with ocean.
 The sailor sees their graves as one,
 530 When rising on the ridge of the waves."

DUAN II.

He afterwards defeated invaders from the north. Finding no one to match him he flung off his armour, was killed by a chance arrow, and was buried beside Galvina.

An arrow found his manly breast. He sleeps with his loved Galvina at the noise of the sounding surge! Their green tombs are seen by the mariner when he bounds on the waves of the north.

D U A N III.

ARGUMENT.

“Cuthullin, pleased with the story of Carril, insists with that bard for more of his songs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca, the beautiful sister of Swaran. He had scarce finished when Calmar, the son of Matha, who had advised the first battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's design to surprise the remains of the Irish army. He himself proposes to withstand singly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pass, till the Irish should make good their retreat. Cuthullin, touched with the gallant proposal of Calmar, resolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Irish. Morning comes, Cahuar dies of his wounds; and, the ships of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the pursuit of the Irish, and returns to oppose Fingal's landing. Cuthullin, ashamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not decisive. The king, who had observed the gallant behaviour of his grandson, Oscar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and in war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes as the best model for his conduct, which introduces the episode concerning Fainasollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection in his youth. Fillan and Oscar are despatched to observe the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul, the son of Morni, desires the command of the army in the next battle, which Fingal promises to give him. Some general reflections of the poet close the third day.”—M.

D U A N III.

- “ ’S TAITNEACH leam focail nam fonn,”
 Thuirt Cuchullin, an sonn deas,
 “ S-taitneach sgeul air àm a dh’fhalbh,
 Caoin mar bhalbh-dhrùchd madaimn shèimh
 5 Air dosan ’us tuim nan ruadhag,
 ’N uair a dh’ éireas a’ ghrian gu mall
 Air shìos sàmhach nan liath-bheann,
 Loch gun bhruaillein fada thall
 Caoin ’us gorm air urlar ghleann.
 10 A Charuill, tog a rìs do ghuth,
 ’Dh’éirich le aoibhneas ’s an talla,
 ’N uair bha Fionnghal nam ball-sgiath
 ’Lasadh mu ghnìomh a shìnn’s’re.”

- “ ’Fhionnghail, ’fhir-còmhnuidh ’s a’ chòmhrag,”
 15 Thuirt Carrull, ’bu bhinne fonn,
 “ ’S honor do chleas agus dùbh-bhuill ;
 Fo d’ fheirg thuit Lochlin nan long,
 ’N uair bha d’ aghaidh cho lom ri òigh’.

“ PLEASANT are the words of the song,” said Cuthullin ! “ lovely the tales of other times ! They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes, when the sun is faint on its side, and the lake is settled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raise again thy voice ! let me hear the song of Selma, which was sung in my halls of joy,

D U A N III.

“ PLEASING to me are the words of songs,”

Said Cuchullin, hero stately ;

“ Pleasing the tale of the time which has gone :
Soothing as noiseless dew of morning mild,

5 On the brake and knoll of roes,

When slowly rises the sun

On the silent flank of hoary Bens—

The loch, unruffled, far away,

Calm and blue on the floor of the glens.

10 Carul, lift again thy voice,

Which rose with joyance in the hall,

When Fingal of the spotted shields

Exulted in the prowess of his sires.”

“ Fingal, who in battle hast thy home,”

15 Said Carul, of sweetest voice,

“ Many are thy feats and deadly strokes.¹

Beneath thine ire fell Lochlin of ships,

When thy face was smooth as a maiden.

Cuchullin
praises the
song of Carul,
and requests
him to sing a
tale of Fingal.

Carul tells
of Fingal's
youthful ex-
ploits.

when Fingal, king of shields, was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers.”

“ Fingal ! thou dweller of battle,” said Carril, “ early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was consumed in thy wrath, when thy youth strove with the beauty of maids. They smiled at the fair-

DUAN III.

- Chunnaic iad aghaidh na h-òige,
 20 Bha 'n gàire 'n tòs mu 'n laoch.
 Bha 'm bàs 'n a làimh anns a' chòmh-stri.
 A neart mar thuil Lòra an fhraoich ;
 Mar mhìle sruth bha 'ghaisgich chiar,
 'An carraid nan sgiath, mu 'n t-sonn,
 25 'N uair ghlac iad rìgh Lochlin nan sliabh,
 'Us thugadh e sìos d' a long.
 Dh' at àrdan 'n a chridhe borb,
 'N robh bàs dorcha do 'n òig-fhear ^a
 'N anam triath 'bu choirbte colg.
 30 Cha d'fhuair duine buaidh 's a' chòmh-stri
 Air Starno ach Fionnghal féin.
 Shuidh an triath 'n a thalla thall,
 'An tìr nan Gall a's àirde coill'.
 Ghabh e Snìobhan liath 'n a dhàil,
 35 'Us labhair e gu mall le foill ;
 Snìobhan, a thogadh am fonn
 Aig leac Lèduinn cròm 's an t-sliabh ;
 'N uair chluinneadh an fhuath-chlach an sonn,
 Thilleadh còmhrag ruaig nan triath.^b
- 40 “ ‘ A Shnìobhain, a's glaise ciabh,'
 Thubhairt Starno nan sgiath donn,
 ‘ Siubhail gu Àrdbheinn nan sliabh,
 Gu Selma, mu 'n iadh an tonn ;

^a The Gaelic line 28 would be much improved by beginning it with *Bha*, and pointing the preceding line as in English.

^b Battle recalled the flying warriors — *i.e.* the warriors, though in flight, returned to conflict under the influence of Suivan and the Crom-lec.

blooming face of the hero ; but death was in his hands. He was strong as the waters of Lora. His followers were the roar of a thousand streams. They took the king of Lochlin in war ; they restored him to his ships. His big heart swelled with pride ; the death of the youth was dark in his soul. For none ever, but Fingal, had overcome the strength of the mighty Starno. He sat in

DUAN III.

- They saw the countenance of youth ;
 20 At first their laugh was against the hero.
 In the battle death was in his hand.
 His strength (was) as the flood of heathy Lora,
 As thousand rivers were his dusky warriors
 In the conflict of shields around the hero.
- 25 When they captured the king of Lochlin of hills,
 And bore him down to his ship,
 Swelled fury in his savage heart ;
 The youth was doomed to secret death ^a
 In the soul of the chief of blackest mood.
- 30 None had ever prevailed in battle
 Over Starno, save Fingal himself.
 The chief sat in his distant hall,
 In the land of Galls of loftiest trees.
 He summoned to him grey-haired Snivan,
- 35 And slowly he spoke in guile—
 Snivan, who sang the lay
 At Lodin's Crom-lec on the hill ; ²
 When the stone of spectres heard the sage,
 Battle recalled the flying warriors. ^b
- 40 “ ‘ Snivan of hoariest locks,’
 Said Starno of dark-brown shields,
 ‘ Hie thee to Ardven of mountains,
 To Selma round which winds the wave.

He had taken Starno prisoner, and released him. Starno resolves on his death, and consults Snivan, a *sooth-sayer*, on the subject.

Snivan is sent to Selma to offer Agandecca, Starno's daughter, in marriage to Fingal.

the hall of his shells, in Lochlin's woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often sang round the circle of Loda : when the stone of power heard his voice, and battle turned in the field of the valiant !”

“Go, grey-haired Snivan,” Starno said, “go to Ardven's sea-surrounded rocks. Tell to the king of Selma—he the fairest among

DUAN III.

- Innis do Fhionnghal an rìgh,
 45 A's glaine measg mìle triath,
 Dha bheiream nighean a' ghuth bhinn;
 Oigh a's àillidh 'thog mìn-uchd riamh,
 Cho geal a' ruighe a tha cruinn,
 'S an còbhar air druim a' chuain.
- 50 Caoin anam géig a' chùil duinn.
 Grad thigeadh an rìgh air stuaidh;
 Thigeadh an gaisgeach nach strìochd
 Gu nighin a's dìomhaire ceum.'

“Thàinig Snìobhan 'bu ghlas ciabh.

- 55 Chaidh Fionnghal air triall le 'shluagh,
 Leum anam, a' lasadh, roi' 'n triath,
 Gu ainmir nan ciabh o thuath.

“ ‘Ceud fàilte,’ thuir Starno 'bu chiar,
 ‘A rìgh mhòir nan sliabh, ceud fàilt’.

- 60 'Ur beatha-se, 'ghaisgich mu 'n triath,
 A shìol innis nan cruach àrd.
 Tri lài, 's an talla so féin
 Gabhaibh cuirm 'us gleus fo 'r ceann;^a
 Tri lài measg ciar-thore 'us féidh,
- 65 'Am faoghaid 'an réidh 's a' ghleann.
 Chuinnidh òigh a's àillidh 'ur cliu,
 'S i 'tunaidh air chùl an t-sluaigh.'

“Bha bàs nam fear 'n a anam borb;

^a Make free
 with feast and
 song; lit.
 take feast and
 song under
 your head.

his thousands—tell him I give him my daughter, the loveliest maid that ever heaved a breast of snow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her soul is generous and mild. Let him come with his bravest heroes to the daughter of the secret hall!” Snivan came to Selma's hall: fair-haired Fingal attended his steps. His kindled soul flew to the maid, as he bounded on the waves of the

DUAN III.

Declare to Fingal the king,
 45 The noblest of a thousand chiefs,
 That I give him the maiden of sweet voice ;
 Loveliest maid that ever heaved a bosom smooth.
 White is her rounded arm
 As foam on the ridge of ocean ;
 50 Mild (is) the soul of the branch of brown hair.
 Let the monarch cross the wave with speed,
 Let the unyielding hero come
 To the maiden of retiring steps !'

“ Came Snivan of hoary locks.
 55 Fingal set forth with his band ;
 His soul, enraptured, flew before the chief
 To the wavy-haired maid of the north.

“ ‘ A hundred welcomes, ’ said the swarthy Starno ;
 ‘ Hail to the great king of mountains,
 60 And welcome the heroes who surround their lord,
 Sons of the isle of lofty peaks.
 For three days in this very hall,
 Make free with feast and song ; “
 Three days, amid tawny boars and deer,
 65 (Bestow) on chase through field and fell.
 The lovely maid shall hear your praise,
 In her dwelling apart from the people.’

“ Death to the men was in his savage soul.

Fingal, in great joy, sets sail for Lochlin, attended by a chosen band of his warriors.

They are freely welcomed by Starno,

who orders them to pass the first three days in feasting, and the next three in hunting. Meantime he had prepared assassins to cut off his guests. These being, how-

north. “ Welcome,” said the dark-brown Starno, “ welcome, king of rocky Morven ! welcome his heroes of might, sons of the distant isle ! Three days within my halls shall ye feast ; three days pursue my boars ; that your fame may reach the maid who dwells in the secret hall.”

Starno designed their death. He gave the feast of shells. Fingal,

DUAN III.

^a The minions
of death : lit.
the race of
death.

^b Of frowning
height ; lit.
of highest
frown.

^c The day
with westward
moving ray ;
lit. the day
with shining
toward the
west.

- Thug e slig 'us cuirm nam fleagh.
 70 Bha amharus an rìgh mu 'cholg ;
 Chum 'éideadh, 'us ghlac a shleagh,
 Thuit eagal air sinnsire 'bhàis ; ^a
 Theich iad thall o rosg an rìgh.
 Dh' éirich guth aoibhneis mu 'n cuairt ;
 75 Bha aighear 'g a luaidh air teud,
 Sheinn bàird air còmh-stri nam buadh,
 'S air àrd-uchd fo luaidh an tréin.
 Thog Ullin, fear-focail an rìgh,
 Guth binn o Chòna nam fuaim,
 80 Mhol e nighean Lochlin nam frìth
 'S triath Mhòrbheinn a's airde gruaim. ^b
 Chuala nighean Lochlin an ceòl ;
 Dh'fhàg i 'talla dìomhair thall ;
 Thàinig 'u a h-àille do 'n còir,
 85 Mar ghealach òg o neoil air sàil.
 Bha sgèimh mar sholus 'g a h-éideadh ;
 Bha 'ceuman mar cheòl nan dàn.
 Chunnaic i 'n rìgh, 'u òigh 'bu bheusach ;
 Dh' éirich osna a cléibh gu mall ;
 90 Bha 'gorm-shùil ag iadhadh os òsal
 Mu thriath Mhòrbheinn nan liath chàrn.

“ An treas là le dearrsa gu h-iar ^c
 A' boillsgeadh air sliabh nan tore,

who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of steel. The sons of death were afraid : they fled from the eyes of the king. The voice of sprightly mirth arose. The trembling harps of joy were strung. Bards sung the battle of heroes : they sung the heaving breast of love. Ullin, Fingal's bard, was there : the sweet voice of resounding Cona. He praised the daughter of Lochlin, and Morven's high-descended chief. The daughter of Lochlin overheard ; she left

He gave the shell and plenteous feast.

70 The king misdoubted his mood.

He kept his mail, and grasped his spear ;

Fear fell on the minions of death ^a—

They fled afar from the eye of the king.

Rose voice of gladness all around ;

75 Joyance sounded from the strings ;

The bards sang of victorious war,

And the high-bosom beloved of the hero.

Raised Ullin, spokesman to the king,

A tuneful voice from echoing Cona.

80 He praised the daughter of Lochlin of woods,

And the king of great Bens of frowning height.^b

The daughter of Lochlin heard the music ;

She came forth from her retired abode,

(And) in her loveliness drew near them,

85 Like a new moon from clouds on sea.

Beauty enrobed her as light ;

Her steps were as the music of songs.

The modest maid beheld the king ;

Slowly rose the sigh of her breast ;

90 Her blue eye in secret turned

To the king of great hills of hoary cairns.

“When the third day, with westward-moving ray,^c
Shone on the mountain of boars,

DUAN III.

ever, on their
guard, were
not attacked.

The feast is
held.

Description
of Agandecca.

On the third
day they went
forth to the
hunt.

the hall of her secret sigh ! She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the east. Loveliness was around her as light. Her steps were the music of songs. She saw the youth and loved him. He was the stolen sigh of her soul. Her blue eye rolled on him in secret : she blessed the chief of resounding Morven.

The third day, with all its beams, shone bright on the wood of

DUAN III.

^a Fingal . . .
of wounds—
i. e. wound-
dealing.

- Ghluais Starno nam mala ciar,
95 'Us Fionnghal nan sgiath 's nan lot.^a
Leth soillse chaith iad 's an t-seilg ;
Bha sleagh Shelma night' 'am fuil.
- “Thàinig nighean Starno nach mairg,
A gorm-shùil fo dheoir 'an tuil.
100 Thàinig òigh' le guth 'bu tlàth,
Gu laoch 'bu shàr, rìgh Mhòrbheinn.
' Fhionnghail o shìmsir nan triath,
Na cuir earbsa 'n àrdan Starno.
Tha 'ghaisgich ceilte 's an t-shiabh,
105 'S a' choille chiar fo armaibh ;
Seachain coill' a' bhàis, a rìgh,
A threun-fhìr o innis nan ràmh.
Thoir cuimhne air Làmh-gheal nan sonn ;
Cum a h-athair o òigh an uchd bhàin,
110 'Rìgh Mhòrbheinn mu-n iadh an tonn.' ”
- “ Gun bhruaillein ghluais an t-òig-fhear suas,
A ghaisgich 'n an cruaidh ri 'thaobh.
Thuit luchd a' bhàis fo 'làimh gu luath,
Ghair Gorm-mheall mu 'n cuairt le 'fraoch.
- 115 “ Fa chomhair an talla'n robh fleagh,
Chruinnich o'n t-seilg an sluagh ;

boars. Forth moved the dark-browed Starno, and Fingal, king of shields. Half the day they spent in the chase ; the spear of Selma was red in blood. It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears ; it was then she came with her voice of love, and spoke to the king of Morven : “ Fingal, high-descended chief, trust not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed

Forth went Starno of gloomy brow,
 95 And Fingal of shields and of wounds.^a
 One half the day they spent in chase ;
 Selma's spear was bathed in blood.

“ Came the goodly daughter of Starno,
 Her blue eye in flood of tears—
 100 Came the maid with soft warm voice
 To the hero true, king of great Bens :
 ‘ Fingal, of princes descended,
 Trust not Starno's haughty pride ;
 His warriors are hidden in the hill—
 105 In the shady wood all armed.
 Shun the wood of death, O king !
 Thou strong one from the isle of oars.
 Remember the White-hand (beloved) of heroes ;
 Shield from her father the fair-bosomed maid,
 110 King of great hills begirt with waves.’

“ Without dismay the youth went forth,
 His warriors in their steel beside him.
 The men of death fell speedily beneath his hand ;
 Re-echoed heathy Gormal all around.

115 “ Before the house wherein the feast was (spread)
 Gathered the people from the hunt.

DUAN III.

Agandecca
 warns Fingal
 against an
 ambush laid
 for him in the
 wood.

He goes for-
 ward, and
 cuts down the
 assassins.

his chiefs. Beware of the wood of death. But remember, son of the isle, remember Agandecca : save me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven !”

The youth, with unconcern, went on, his heroes by his side. The sons of death fell by his hand, and Gormal echoed around ! Before the halls of Starno the sons of the chase convened. The

DUAN III.

Thàinig borb-Starn' le 'shleagh,
 'Dhubh-mhala mar nial air stuaidh,
 'S a shùil mar ruadh-thein' oidhehe.

- 120 'Thig-sa,' thuirt Starno na strì,
 'Aghaidh shneachda a's mìne glòir.
 Cha robh do chòmhradh faoin do 'n rìgh;
 Air a làimh tha fìdhr-fhuil an t-sluaigh.'^a

^a The life-
 blood; lit.
 the true blood.

“Thàinig le 'dearg-shùil fo dheoir,

- 125 A ciabh 'bu chòrr a' sgaoilcadh àrd,
 A broilleach bàn fo osnaidh mhòir^b—
 Co geal ri cobhar sruth nan càrn.
 Bhuail Starno a chruaidh 'n a taobh;
 Dh'aom i mar chuitheamh air an t-sliabh
- 130 'N àm tuiteam o Liath-lic an fhraoich,
 'S fuaim a' gluasad o 'n aonach chiar,
 'N uair is sàmhach a' choill' 's an t-àrd,
 'Us mac-talla 'snàmh 's a' ghleann.
 Thug Fionnghal sùil air a shluagh,
- 135 'Us dh'éirich a shluagh fo airm.
 Bha 'n còmhrag mar charraid nan stuadh.
 Chaidh Lochlin fo ruaig 's an stoirm.
 Thog e òigh 'bu ghlaise snuagh,
 Ainnir fharasd 'bu mhìn gnè.
- 140 Chuir a luingeas ri iomairt a' chuain;
 Fo Àrdbheinn tha 'h-uaigh 's an réidh;
 Tha stuadh mu 'tigh eal gun lens.

^b A heavy sigh
 (rose) from her
 white bosom;
 lit. her white
 bosom under
 a heavy sigh.

king's dark brows were like clouds. His eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he said, "Agandeeea to her lovely king of Morven! His hand is stained with the blood of my people; her words have not been in vain!" She came with the red eye of tears. She came with loosely-flowing locks. Her white breast heaved with broken sighs, like the foam of the streamy Lubar. Starno pierced

- Fierce Starno came with his spear ;
 His black brow like cloud on wave ;
 And his eye like lurid fire of night.
- 120 'Come thou,' said strife-loving Starno,
 'Agandecca of smoothest speech.
 Not fruitless was thy converse to the king ;
 On his hand is the life-blood of my people.'^a
- "She came with red and weeping eye,
 125 Her flowing locks dispread on high.
 A heavy sigh (rose) from her white bosom^b—
 White as foam on torrent of the cairns.
 Starno struck his steel into her side ;
 She yielded like snow-wreath on the mountain,
- 130 As it slides off Lia-lie of heath :
 The sound spreads around from the dusky hill,
 When heights and wood are silent,
 And echo floats adown the glen.
 On his people Fingal turned his eye,
- 135 And his people rose in their arms.
 The combat was as warring of the waves—
 Lochlin was routed in the storm.
 (Fingal) raised the maid of palest hue—
 The gentle maid of temper mild.
- 140 (He) set his ships to combat with the sea.
 On the plain 'neath Ardven is her grave ;
 The waves surround her narrow darksome house.

DUAN III.

Starno, enraged at the result, calls Agandecca, and, reproaching her for her counsel to Fingal, plunges his sword into her side.

Fingal attacks and defeats him and his people,

carries the body of Agandecca with him, and buries her at the foot of Ardven.

her side with steel. She fell like a wreath of snow which slides from the rocks of Ronan, when the woods are still, and echo deepens in the vale ! Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms. The gloom of battle roared ; Lochlin fled or died. Pale in his bounding ship he closed the maid of the softest soul. Her tomb ascends on Ardven ; the sea roars round her narrow dwelling.

DUAN III.

^a Of sweetest voice ; lit. of sweetest mouth.

^b Sit on the mist with full control ; lit. sit on the mist to its back—i. e. sit over the whole of it ; have entire control of it.

“ Ceud fàilt air d’ anam, a gheug,”

Thuirt Cuchullin ’bu treun làmh.

145 “ Ceud fàilt air bàrd, a’s binne beul,^a

’S air gaisgeach mu-n d’ éirich dàn.

Bu làidir ’n a òige ’n rìgh,

Is neartmhor ’n a aois a lann.

Tuitidh Lochlin fo ’chruadal a rìs,

150 Àrd cheannard nam frìth ’s nan gleann.

Feuch do ghnùis o neoil ag éirigh,

A ghealach, a shoillseadh a shiuil.

Ma tha taibhs’ a’s neartmhor ’s na speuraibh

’N a shuidh air ceathach gu ’chùil,^b

155 Tionndaidh a luingeas o charragh,

’Fhir a tha ’marcachd nan sìan.”

So thuirt Cuchullin nam buadh

Aig fuaim sruth uaibhreach nam beann.

Thàinig Calmar a lotadh ’s an ruaig,

160 Mac Mhathais, gun tuar o’ n ghleann.

Thàinig e ’n a fhuil o ’n bhàr ;

Dh’aom gaisgeach ’bu shàr air craun.

Bu lag o ’n chòmhrag a làmh,

Bha spionnadh ’n a anam ’s an àn.

165 “ Do bheath’, a mhic Mhathais,” thuirt Conall,

“ Do bheatha gu d’ chàirdcan, a thriath,

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

- “ A hundred welcomes to thy soul, O branch ! ”
 Said Cuchullin of mighty arm ;
 145 “ A hundred welcomes to the bard of sweetest voice,^a
 And to the brave round whom the song arose.
 Strong in his youth was the king,
 And his sword is mighty in his age ;
 Again shall Lochlin fall beneath his prowess—
 150 High chief of forests and of glens.
 Show thy face from clouds emerging,
 O moon ! to give light to his sails.
 If any mighty spirit in the skies
 Sit on the mist with full control,^b
 155 Turn his vessels from the rocks,
 Thou who ridest on the storms ! ”

- So spoke the great Cuchullin,
 By the sound of the proud torrent of the mountains.
 Came Calmar, wounded in the fight—
 160 Son of Mathas, pallid from the glen.
 He came in his blood from the battle ;
 Leaned the true hero on his spear ;
 Feeble, from the combat, his hand—
 Still there was strength in his soul.
 165 “ Welcome, son of Mathas,” said Connal—
 “ Welcome to thy friends, O chief !

DUAN III.

Cuchullin
 wishes peace
 to the soul of
 Agandecca,
 thanks Carul,
 praises Fingal,

and prays the
 spirit of the
 storm to
 guard his
 ships from
 the rocks.

Meantime
 Calmar ap-
 proaches,
 sorely wound-
 ed from the
 battle.

Connal, who
 was with
 Cuchullin,

Such were the words of Cuthullin at the sound of the mountain stream ; when Calmar ascended the hill, the wounded son of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending spear. Feeble is the arm of battle ! but strong the soul of the hero ! “ Welcome ! O son of Matha,” said Connal, “ welcome art thou to thy friends ! Why bursts that broken sigh from the breast of him

DUAN III.

C' uim' a bhris an osna o d' bhroilleach,
'Fhir anns nach robh eagal riamh."

- “Cha robh, a Chonaill, 's cha bhì,
170 'Thriath-chòmhrag a's géire cruaidh,
Tha sòlas air m' anam 's an strì,
'S binn leam fuaim còmh-stri an t-sluaigh.
Tha mise de shliochd nam beum ;
Cha robh eagal nan ceud air mo shìnns're.
175 B' e Cormar an ceud-fhear de m' thréibh ;^a
Bha 'aoibhneas 'an stòirm nan stuadh ;
Bha 'dhubh-eathar luathmhor, seang,
Air sgéith gaoithe, 'n astar a' chuain.
Chuir tannas bruailein 's an oidheh' ;
180 Dh'at muir gun soills', bha carragh 'fuaim ;
Bha 'ghaoth 'cur nial, agus bhoillsg
Tein-didheche air aghaidh nan stuadh.
Ghabh eagal 'us thull e gu tràigh.
Bu nàr leis gun d' ghabh e fiamh :
185 Bhuail e gu aigein gun tàmh
Dh'iarraidh fuath-thannais nan nial,
Tri òig-fhir 'riaghl' eathar air tonn.
Bha 'chlaindeamh, 's e lom, 'n a làimh.
'N dubh-cheathach air àros nan long,
190 Dh'iarr ceannard nan sonn le 'lann :
Le 'lann a dh'iarr an dùbhra,

^a Of my line ;
lit. of my
tribe.

who never feared before? And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed steel! My soul brightens in danger; in the noise of arms. I am of the race of battle. My fathers never feared."

"Cormar was the first of my race. He sported through the storms of waves. His black skill bounded on ocean; he travelled on the wings of the wind. A spirit once embroiled the night. Seas

Wherefore broke the sigh from thy breast,
Thou who never wert afraid ?”

- “Connal, I never (feared), and never will,
170 Thou battle-ruler of sharpest blade ;
There is joy on my soul in the conflict ;
The battle-din of hosts is melody to me.
I am of the race of cleaving strokes ;
Hundreds did not daunt my sires.
175 Cormar was the first man of my line ;^a
His joy was in the storm of waves ;
His dark skiff was swift and light
On wing of wind to traverse ocean.
A spectre raised a storm at night ;
180 Swelled the dark sea, resounded rocks ;
Clouds were driven by the wind ; and glared
The night-fire on the face of the waves ;
(He) feared, and he put back to shore.
He was ashamed that he had feared.
185 Straightway struck he for the deep,
To seek the spectre-spirit of the clouds.
O'er waves the skiff was guided by three youths ;
His sword, unsheathed, was in his hand ;
The sable fog on the home of ships
190 The chief of heroes searched with his brand—
With his brand he searched the darkness,

DUAN III.

welcomes him, and asks why he who never was afraid is now so sad.

He answers that he never knew fear ; that he was of a fearless race ; and tells how his ancestor Cormar, a seaman, defeated a spirit which had raised a storm against him.

swell and rocks resound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared, and came to land ; then blushed that he feared at all. He rushed again among the waves to find the son of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark ; he stood with sword unsheathed. When the low-hung vapour passed he took it by the curling head. He searched its

DUAN III.

^a Calmar is
brother to the
brave; lit.
is according
to the brave
—is like them.

- 'S e 'dlùthadh ri 'n tannas gu 'cheam.
Dh'fhàg sàmhlà a' ghaoth 's an speur;
Dh'éirich reultan 's gealach chaoin.
- 195 “ Cho dàna ri m' shìnn'sre mi féin;
Tha Calmar a réir nan sonu.^a
Teichidh cunnart a chaoidh o lann;
'S ann dhoibhs 'tha dàn a bhios buaidh.
Sibhse, 'shìol Eirinn na féile,
- 200 Fàgaibh Léna, 's fuileach fraoch,
Tionail na mbaireas ri 'chéile
Gu rìgh nam beum, àrd-thriath nan laoch.
Chualas triall Lochlin fo airm;
Gabhams' an còmhrag 'am làimh;
- 205 Bi 'dh m' fhocal cho àrd ri stoirm;
Bi 'dh am barail gur mìle 'th' ann.
'Mhic Sheuma, cuir cuimhn' orm féin;
Cuir cuimhu' air Calmar gun deò;
'N uair bhuaidhaicheas Fionnghal 's a' bhèinn,
- 210 Cum mo chuimhne le cloich o cheò;
Cluinnidh gach linn 'am dhéigh
Air Calmar, e féin, 's a chliu.
Bi 'dh a mhàthair 'an astar an fhéidh,
Fo aoibhneas a' coinhead air 'ùir.”
- 215 “ 'Mhic Mhathais,” do fhreagair an triath,

dark womb with his steel. The sun of the wind forsook the air.
The moon and stars returned! Such was the boldness of my race.
Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the lifted sword.
They best succeed who dare!

“But now, ye sons of green Erin, retire from Lena's bloody
heath. Collect the sad remnant of our friends, and join the sword
of Fingal. I heard the sound of Lochlin's advancing arms! Cal-

Nearing the spectre's very head.
The spectre left both wind and sky ;
Rose the stars and moon serene.

- 195 "As dauntless as my ancestors am I ;
Calmar is brother to the brave.^a
Danger ever flees before the sword,
Such as are bold win victory.
Ye sons of hospitable Erin,
- 200 Abandon Lena of the blood-stained heath ;
Draw ye the remnant together
Around the king of cleaving strokes, high chief of
Lochlin's armed advance is heard ; [heroes.
The battle I will take in hand ;
- 205 Loud as a storm shall be my shout ;
They will think that a thousand are here.
Semo's son, remembrance place on me ;
Remembrance place on Calmar dead.
When Fingal conquers on the hill,
- 210 Let a stone preserve my memory from mist,
(That) every succeeding age
May hear of Calmar—(of) himself and his renown ;
His mother, standing in the pass of deer,
Will rejoice as she looks on his dust."

215 "Son of Mathas," answered the prince,

mar will remain and fight. My voice shall be such, my friends, as if thousands were behind me. But, son of Semo, remember me ; remember Calmar's lifeless corse. When Fingal shall have wasted the field, place me by some stone of remembrance, that future times may hear my fame ; that the mother of Calmar may rejoice in my renown."

"No, son of Matha," said Cuthullin, "I will never leave thee

DUAN III.

He urges Cuchullin to withdraw his forces from the battle-field of Lena. He says that Swarau's army is advancing, proposes that he alone should remain to check them, and prays Cuchullin to preserve his memory after death.

DUAN III.

^a Of valour proved; lit. of old bristles, or, of old arms. A frequent expression for well-tried bravery.

- “ Cha do thréig mi thu riamh, ’s cha tréig ;
 Tha m’ aoibhneas ’an cunnart nan sgiath ;
 Cha deachaidh fo ruaig ’s cha téid.
 A Chonail, ’s a Charuill araon
 220 O ’n aimsir a dh’aom o shean,
 Thugaibhs’ ar càirdean tro’ ’n fhraoch,
 Gaisgich Éirinn nan colg sean.^a
 ’N uair a dh’ìsl ’eas farum a’ chòmhraig,
 Gheibh sibh ’s a’ chòmhnard gun dèd,
 225 Dà churaidh ’chaidh sìos air chòmhlath
 Measg mhiltean ’an còmh -stri nan slògh.
 ’Mhic Fhithil nan ceum àrd,
 Gabh Léna gu gàir a’ chuain ;
 Thigeadh rìgh Mhòrbheinn gun tàmh,
 230 Thigeadh an triath nall gu luath,
 Mar a’ ghrian ’an deireadh nan stòirm,
 Le solus as-ùr do ’n t-sluagh.”

- Ghlas madainn air Cromla an fhraoich ;
 Ghluais sìol nan long o thonn gu tòrr.
 235 Sheas Calmar an aghaidh nan laoch ;
 ’An àrdan faoin bha ’anam mòr,
 Bu ghlas ’n a thuar ’bha triath nam beum ;
 Dh’aom air sleagh ’athar ’s e fann,
 Sleagh ’athar o Làra nan treun,
 240 ’Thug e féin gu réidh nan lann,

here. My joy is in unequal fight: my soul increases in danger. Connal and Carril of other times carry off the sad sons of Erin. When the battle is over, search for us in this narrow way. For near this rock we shall fall, in the stream of the battle of thousands! O Fithil's son, with flying speed rush over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is fallen. Bid the king of Morven come.

“ I never left thee, and will never leave ;
 My joy is in the peril of the shields.
 I never fled ; I will never flee.
 Connal and Carul, do ye both,

- 220 Who are from time that is gone of old,
 Lead on our friends across the heath,
 Erin’s warriors of valour proved.^a
 When the noise of the conflict dies down
 Ye shall find on the plain, in death,
 225 Two champions who, side by side, went down
 Against thousands in the war of hosts.
 Fihil’s son of steps high-bounding,
 Speed over Lena to the sounding sea ;
 Let Morven’s king come on without delay ;
 230 Let the prince come onward in haste,
 Like the sun at the close of storms,
 Bringing light to men anew.”

- Morning greyed on Cromla of heather ;
 The race of ships advanced from wave to hill ;
 235 Calmar stood against the warriors.
 In valour vain his soul was strong.
 Pallid in hue the hero of fell strokes ;
 Faint he leaned on his father’s spear—
 His father’s spear from Lora of the brave,
 240 Which he had carried to the field of brands

DUAN III.

Cuchullin
 replies that
 he will never
 forsake him ;
 orders Connal
 and Carul
 to withdraw
 the remnant
 of the army
 to the hill ;
 and remains
 with Calmar
 to resist the
 advance of
 Swaran.

He sends off
 Fihil to the
 shore to hasten
 Fingal’s ar-
 rival.

Calmar leaned
 for a time on
 his spear,

O let him come like the sun in a storm, to lighten, to restore the isle !”

Morning is grey on Cromla. The sons of the sea ascend. Calmar stood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling soul. But pale was the face of the chief. He leaned on his father’s spear : that spear which he brought from Lara, when the soul of his mother

DUAN III.

- 'N uair bha anam a mhàthar fo cheò,
 Anam Alclétha 'n a h-aonar,
 'S i 'g aomadh fo bhròn n a h-oidheche.
 Ghlac an t-sleagh, ach thuit e thall,
 245 Mar chraoibh a' strìochdadh air sliabh.
 Sheas Cuchullin 'n a aonar 's a' bhlàr,
 Mar chreig 'an gaineamh sheas an triath,
 Creag air an taomadh an cuan
 Neart nan stuadh gu fuar ri 'taobh ;
 250 Bhi cobhar bàn mu 'muineal shuas,
 Na cùirn a' fuaim air cruaidh an fhraoich.
 O 'n cheathach ghlas air toirm nan stuadh,
 Chunnas luingeas nan seòl bàn,
 Luingeas Fhionnghail nan sàr-thriath,
 255 Àrd mar choille chiar an croinn
 'Géilleadh mu seach air druim a' chuain.

- Chunnaic Suaran o leac nan os,
 'Us thill e o ruaig na h-Éirinn.
 Mar thaomas an cuan o thràigh
 260 Mu cheud innis gàireach nan tore ;
 Cho beucach, dùbhlaidh, leathann, mòr
 Ghluais Lochlin fa chòir an rìgh.

Cròm 'us deurach, brònach, mall,
 A shleagh 's an fhraoch ri 'thaobh 's 'n a dhéigh,^a

^a His spear
 behind him on
 the heath ;
 lit. *by his side*
and after him
on the heath.

was sad ; the soul of the lonely Alclétha waning in the sorrow of years. But slowly now the hero falls like a tree on the plain. Dark Cuthullin stands alone like a rock in a sandy vale. The sea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened sides. Its head is covered with foam ; the hills are echoing around.

Now from the grey mist of the ocean, the white-sailed ships of

When the soul of his mother was sad—
 The soul of Aleletha—lonely,
 As she bowed under sorrow of night.
 Grasped (he) the spear, but (he) fell anon,
 245 Like a tree which yields on the hill.
 Alone Cuchullin stood in battle ;
 Like rock amid sands the hero stood—
 Rock on which the ocean dashes
 The force of billows cold against its side ;
 250 White spray is high around its throat,
 And cairns resound on the heathery steep.
 In greyish mist, amid roar of waves,
 Seen were the galleys of white sails—
 Galleys of Fingal (leader) of heroes true ;
 255 High like dusky woods their masts,
 Bending by turns on the ridge of ocean.

Swaran saw them from the crag of deer,
 And he turned from pursuit of Erin.
 As pours the ocean from the shore,
 260 Around the hundred echoing isles of Torc ;
 So loud, defiant, wide, and vast,
 Rushed Lochlin on against the king.

Bent and tearful, mournful, slow,
 His spear behind him on the heath.^a

DUAN III.

but, exhausted
 by his wounds,
 fell dead.

Cuchullin
 stands alone.

Swaran ad-
 vances at
 dawn ; but
 daylight
 showing the
 ships of Fin-
 gal close at
 hand, he
 turns from
 pursuing the
 host of Erin
 to attack
 Fingal.

Cuchullin,
 oppressed with
 grief, with-

Fingal appear. High is the grove of their masts, as they nod by turns on the rolling wave. Swaran saw them from the hill ; he returned from the sons of Erin. As ebbs the resounding sea, through the hundred isles of Inistore ; so loud, so vast, so immense returned the sons of Lochlin against the king. But bending, weeping, sad, and slow, and dragging his long spear behind, Cuthullin sunk in

DUAN III.

- 265 Luidh Cuchullin thall 's a' choill',
 Mar theine 'soillseadh roimh a bhàs.
 Mu 'chàirdean bha mulad an laoich
 'An codal caoin air sliabh nam blàr;
 B' eagal dha aghaidh an rìgh,
- 270 'Chuir fàilt air o 'n strì cho tric.
 " Is lionmhor mo laoich air làr,
 Tréith Éirinn, a b' àillidh snuagh,
 Iadsan 'bha sùrdail 's an talla,
 'N uair dh'éirich farum nan còrn ;
- 275 Cha-n fhaic mi chaoidh an ceuman
 'Am fraoch air aodunn nan sìan :
 Cha chluinn mi an guth 's an t-seilg
 Aig sruth an deing 's an aonach ;
 Clos, sàmbhach, 'us ìosal 'n an cadal
- 280 'N an luidhe gun leus tha mo chàirdean.
 A thannais' fhaoin nam marbh-laoch,
 Tachraibh 's an fhraoch orm féin,^a
 'N uair lùbas craobh Thùra fo ghaoith,
 'S fuaim bhaoth air aghaidh na beinn'.
- 285 Luidheam fada thall os ìosal
 Gun fhios do fhear-focail, no dàin ;^b
 Cha-n éirich dhomh clach no uaigh
 Aig iomall nan stuadh, no 'n gleann.
 Bì brònach, 's mi 'measg nam marbh,

^a Give me
 true meeting ;
 lit. *meet me
 myself.*

^b Orator or
 bard ; lit.
*wordman or
 songman.*

Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the
 face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of
 renown !

" How many lie there of my heroes ! the chiefs of Erin's race !
 they that were cheerful in the hall, when the sound of the shells
 arose ! No more shall I find their steps in the heath ; no more

- 265 Cuchullin lay in the wood, apart,
 Like fire that gleams before it dies ;
 The hero's grief was for his friends,
 In dreamless sleep on the field of battles :
 He feared the countenance of the king
- 270 Who so oft had welcomed him from war.
 " Many are my heroes (stretched) on earth—
 Erin's chiefs of glorious mien ;
 They who were joyous in the hall,
 When sounded the cheer of goblets.
- 275 Their steps I never more shall see
 On heath, as they face the storm ;
 Their voice in the hunt I shall never hear
 By the stream of red (deer) on the hill.
 Still, silent, and lowly in sleep,
- 280 Without a gleam, my friends repose.
 Ye airy shades of the brave dead,
 Give me true meeting on the heather,^a
 When bends the tree of Tura under wind,
 And weird-like sound is on the mountain-side.
- 285 In secret far away shall I lie down,
 Unknown to orator or bard ;^b
 Nor tomb nor stone shall rise for me,
 By marge of waves, or in the glen.
 Mournful be thou since I am with the dead,

DUAN III.

draws into the
 wood ;

mourns over
 his slaught-
 ered warriors ;

and bewails
 his own loss
 of fame.

shall I hear their voice in the chase. Pale, silent, low on bloody
 beds, are they who were my friends ! O spirits of the lately dead,
 meet Cuthullin on his heath ! Speak to him on the wind, when
 the rustling tree of Tura's cave resounds. There, far remote, I shall
 lie unknown ; no bard shall hear of me ; no grey stone shall rise
 to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela ! departed is

DUAN III.

290 A Bhrù'-gheal a's àillidh ciabh,
Bi brònach, 's mo chliu air falbh !”

Mar sin a labhair an triath,
'N uair chuir e an sliabh air chùl.

An rìgh 'n a luing 'bha làidir, còrr,
295 Shìn a mach gu mòr a shleagh :
Bha 'chruaidh mar lasair air seòrr ;
Dearbh-theachdair a' bhàis 's a' mhagh,
'N uair luidheas air Meallmor an fhraoich
An caol-dhealan o 'n fhaoin-thaibhs',

300 Am fear-siubhail fo eagal leis féin,
'S a' ghealach a' dubhadh 's an speur.

“ Dh'aom an còmhrag,” thuirt an rìgh,
“ Chi 'm obair na strì 's an réidh,
Fuil chraobhach mo chàirdean 's an fhùth.

305 Is brònach do fhraoch 'a Léna ;
'S brònach darag air beinn Chromla.
'N neart thuit sealg-fhir 'bu tréine ;
'S mac Sheuma nam beum air chòmhlath.
'Fhillein 's a Ròinne, mo dhà mhac,

310 Togaibhs' an stoc aig Fiomghal ;
Diribh air aghaidh nan enoc,
'Us gairmidh gu loch na Torghuil,
Gairmibh nàmhaid o uaigh Làmh dhearg,

my fame.” Such were the words of Cuthullin, when he sunk in the woods of Cromla !

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

290 Bragēla of loveliest hair ;
Mournful be thou, for my renown is gone."

Such was the utterance of the prince,
When from the mountain he withdrew.

The king in his galley, stout and strong,
295 Eagerly stretched forth his spear ;
His steel (was) as a flame on jaggèd rock—
Unerring messenger of death on field,
When falls, on Melmor of heather,
The pointed lightning from a wayward ghost ;
300 The lonely traveller is afraid
As the moon grows dark in the skies.

"Ceased has the battle," said the king ;
"I see the work of strife upon the plain—
The bubbling blood of my friends on the moor.
305 Mournful is thy heath, O Lena !—
Mournful the oaks on the Ben of Cromla ;
Fell strongest hunters in their strength,
And with them Semo's son of mightful stroke.
Fillan and Ryno, both my sons,
310 Sound ye the horn of Fingal ;
Ascend the face of the hill,
And summon to the loch of Torgal³—
Summon the foe from grave of Lamderg—

DUAN III.

Fingal lands,

mourns over
the sad signs
of battle
which met
his eye,

and sends two
of his sons to
summon
Swaran to
combat.

"The battle is past," said the king. "I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena ! mournful the oaks of Cromla ! The hunters have fallen in their strength : the son of Semo is no more. Ryno and Fillan, my sons, sound the horn of Fingal. Ascend that hill on the shore ; call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times. Be

DUAN III.

- An triath a ghabh tàmh o shean.
 315 Biodh 'ur guth mar ghuth 'ur n-athar,
 'N uair a dh'éireas dha gabhail o chòmhrag.
 Feitheam an so an laoch treun ;
 Feitheam mu Léna air Suaran.
 Thigeadh an gaisgeach leis féin,
 320 No maille r'a cheud fo 'n armaibh.
 Thigeadh na nàimhdean gu léir ;
 Inn'sibh gur treun 's gur garbh sinn."

Chaidh Ròinne ruadh gu 'luas mar dhealan ;
 Bha Fillean mar fhoghar fo ghruaim.

- 325 Chualas thar Léna nan gleannan ^a
 Stoc Fhionnghail le sinns're a' chuain.
 Mar thràigh fhuaimcar a' chuain mhòir,
 A' tilleadh o thòrr tìr an t-sneachd',^b
 Cho làidir, cho dorcha, cho eòrr
 330 Theiring slioehd nan long o'n lae. ·
 Bha 'n rìgh rompa mòr 'us treun
 'Am beud àrdain sgéithe 's airm.
 Las fearg air dubh-aghaidh naeh tioma.
 Bha 'shùil mar theine sléibh 'an stoirm.

- 335 Chunnaic Fionn mac Stàirn' 'bu ehòrr,
 'S bha 'chuimhn' air òigh an t-sneachd';^c
 'N uair thuit i, bha Suaran fo dheoir ;

^a "Glenlet" is the literal translation of *gleannan*. Possibly "dingle" would be better understood.

^b The craggy land of snow—i.e. Lochlin.

^c The maid of snow—i.e. Agandecca, sister to Swaran.

your voice like that of your father when he enters the battles of his strength. I wait for the mighty stranger: I wait on Lena's shore for Swaran. Let him come with all his race; strong in battle are the friends of the dead!"

Fair Ryno as lightning gleamed along: Dark Fillan rushed like the shade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard. The

- The chief who (there) abode of old.
 315 Be your voice as the voice of your father
 When he kindles to battle-onslaught ;
 Here wait I (for) the hero of prowess—
 I wait for Swaran on Lena.
 Let the warrior come on alone,
 320 Or with his hundreds in their armour ;
 Come the enemies all together,
 Tell them we are strong and stern.”

- Red Ryno went at his speed like lightning ;
 Fillan was like autumn in gloom.
 325 Heard over Lena of glenlets ^a
 Was Fingal's horn by the race of the sea.
 Like sounding shore of the great ocean,
 As it turns from the craggy land of snow ^b—
 As strong, as dark, as unsurpassed—
 330 The race of ships from rocks rushed down ;
 The great strong king was at their head,
 In baleful pride of shield and armour ;
 Flamed wrath in his dark unblenching face ;
 His eye was like mountain-fire in storm.
 335 Fingal saw the unrivalled son of Starno ;
 His memory turned to the maid of snow.^c
 When she fell (dead), Swaran wept

DUAN III.

The advance
 of the host
 of Lochlin
 described.

When Fingal
 saw Swaran,
 the brother of
 Agandecca,
 his first love,

sons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal. As the roaring eddy of ocean returning from the kingdom of snows ; so strong, so dark, so sudden came down the sons of Lochlin. The king in their front appears, in the dismal pride of his arms ! Wrath burns on his dark-brown face ; his eyes roll in the fire of his valour. Fingal beheld the son of Starno : he remembered Agandecca. For Swaran

DUAN III.

Mu 'n òg-mhnaoi a b' àillidh leac.
 Chaidh Ullin nam fonn d'a chòir
 340 G' a chuireadh gu cuirm air tràigh.
 Bu taitneach do rìgh nam beann-mòr
 Cuimhu' air ainnir a cheud-ghràidh.

Thàinig Ullin a b' aosda ceum,
 'S labhair e féin ri mac Stàirn.
 345 "Thus' o thìr fada, 'fhir thréin,
 'S coimeas 'n ad éideadh 's 'n ad airm
 Ri creig 'am meadhon nan stuadh,
 Thig -sa gu cuirm nan triath,
 Caith là na sàmhchair fo fhleagh ;
 350 Am màireach bi 'briseadh nan sgiath,
 'S a' chòmhrag mu-n iadh an t-sleagh."

"'N diugh féin," thuirt mac Stàirn', "an diugh féin
 Briseam 's a' bheinn an t-sleagh.
 'Màireach bi'dh do rìgh -sa gun ghleus,"
 355 Agus Suaran 's a thréin aig fleagh."
 " Am màireach biodh fleagh aig an triath,"
 Thuirt rìgh Mhòrbheinn fo fhiamh-ghàire,
 "'N diugh cuiream an còmhrag air sliabh,
 'S briseadhmaid an sgiath 'bu shàr.
 360 'Oiscin, seas suas ri mo làmh,

^a Powerless
 shall be thy
 king ; lit.
without tune,
or unstrung,
shall be thy
king.

with the tears of youth had mourned his white-bosomed sister. He sent Ullin of songs to bid him to the feast of shells : for pleasant on Fingal's soul returned the memory of the first of his loves !

Ullin came with aged steps, and spoke to Starno's son. " O thou that dwellest afar, surrounded like a rock, with thy waves ! come to the feast of the king, and pass the day in rest. To-morrow let us

For the maiden of loveliest cheek.

Ullin of songs went to his presence,

340 To bid him to a feast on the shore ;

Pleasing to the king of great mountains,

Was memory of the maiden, his first love.

Came Ullin of agèd step,

And he spake to the son of Starno.

345 "Thou from far-off land, thou strong one,

Like in thy vesture and thine armour,

To a rock amid the breakers,

Come thou to the banquet of nobles ;

In feasting spend a day of calm,

350 On the morrow break the shields ;

In the conflict of hurtling spears." 4

"This very day," said Starno's son ; "this very day

Shall I break the spear on the hill ;

To-morrow powerless shall be thy king ;^a

355 Swaran and his strong ones shall feast."

"To-morrow let the hero feast,"

The king of great Bens, smiling, said ;

"To-day I fight the battle on the hill ;

And break we the shield so strong.

360 Ossian, stand thou close by my hand ;

DUAN III.

he sent Ullin,
his bard, to
invite him to
feast with
him on the
first day,

offering bat-
tle on the
second.

Swaran refuses
the invitation,
and insists on
engaging im-
mediately.

Fingal assents,
and charges
his sons to
equal him in
his renown.

fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing shields." "To-day," said Starno's wrathful son, "we break the echoing shields: to-morrow my feast shall be spread; but Fingal shall lie on earth." "To-morrow let his feast be spread," said Fingal, with a smile. "To-day, O my sons! we shall break the echoing shields. Ossian, stand thou near my arm. Gaul, lift thy terrible sword. Fergus,

DUAN III.

'Ghail, togsa do lann, 'fhir mhòir ;
 'Fhearghuis, tarring taifeid nach mall ;
 Tilgs' 'Fhillein, do chrann 'bu chòrr.
 Togaibhs' 'ur sgiàthan gu h-àrd,
 365 Mar ghealach fo sgàil' 's an speur :
 Biodh 'ur sleaghan mar theachdair' a' bhàis ;
 Leanuibh, leanuibh mo chliu 's mi féin ;
 Bi'bh coimeas do cheud 's a' bhlàr."

Mar cheud gaoth 'an daraig Mhòrbheinn,
 370 Mar cheud sruth o thòrr nan aonach,
 Mar neoil a' curradh gu dùbhlaidh,
 Mar chuan mòr air tràigh a' taomadh,
 Cho leathann, beucach, doreha, borb
 Thachair laoich fo cholg air Léna.
 375 Bha gairm an t-sluaigh air cruaich nam beann,
 Mar thorrann 'an oidheche nan sìan,
 'N uair bhriseas nial Chona nan gleann,
 'Us mìle taibhs' a' sgreadadh gu dian
 Air gaoith fhaoin fhiair nan càrn.

380 Ghluais an rìgh 'n a neart gu luath,
 Mar thannas Thréimhoir, fuath gun bhàigh,
 'N uair thig e 'n cròm-osag nan stuadh
 Gu Mòrbheinn, tìr sinns're a ghràidh.

bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven.
 Lift your shields like the darkened moon. Be your spears the
 meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame. Equal my
 deeds in battle."

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the streams of a hundred
 hills; as clouds fly successive over heaven; as the dark ocean assails

Gaul, thou great one, lift thy brand ;
 Fergus, draw thy speeding bow-string ;
 Fillan, throw thy lance unmatched :
 Raise ye on high your shields,
 365 Like a clouded moon in the sky.
 Be your spears as messengers of death.
 Follow, follow my renown and me ;
 Match a hundred in the battle.”

As hundred winds 'mid oaks of great mountains,
 370 As hundred torrents from lofty hills,
 As clouds in darkness rushing on,
 As the great ocean rolling on the shore,—
 So vast, so sounding, dark, and stern,
 Met the fierce warriors on Lena.
 375 The shout of the host on mountain-height
 Was like thunder on a night of storms,
 When bursts the cloud in Cona of gleus,
 And thousand spirits wildly shriek
 On the waste wind that sweeps around the cairns.
 380 In his strength advanced the king with speed,
 Like Treunmor's ghost—a spirit stern—
 When he comes in the eddy wind of waves
 To the great mountain-land of his loved sires.

DUAN III.

The conflict
described.

Fingal was
like the spirit
of Treunmor,
his ancestor.

the shore of the desert : so roaring, so vast, so terrible, the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath. The groan of the people spread over the hills : it was like the thunder of night when the cloud bursts on Cona, and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind. Fingal rushed on in his strength, terrible as the spirit of Trenmor, when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven, to see the

DUAN III.

B'ìdh an darag a' fuaim 's a' bheinn,
 385 Tuitidh carraig na sléibh fa 'chòir ;
 Tro' 'n dealan chithear e féin ;
 O chàrn gu càrn bi' dh 'cheuman mòr.
 B' fhuileach leam m' athair 's an fhrìth,
 'N uair 'thog e le cli a lann ;
 390 Bha cuimhn' air 'òig' aig an rìgh,
 'N uair chathadh leis strì nan gleann.

Shiubhail Ròinne mar theine nan speur ;
 Bu dorcha gu léir a bha Gall ;
 Chaidh Feargus mar ghaoith 's a' bheinn ;
 395 Ghluais Fillean mar cheathach ri tom ;
 Bha Oisian mar charragh 's a' chòmhrag ;
 Bha m' anam a' mòrchuis mu 'n rìgh,
 Bu lionmhor na bàis, 's bu dùbhlaidh
 Fo dhealan mo mhòr-lainn 's an strì.
 400 Cha robh 'n sin mo chiabh cho glas ;
 Cha do chrìth mo làmh le aois ?
 Bha léirsinn mo shùil gun dol as,
 'Us shiùbhladh mo chas dbomh a chaoìdh.

Co 'dh'inn'seadh air bàs nan slògh ?
 405 Co air gnìomhan nam mòr-thriath,
 'N uair lasadh gu feirg an rìgh còrr

children of his pride. The oaks resound on their mountains, and the rocks fall down before him. Dimly seen, as lightens the night, he strides largely from hill to hill. Bloody was the hand of my father when he whirled the gleam of his sword. He remembers the battles of his youth. The field is wasted in his course !

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire. Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward with feet of wind : Fillan like the mist of

Resounds the oak-tree on the hill ;
 385 The mountain-rock falls down before him.
 Through lightning he himself is seen ;
 From cairn to cairn are his great strides.
 Bloodthirsty was my father on the moor,
 As he raised his brand in his might.
 390 The monarch recalled his youth,
 When he fought the fight of the glens.

Ryno sped like the fire of the skies ;
 Gaul was altogether dark ;
 Fergus rushed like mountain-wind ;
 395 Fillan moved like mist that climbs the hill ;
 Ossian was as a rock in the conflict.
 My soul exulted in the king.
 Many the deaths and mournful
 Under my great spear's lightning in the fray.
 400 My hair was not so hoary then ;
 My hand did not tremble with age ;
 The sight of my eyes was unquenched,
 And my foot could travel ever on.

Who could tell the deaths of men ?
 405 Who of the deeds of mighty chiefs
 When kindled in wrath the resistless king,

DUAN III.

The prowess
 of other heroes
 is mentioned.

Ossian refers
 to his own
 achievements,
 contrasting
 these with his
 feeble old age.

the hill. Ossian, like a rock, came down. I exulted in the strength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm! dismal the gleam of my sword! My locks were not then so grey; nor trembled my hands with age. My eyes were not closed in darkness; my feet failed not in the race!

Who can relate the deaths of the people? Who the deeds of mighty heroes? when Fingal, burning in his wrath, consumed the

DUAN III.

'Caitheadh Lochlin air tòrr nan sliabh ?
Dh'éirich toirm air thoirm o 'n t-sluagh,
Gu 'n d' thuit air an stuaidh an oidlich'.

- 410 Fann, a' crith, gun tuar, mar fhéidh,
Thionail Lochlin air Léna 'n fhraoich.
Shuidh sinne mu chlàrsaichean grinn
Aig Lùbar nan sèimh-uig caoin.
'S e 'n rìgh 'bu teinn' air an tom
- 415 'S e 'clàistinn binn-sgeul nam bàrd ;
Bha sinns're nam mòr-ghnìomh 's an fhonn,
Gach gaisgeach a b' aosda dàn.^a
Air sgéith bha aomadh an rìgh ;
Bha osag na frìth 'n a chiabh,
- 420 A smaointean air làithean na strì,
'An àm 'bu neo-chlìth na tréith.
Ri 'thaobh 'n a sheasadh ri crann
Bha Oscar nan lann 'bu chòrr,
A shùil air rìgh Mhòrbheum nan gleann,
- 425 'Us 'anam mu 'ghnìomhan mòr.

^a Each warrior (renowned) in olden lay ; lit. each warrior whose was an ancient lay.

“ 'Mhic mo mhic,” thuirt an rìgh,
“ 'Oscair na strì 'n ad òige,
Chunnam do ehlaidheamh nach mìn ;
Bha m' uaill mu m' shìnn's're mòr.

sons of Lochlin ? Groans swelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, staring like a herd of deer, the sons of Lochlin convene on Lena. We sat and heard the sprightly harp at Lubar's gentle stream. Fingal himself was next to the foe. He listened to the tales of his bards. His godlike race were in the song, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his shield,

Consuming Lochlin on the mountain-heights ?
 Rose shout on shout from the host,
 Until night fell down on the wave.

- 410 Faint and pale, trembling like deer,
 Lochlin gathered on Lena of heath.
 We sat around the pleasant harps,
 By Lubar of waters slow and pure ;
 The king was nighest to the hill.
- 415 He listened to the pleasing tale of bards ;
 The sires of hero-deeds were in the song,
 Each warrior (renowned) in olden lay.^o
 On a shield reclined the king ;
 The forest-wind was through his hair ;
- 420 His thoughts were of days of battle
 In the time when warriors were strong.
 Beside him, leaning on a tree,
 Was Oscar of matchless spears ;
 His eye on the king of great mountains and glens,
- 425 And his soul exultant in his deeds.

“Son of my son,” said the king ;
 “Oscar, who art a warrior in thy youth,
 I beheld thy trenchant blade,
 (And) my pride in my kindred was great.

DUAN III.

The battle continued till night, when Swaran, utterly defeated, fled to the hill.

Fingal and his warriors rested beside the river Lubar.

He gives high praise to Oscar, his grandson, for his bravery, and counsels him as to his

the king of Morven sat. The wind whistled through his locks ; his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him, on his bending spear, my young, my valiant Oscar stood. He admired the king of Morven : his deeds were swelling in his soul !

“Son of my son,” began the king, “O Oscar, pride of youth ! I saw the shining of thy sword: I gloried in my race. Pursue the

DUAN III.

- 430 Leansa cliu na dh'aom a chaoidh ;
 Mar d' aithrichean bi-sa féin,
 Mar Threunmor, ceud cheannard nan saoi,
 Mar Thrathal, sàr athair nan treun.
 'N an òige bhuail iad 'am blàr ;
- 435 'An duanaibh nam bàrd tha 'n cliu.
 Bi-sa mar shruth ris na sàir ;
 Ri laigse nan lann cho ciuin
 Ri aiteal gaoith air raon an fhéir.
 Mar sin bha Treunmor nan sgiath,
- 440 'Us Trathal, ceannard nan triath ;
 Mar sin bha mo ghnìomh 's an t-sliabh.
 Bha 'm feumach riamh ri mo làimh,
 'S dh'fhàs an lag dàna fo m' chruaidh.
 Na h-iarrsa carraid nan sgiath ;
- 445 'S na diùlt i air sliabh nan cruach."^a

^a The episode of *Fàinne-Soluis* is not in Macpherson's Gaelic MS.—*Vide* Note.

fame of our fathers ; be thou what they have been when Trenmor lived the first of men, and Trathal the father of heroes ! They fought the battle in their youth : they are the song of bards. O Oscar ! bend the strong in arm, but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people ; but like the gale that moves the grass to those who ask thine aid. So Trenmor lived ; such Trathal was, and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured ; the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel.

“Oscar ! I was young like thee when lovely Fainasóllis came : that sunbeam ! that mild light of love ! the daughter of Craca's king ! I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-sailed boat appeared far off ; we saw it like a mist that rode on ocean's wind. It soon approached. We saw the fair : her white breast heaved with sighs. The wind was in her loose

- 430 Ever follow their fame who are gone ;
 Be thou even as thy fathers were—
 Like Treunmor, foremost leader of heroes ;
 Like Tra-hal, true father of the brave.
 In youth they smote in battle ;
- 435 In the lays of bards is their renown.
 Be thou as a torrent against the strong ;
 To weakness of weapon as mild
 As a breath of wind on the grassy plain.
 So was Treunmor of shields,
- 440 And Tra-hal, the leader of chiefs—
 Such were my deeds on the mountain ;
 The needy was ever anigh me,
 And the weak waxed bold beneath my steel.
 Seek not thou the conflict of shields,
- 445 Nor shun it on the mountain-side.”

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DUAN III.
 —
 conduct in the
 future.

dark hair : her rosy cheek had tears. ‘ Daughter of beauty,’ calm I said, ‘ what sigh is in thy breast ? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the sea ? My sword is not unmatched in war, but dauntless is my heart.’

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

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

DUAN III.

- “ ‘Fhillein ’us ’Oscair nan ciabh donn,
 Laoich nach trom air aghaidh frìth,
 ’N am fhianuis gabhaibhs’ an tom ;
 Faicibh Lochlin nan long o ’n strì.
 450 Cluinneams’ an gluasad thall,
 Mar thoirm a thig fada o stuaidh,
 No coille nan cruach. Na bi’bh mall,
 Mu-n gabh iad luingeas gu tuath,
 A’ fàgail le luathas mo lann.
 455 ’S iomadh triath ’us gaisgeach beumach
 ’Shìol Éirinn gun leus ’tha marbh ;
 Tha sìuns’re a’ chòmhraig gun éirigh.
 Mic Chromla nan torrann garbh.”

- Ghluais laoich ’bu dorcha tuar,
 460 Mar neul fuar-charbaid nan taibhs’,
 ’N uair thig shìochd na gaoithe gu luath
 A’ chur gruaim air sluagh mu ’n bhàs.

’N sin dh’éirich mac Mhorni gu mall,
 Gall, mar charraig thall ’s an oidheche,

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

“The maid stood trembling by my side. He drew the bow : she fell. ‘Unerring is thy hand,’ I said, ‘but feeble was the foe !’ We fought, nor weak the strife of death ! He sank beneath my sword. We laid them in two tombs of stone ; the hapless lovers of youth ! Such have I been in my youth, O Oscar ! be thou like

- “Fillan and Oscar of brown hair,
 Heroes light (of step) on forest-brae,
 Before my eyes ascend the hill ;
 See (what) Lochlin of ships (does) after the fray.
- 450 I hear their movements from beyond,
 Like noise afar resounding from the wave,
 Or wood on the hill. Be not slack,
 Lest they take shipping for the north,
 Through speed escaping my sword.
- 455 Many chiefs and heroes warlike
 Of Erin’s sons are in darksome death ;
 The race of battle will rise no more—
 Sons of Cromla of loud thunder.”

Moved the heroes, dark in aspect,
 460 Like cold cloud-chariots of ghosts,
 When the sons of the wind come in speed,
 To appal the people with death.

Then slowly rose the son of Morni,
 Gaul, like a rock-pillar in the night—

DUAN III.

He orders
 Fillan and
 Oscar to watch
 the move-
 ments of
 Swaran, lest
 he should
 escape to sea
 at night.

Gaul, the son
 of Morni, com-
 plains that

the age of Fingal. Never search thou for battle, nor shun it when it comes.

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

The heroes flew like two dark clouds: two dark clouds that are the chariots of ghosts; when air’s dark children come forth to frighten hapless men. It was then that Gaul, the son of Morni, stood like a rock in night. His spear is glittering to the stars; his

DUAN III.

^a Of feasts ;
lit. of cups.
Còrn probably
means a cup
made of horn,
cornu.

- 465 'Fhocal mar shruth mòr nan càrn,
A chruaidh-shleagh g'a ceann a'soillseadh,
"A mhic a' chòmhraig," thuirt an triath,
"Rìgh Mhòrbheinn nan sgiath 's nan còrn,^a
Biodh bàird a' cur fonn air sliabh,
470 Air càirdean Éirinn nam fiar-cholg.
A rìgh, cuir gu truaill do lann,
Thoir do 'n t-sluagh an còir, a thriath ;
Tha sinne 'erionadh, 's ar cliu gam ;
'S tu féin a' briseadh gach sgéith'.
- 475 'N uair dh'éireas madainn air cruaidh,
Seall fada shuas air ar guìomh ;
Fairicheadh Lochlin 'an iomall a' chuain,
Gu-m bheil claidheamh 's an ruaig gun ghìomh.
'N sin a labhras am bàrd orm féin.
- 480 B' e so an cleachda 'bha riamh
Aig sinns're nan sgiath 's a' mbagh ;
B' e so do ehleachda féin, a thriath,
'An còmhstri mu-n iadh an t-sleagh."
- "A mhic Mhòrn," thuirt an rìgh,
485 "Tha m' àrdan gu léir 'n ad chliu ;
Riaghail còmhrag 'an iomairt na strì ;
Bì' dh sleagh nach 'eil mìn ri d' chùl.
Togaibh, togaibh, a shiol nam fonn ;
'Us dùnaibh gu trom mo rosg ;

voice like many streams.

"Son of battle," cried the chief, "O Fingal, king of shells ! let the bards of many songs soothe Erin's friends to rest. Fingal, sheathe thou thy sword of death, and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame ; our king is the only breaker of shields ! When morning rises on our hills, behold at a distance our deeds. Let

465 His voice as the strong torrent of the cairns ;
His steel-spear shining to its point.

“Thou son of battle,” said the chief,
“King of great Bens, of shields, and feasts,”
Let bards on hills compose their lays

470 To Erin’s friends of warlike mood.
Do thou, O king ! ensheathe thy sword ;
Give, O chief ! to the host their right ;
We wither, and our fame is scant,
Whilst thou thyself dost break all shields.

475 When morning rises on the hill,
Look thou on our deeds from afar ;
Let Lochlin feel, on the verge of ocean,
That a trenchant sword pursues ;
Then shall the bard discourse of me :

480 The custom this which always held
With our shielded fathers on the field.
This custom was thine own, O prince !
In the conflict of hurtling spears.”

“Son of Morni,” answered the king,

485 “My pride is wholly in thy fame ;
Rule thou the battle in the wrestling of strife,
A spear of might shall back thee.
Raise, raise (the tune), ye sons of song,
And heavily close my eyelids.

DUAN III.

Fingal himself “broke all shields,” and thus that his warriors earned no renown. He begs the king to leave the battle of the following day to his chiefs.

Fingal willingly assents, and says that Gaul himself should rule the battle.

He calls on his bards to lull him to

Lochlin feel the sword of Morni’s son, that bards may sing of me. Such was the custom heretofore of Fingal’s noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of swords, in battles of the spear.”

“O son of Morni,” Fingal replied, “I glory in my fame ! Fight ; but my spear shall be near to aid thee in the midst of danger. Raise, raise the voice, ye sons of song ! and lull me into rest. Here

DUAN III.

- 490 Luidheam sìos ri fuaim nan tonn
 Fo osaig chròm na h-oidhche nochd.
 Ma tha thus', 'Aghaidh 'n t-sneachd',
 Anns an leac am measg do shluaigh ;
 Ma shuidheas tu, a réir mo bheachd,
- 495 Air gaoith mu chrannaibh nan stuadh,
 Thig-sa gu m' aisling, a Làmhgheal,
 Bi 'suàmh air 'm anam, 's mi 'm shuain."
- 'S iomadh guth 'us clàrsach ghrinn,
 'Bha 'g éirigh suas air strì nam fonn,
- 500 Na dàin air àrd-ghnìomh an rìgh,
 'S air sìms're cheannaird nan sonn.
 Air uair chluinnteadh 's a' chaoin-fhuaim
 Ainm Oisein 's a luathas 's a' mhagh :
- 'S tric a bhuail 's a thug mi buaidh
- 505 'An còmhrag nan ruaig le sléigh.
 Gu dall, gu deurach, 's gu faoin,
 Tha mo shiubhal le daoine gun chli,
 'Mhòr Fhionnghail, cha-n fhaic mi thu chaoidh,
 Thu féin no do shuinn, a rìgh ;
- 510 Tha 'n ruadhag a' spioladh air d' uaigh ;
 'Rìgh Mhòrbheinn, a 's uaine tom,
 Biodh d' anam fo aoibhneas ri 'luaidh,
 A cheannaird nam buadh 's nan sonn
- 514 Aig Còna nan cruach àrd.

will Fingal lie amidst the wind of night. And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land ; if thou sittest on a blast of wind, among the high-shrouded masts of Lochlin ; come to my dreams, my fair one ; show thy bright face to my soul."

Many a voice and many a harp in tuneful sounds arose. Of Fingal's noble deeds they sang ; of Fingal's noble race : and some-

- 490 I will lie down by the sound of the waves,
 Under the eddying wind of night.
 If, Agandecca, thou be (now)
 Among thy people on the hill,
 (Or), if thou reclinest, as I deem,
 495 On wind 'mid the masts of the waves,
 Come to my dream, thou White-hand—
 Float over my soul while I sleep.”

Many a voice and dulcet harp
 Rose high in rivalry of airs.

- 500 Songs (told) the high deeds of the king,
 And of his sires, the leader of the brave.
 At times was heard amid the sweet sound
 The name of Ossian, and his speed on field.

Ofttimes I smote and conquest won

- 505 With the spear in victorious war ;
 (Now) blind (and) tearful and unheeded,
 My path is with weakly men.
 Great Fingal, I shall never see thee more—
 Nor thee nor thy heroes, O king !
 510 The roebuck nibbles on thy grave ;
 Great mountain-king of greenest mound,
 Be thy soul in joy when named,
 Leader of victories and heroes,
 514 By Cona of the lofty peaks.

DUAN III.

sleep, and in-
 vokes Agan-
 decca to his
 dreams.

The song of
 the bards
 celebrated the
 prowess of
 Ossian.

But now he is
 old and feeble.

He mourns
 over the death
 of his great
 father.

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

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



