

**Landesbibliothek Oldenburg**

**Digitalisierung von Drucken**

**Fingal, An Ancient Epic Poem, In Six Books**

**Macpherson, James**

**London, 1762**

Temora: an Epic Poem.

**urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-2056**

T E M O R A :

A N

E P I C P O E M\*.

THE blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze; and gray torrents pour their noisy streams.—Two green hills, with their aged oaks, surround a narrow plain. The blue course

\* Though the history which is the foundation of the present poem, was given in the notes on the two pieces preceding, it may not be here improper to recapitulate some part of what has been said.—Immediately after the death of Cuchullin, Cairbar, lord of Atha, openly set up for himself in Connaught, and having privately murdered young king Cormac, became, without opposition, sole monarch of Ireland. The murder of Cormac was so much repented by Fingal, that he resolved on an expedition into Ireland against Cairbar. Early intelligence of his designs came to Cairbar, and he had gathered the tribes together into Ulster, to oppose Fingal's landing; at the same time his brother

Cathmor kept himself with an army near Temora.—This Cathmor is one of the finest characters in the old poetry. His humanity, generosity, and hospitality, were unparalleled: in short, he had no fault, but too much attachment to so bad a brother as Cairbar.—The present poem has its name from Temora, the royal palace of the Irish kings, near which the last and decisive battle was fought between Fingal and Cathmor. What has come to the translator's hands, in a regular connection, is little more than the opening of the poem.—This work appears, from the story of it, which is still preserv'd, to have been one of the greatest of Ossian's compositions. The variety of the characters makes it interesting;



course of the mountain-stream is there; Cairbar stands on its banks.—His spear supports the king: the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises in his soul, with all his ghastly wounds. The gray form of the youth appears in the midst of darkness, and the blood pours from his airy sides.—Cairbar thrice threw his spear on earth; and thrice he stroked his beard. His steps are short; he often stopt: and tossed his finewy arms. He is like a cloud in the desert; that varies its form to every blast: the valleys are sad around, and fear, by turns, the shower.

THE king, at length, resumed his soul, and took his pointed spear. He turned his eyes towards Lena\*. The scouts of ocean appear. They appeared with steps of fear, and often looked behind.

interesting; and the war, as it is carried on by Fingal and Cathmor, affords instances of the greatest bravery, mixed with incomparably generous actions and sentiments. One is at a loss for which side to declare himself: and often wishes, when both commanders march to battle, that both may return victorious. At length the good fortune of Fingal preponderates, and the family of Cormac are re-established on the Irish throne.

The Irish traditions relate the affair in another light, and exclaim against Fingal for appointing thirty judges, or rather tyrants, at Temora, for regulating the affairs of Ireland. They pretend to enumerate many acts of oppression committed by those judges; and affirm, that both they and a part of Fingal's army, which was left in Ireland to enforce their laws, were at last expelled the kingdom.—Thus the Irish tra-

ditions, say the historians of that nation. It is said, however, that those gentlemen sometimes create facts, in order afterwards to make remarks upon them; at least, that they adopt for real facts, the traditions of their bards, when they throw lustre on the ancient state of their country.

The present poem opens in the morning. Cairbar is represented as retired from the rest of the Irish chiefs, and tormented with remorse for the murder of Cormac, when news was brought him of Fingal's landing. What passed, preceding that day, and is necessary to be known for carrying on the poem, is afterwards introduced by way of episode.

\* The scene described here is nearly that of the epic poem, Fingal. In this neighbourhood also the sons of Usnoth were killed.

Cairbar



Cairbar knew that the mighty were near, and called his gloomy chiefs. The sounding steps of his heroes came. They drew, at once, their swords. There Morlath \* stood with darkened face. Hidalla's bushy hair sighs in the wind. Red-haired Cormar bends on his spear, and rolls his side-long-looking eyes. Wild is the look of Malthos from beneath two shaggy brows.—Foldath stands like an oozy rock, that covers its dark sides with foam; his spear is like Slimora's fir, that meets the wind of heaven. His shield is marked with the strokes of battle; and his red eye despises danger. These and a thousand other chiefs surrounded car-borne Cairbar, when the scout of ocean came, Mor-annal †, from streamy Lena.—His eyes hang forward from his face, his lips are trembling, pale.

Do the chiefs of Erin stand, he said, silent as the grove of evening? Stand they, like a silent wood, and Fingal on the coast? Fingal, who is terrible in battle, the king of streamy Morven.

AND hast thou seen the warrior, said Cairbar with a sigh? Are his heroes many on the coast? Lifts he the spear of battle? Or comes the king in peace?

HE comes not in peace, O Cairbar: for I have seen his forward spear ‡. It is a meteor of death: the blood of thousands is on its

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

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

‡ Mor-annal here alludes to the particular appearance of Fingal's spear.—If a man, upon his first landing in a strange

country, kept the point of his spear forward, it denoted in those days that he came in a hostile manner, and accordingly he was treated as an enemy; if he kept the point behind him, it was a token of friendship, and he was immediately invited to the feast, according to the hospitality of the times.

steel.



steel.—He came first to the shore, strong in the gray hair of age. Full rose his finewy limbs, as he strode in his might. That sword is by his side which gives no second † wound. His shield is terrible, like the bloody moon, when it rises in a storm.—Then came Ossian king of songs; and Morni's son, the first of men. Connal leaps forward on his spear: Dermid spreads his dark-brown locks.—Fillan bends his bow: Fergus strides in the pride of youth. Who is that with aged locks? A dark shield is on his side. His spear trembles at every step; and age is on his limbs. He bends his dark face to the ground; the king of spears is sad!—It is Ufnoth, O Cairbar, coming to revenge his sons. He sees green Ullin with tears, and he remembers the tombs of his children. But far before the rest, the son of Ossian comes, bright in the smiles of youth, fair as the first beams of the sun. His long hair falls on his back.—His dark brows are half hid beneath his helmet of steel. His sword hangs loose on the hero's side. His spear glitters as he moves. I fled from his terrible eyes, king of high Temora!

THEN fly, thou feeble man, said the gloomy wrath of Foldath: fly to the gray streams of thy land, son of the little soul! Have not I seen that Oscar? I beheld the chief in battle. He is of the mighty in danger: but there are others who lift the spear.—Erin has many sons as brave: yes—more brave, O car-borne Cairbar!—Let Foldath meet him in the strength of his course, and stop this mighty stream.—My spear is covered with the blood of the valiant; my shield is like Tura's wall.

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

SHALL



SHALL Foldath alone meet the foe, replied the dark-browed Malthos? Are not they numerous on our coast, like the waters of a thousand streams? Are not these the chiefs who vanquished Swaran, when the sons of Erin fled? And shall Foldath meet their bravest hero? Foldath of the heart of pride! take the strength of the people by thy side; and let Malthos come. My sword is red with slaughter, but who has heard my words\*?

SONS of green Erin, begun the mild Hidalla, let not Fingal hear your words: lest the foe rejoice, and his arm be strong in the land.—Ye are brave, O warriors, and like the tempests of the desert; they meet the rocks without fear, and overturn the woods in their course.—But let us move in our strength, and slow as a gathered cloud, when the winds drive it from behind.—Then shall the mighty tremble, and the spear drop from the hand of the valiant.—We see the cloud of death, they will say; and their faces will turn pale. Fingal will mourn in his age; and say that his fame is ceased.—Morven will behold his chiefs no more: the moss of years shall grow in Selma.

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

SPREAD the feast on Lena: and let my hundred bards attend. And thou, red-hair'd Olla, take the harp of the king. Go to Oscar king of swords, and bid him to our feast. To-day we feast and

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

hear

hear the song; to-morrow break the spears. Tell him that I have raised the tomb of Cathol\*; and that my bards have sung to his ghost.—Tell him that Cairbar has heard his fame at the stream of distant Carun †.

CATHMOR ‡ is not here; the generous brother of Cairbar; he is not here with his thousands, and our arms are weak. Cathmor is a foe to strife at the feast: his soul is bright as the sun. But Cairbar shall fight with Oscar, chiefs of the high Temora! His words for Cathol were many; and the wrath of Cairbar burns. He shall fall on Lena: and my fame shall rise in blood.

THE faces of the heroes brightened. They spread over Lena's heath. The feast of shells is prepared. The songs of the bards arose.

WE heard || the voice of joy on the coast, and we thought that the mighty Cathmor came. Cathmor the friend of strangers! the brother

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

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

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

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

A a

through



brother of red-haired Cairbar. But their souls were not the same : for the light of heaven was in the bosom of Cathmor. His towers rose on the banks of Atha : seven paths led to his halls. Seven chiefs stood on those paths, and called the stranger to the feast ! But Cathmor dwelt in the wood to avoid the voice of praise.

OLLA came with his songs. Oscar went to Cairbar's feast. Three hundred heroes attended the chief, and the clang of their arms is terrible. The gray dogs bounded on the heath, and their howling is frequent. Fingal saw the departure of the hero : the soul of the king was sad. He dreads the gloomy Cairbar : but who of the race of Trenmor feared the foe ?

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

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

Ἀξυλον δ' ἄρ' ἔπειθε βοῶν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης  
 Τευθρανιδὴν, ὃς ἐναίεν εὐκλιμένην ἐν Ἀρισθῆ,  
 Ἄφνειος βιοτοιο, φίλῳ δ' ἦν ἀνθρώποισι·  
 Πάντας γὰρ φιλέσκειν, ὁδῶ ἔπι οἰκίᾳ ναίω.

HOM. 6. 12.

Next Teuthras' son disdain'd the sands  
 with blood,  
 Axylus, hospitable, rich and good :  
 In fair Arisbe's walls, his native place,  
 He held his seat ; a friend to human race.  
 Fast by the road, his ever open door  
 Oblig'd the wealthy, and reliev'd the poor.

POPE.

CAIRBAR



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

OSCAR! said the dark-red Cairbar, I behold the spear † of Erin's kings. The spear of Temora ‡ glitters in thy hand, son of the woody Morven! It was the pride of an hundred kings, the death of heroes of old. Yield it, son of Ossian, yield it to car-borne Cairbar.

SHALL I yield, Oscar replied, the gift of Erin's injured king: the gift of fair-haired Cormac, when Oscar scattered his foes? I came to his halls of joy, when Swaran fled from Fingal. Gladness rose in the face of youth: he gave the spear of Temora. Nor did he give it to the feeble, O Cairbar, neither to the weak in soul. The darkness of thy face is not a storm to me; nor are thine eyes the flames of death. Do I fear thy clanging shield? Does my soul tremble at Olla's song? No: Cairbar, frighten thou the feeble; Oscar is like a rock.

AND wilt thou not yield the spear, replied the rising pride of Cairbar? Are thy words mighty because Fingal is near, the gray-

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

A ceremony of another kind was long used in Scotland upon such occasions. Every body has heard that a bull's head was served up to Lord Douglas in the castle of Edin-

burgh, as a certain signal of his approaching death.

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

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



haired warrior of Morven. He has fought with little men. But he must vanish before Cairbar, like a thin pillar of mist before the winds of Atha\*.

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

THEIR people saw the darkening chiefs. Their crowding steps are heard around. Their eyes roll in fire. A thousand swords are half unsheathed. Red-haired Olla raised the song of battle: the trembling joy of Oscar's soul arose: the wonted joy of his soul when Fingal's horn was heard.

DARK as the swelling wave of ocean before the rising winds, when it bends its head near the coast, came on the host of Cairbar.— Daughter of Toscar †! why that tear? He is not fallen yet. Many were the deaths of his arm before my hero fell!—Behold they fall before my son like the groves in the desert, when an angry ghost rushes through night, and takes their green heads in his hand! Morlath falls: Maronnan dies: Conachar trembles in his blood. Cairbar shrinks before Oscar's sword; and creeps in darkness behind his stone. He lifted the spear in secret, and pierced my Oscar's side. He falls forward on his shield: his knee sustains the chief: but his spear is in his hand. See gloomy Cairbar ‡ falls. The steel pierced his forehead, and divided his red hair behind. He lay;

\* Atha, *shallow river*: the name of Cairbar's feat in Connaught. part of the poem, which related to the death of Oscar her lover.

† The poet means Malvina, the daughter of Toscar, to whom he addressed that Cairbar, in the latter end of the third century:

lay, like a shattered rock, which Cromla shakes from its side. But never more shall Oscar rise! he leans on his bossy shield. His spear is in his terrible hand: Erin's sons stood distant and dark. Their shouts arose, like the crowded noise of streams, and Lena echoed around.

FINGAL heard the sound; and took his father's spear. His steps are before us on the heath. He spoke the words of woe. I hear the noise of battle: and Oscar is alone. Rise, ye sons of Morven, and join the hero's sword.

OSSIAN rushed along the heath. Fillan bounded over Lena. Fergus flew with feet of wind. Fingal strode in his strength, and the light of his shield is terrible. The sons of Erin saw it far distant; they trembled in their souls. They knew that the wrath of the king arose: and they foresaw their death. We first arrived; we fought; and Erin's chiefs withstood our rage. But when the king came, in the sound of his course, what heart of steel could stand! Erin fled over Lena. Death pursued their flight.

WE saw Oscar leaning on his shield. We saw his blood around. Silence darkened on every hero's face. Each turned his back and wept. The king strove to hide his tears. His gray beard whistled in the wind. He bends his head over his son: and his words are mixed with sighs.

AND art thou fallen, Oscar, in the midst of thy course? the heart of the aged beats over thee! He sees thy coming battles. He be-

ture: they say, he was killed in battle against Oscar the son of Ossian, but deny that he fell by his hand. As they have nothing to go upon but the traditions of their bards, the translator thinks that the account of Ossian is as probable: at the worst, it is but opposing one tradition to another.

holds



holds the battles which ought to come, but they are cut off from thy fame. When shall joy dwell at Selma? When shall the song of grief cease on Morven? My sons fall by degrees: Fingal shall be the last of his race. The fame which I have received shall pass away: my age will be without friends. I shall sit like a gray cloud in my hall: nor shall I expect the return of a son, in the midst of his founding arms. Weep, ye heroes of Morven! never more shall Oscar rise!

AND they did weep, O Fingal; dear was the hero to their souls. He went out to battle, and the foes vanished; he returned, in peace, amidst their joy. No father mourned his son slain in youth; no brother his brother of love. They fell, without tears, for the chief of the people was low! Bran\* is howling at his feet: gloomy Luäth is sad, for he had often led them to the chace; to the bounding roes of the desert.

WHEN Oscar beheld his friends around, his white breast rose with a sigh.—The groans, he said, of my aged heroes, the howling of my dogs, the sudden bursts of the song of grief, have melted Oscar's soul. My soul, that never melted before; it was like the steel of my sword.—Ossian, carry me to my hills! Raise the stones of my fame. Place the horn of the deer, and my sword within my narrow dwelling.—The torrent hereafter may raise the earth of my tomb: the hunter may find the steel and say, "This has been Oscar's sword."

\* Bran was one of Fingal's dogs.—He in the translator's hands, has given him the same properties with Virgil's Camilla. the poet, in a piece which is not just now

AND



AND fallest thou, son of my fame! And shall I never see thee, Oscar! When others hear of their sons, I shall not hear of thee. The moss is on the stones of his tomb, and the mournful wind is there. The battle shall be fought without him: he shall not pursue the dark-brown hinds. When the warrior returns from battles, and tells of other lands, he will say, I have seen a tomb, by the roaring stream, where a warrior darkly dwells: he was slain by car-borne Oscar, the first of mortal men.—I, perhaps, shall hear him, and a beam of joy will rise in my soul.

THE night would have descended in sorrow, and morning returned in the shadow of grief: our chiefs would have stood like cold dropping rocks on Lena, and have forgot the war, did not the king disperse his grief, and raise his mighty voice. The chiefs, as new-wakened from dreams, lift their heads around.

How long shall we weep on Lena; or pour our tears in Ullin? The mighty will not return. Oscar shall not rise in his strength. The valiant must fall one day, and be no more known on his hills.—Where are our fathers, O warriors! the chiefs of the times of old? They have set like stars that have shone, we only hear the sound of their praise. But they were renowned in their day, and the terror of other times. Thus shall we pass, O warriors, in the day of our fall. Then let us be renowned when we may; and leave our fame behind us, like the last beams of the sun, when he hides his red head in the west.

ULLIN, my aged bard! take the ship of the king. Carry Oscar to Selma, and let the daughters of Morven weep. We shall fight in Erin for the race of fallen Cormac. The days of my years begin to fail: I feel the weakness of my arm. My fathers bend from their



their clouds, to receive their gray-hair'd son. But, Trenmor! before I go hence, one beam of my fame shall rise: so shall my days end, as my years begun, in fame: my life shall be one stream of light to other times.

ULLIN rais'd his white sails: the wind of the south came forth. He bounded on the waves towards Selma's walls.—I remained in my grief, but my words were not heard.—The feast is spread on Lena: an hundred heroes reared the tomb of Cairbar: but no song is rais'd over the chief; for his soul had been dark and bloody. We remembered the fall of Cormac! and what could we say in Cairbar's praise?

THE night came rolling down. The light of an hundred oaks arose. Fingal sat beneath a tree. The chief of Etha sat near the king, the gray-hair'd strength of Ufnath.

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

† THE setting sun was yellow on Dora ‡. Gray evening began to descend. Temora's woods shook with the blast of the unconstant wind. A cloud, at length, gathered in the west, and a red star

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

related, as here, the death of his master Cormac.

† Althan speaks.

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

looked



looked from behind its edge.—I stood in the wood alone, and saw a ghost on the darkening air. His stride extended from hill to hill: his shield was dim on his side. It was the son of Semo: I knew the sadness of his face. But he passed away in his blast; and all was dark around.—My soul was sad. I went to the hall of shells. A thousand lights arose: the hundred bards had strung the harp. Cormac stood in the midst, like the morning star\*, when it rejoices on the eastern hill, and its young beams are bathed in showers.—The sword of Artho || was in the hand of the king; and he looked with joy on its polished studs: thrice he attempted to draw it, and thrice he failed: his yellow locks are spread on his shoulders: his cheeks of youth are red.—I mourned over the beam of youth, for he was soon to set.

ALTHAN! he said, with a smile, hast thou beheld my father? Heavy is the sword of the king, surely his arm was strong. O that I were like him in battle, when the rage of his wrath arose! then would I have met, like Cuchullin, the car-borne son of Cantéla! But years may come on, O Althan! and my arm be strong.—Hast thou heard of Semo's son, the chief of high Temora? He might have returned with his fame; for he promised to return to-night. My bards wait him with their songs, and my feast is spread.—

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

\* *Qualis, ubi oceani perfusus Lucifer unda,* Shakes from his rosy locks the pearly dew; *Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,* Dispels the darkness, and the day renews. *Extulit os sacrum cælo, tenebrasque resolvit.* DRYDEN.

VIRG.      || Arth, or Artho, the father of Cormac  
king of Ireland.

So from the seas exerts his radiant head,  
The star, by whom the lights of heav'n are led:



SON of Conachar ! he said, is the king of Tura low ? Why bursts thy sigh in secret ? And why descends the tear ?—Comes the car-borne Torlath ? Or the found of the red-haired Cairbar ?—They come !—for I see thy grief ; and Tura's king is low !—Shall I not rush to battle ?—But I cannot lift the arms of my fathers !—O had mine arm the strength of Cuchullin, soon would Cairbar fly ; the fame of my fathers would be renewed ; and the actions of other times !

HE took his bow of yew. Tears flow from his sparkling eyes.—Grief saddens around : the bards bend forward from their harps. The blast touches their strings, and the sound of woe ascends.

A VOICE is heard at a distance, as of one in grief ; it was Carril of other times, who came from the dark Slimora\*.—He told of the death of Cuchullin, and of his mighty deeds. The people were scattered around his tomb : their arms lay on the ground. They had forgot the battle, for the found of his shield had ceased.

BUT who, said the soft-voiced Carril, come like the bounding roes ? their stature is like the young trees of the plain, growing in a shower :—Soft and ruddy are their cheeks : but fearless souls look forth from their eyes ?—Who but the sons of Ufnoth, the car-borne chiefs of Etha ? The people rise on every side, like the strength of an half-extinguished fire, when the winds come suddenly from the desert, on their rustling wings.—The found of Caithbat's shield was heard. The heroes saw Cuchullin †, in the form of lovely Nathos. So rolled his sparkling eyes, and such was his steps

\* Slimora, a hill in Connaught, near which Cuchullin was killed.

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





on his heath.—Battles are fought at Lego: the sword of Nathos prevails. Soon shalt thou behold him in thy halls, king of woody Temora!—

AND soon may I behold him, O Carril! replied the returning joy of Cormac. But my soul is sad for Cuchullin; his voice was pleasant in mine ear.—Often have we moved on Dora, at the chace of the dark-brown hinds: his bow was unerring on the mountains.—He spoke of mighty men. He told of the deeds of my fathers; and I felt the joy of my breast.—But sit thou, at the feast, O Carril; I have often heard thy voice. Sing in the praise of Cuchullin; and of that mighty stranger.

DAY rose on Temora, with all the beams of the east. Trathin came to the hall, the son of old Gellama †.—I behold, he said, a dark cloud in the desert, king of Innisfail! a cloud it seemed at first, but now a croud of men. One strides before them in his strength; and his red hair flies in the wind. His shield glitters to the beam of the east. His spear is in his hand.

CALL him to the feast of Temora, replied the king of Erin. My hall is the house of strangers, son of the generous Gelláma!—Perhaps it is the chief of Etha, coming in the sound of his renown.—Hail, mighty stranger, art thou of the friends of Cormac?—But Carril, he is dark, and unlovely; and he draws his sword. Is that the son of Usnoth, bard of the times of old?

IT is not the son of Usnoth, said Carril, but the chief of Atha.—Why comest thou in thy arms to Temora, Cairbar of the

† Geal-lamha, *white-banded*.



gloomy brow? Let not thy sword rise against Cormac! Whither dost thou turn thy speed?

HE passed on in his darkness, and seized the hand of the king. Cormac foresaw his death, and the rage of his eyes arose.—Retire, thou gloomy chief of Atha: Nathos comes with battle.—Thou art bold in Cormac's hall, for his arm is weak.—The sword entered Cormac's side: he fell in the halls of his fathers. His fair hair is in the dust. His blood is smoking round.

AND art thou fallen in thy halls, I said ||, O son of noble Artho? The shield of Cuchullin was not near. Nor the spear of thy father. Mournful are the mountains of Erin, for the chief of the people is low!—Blest be thy soul, O Cormac! thou art snatched from the midst of thy course.

MY words came to the ears of Cairbar, and he closed us † in the midst of darkness. He feared to stretch his sword to the bards \*: though his soul was dark. Three days we pined alone: on the fourth, the noble Cathmor came.—He heard our voice from the cave; he turned the eye of his wrath on Cairbar.

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

|| Althan speaks.

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

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



“but he fought for gloomy Cairbar.” They will pass over my tomb in silence, and my fame shall not be heard.—Cairbar! loose the bards: they are the sons of other times. Their voice shall be heard in other ages, when the kings of Temora have failed.—

WE came forth at the words of the chief. We saw him in his strength. He was like thy youth, O Fingal, when thou first didst lift the spear.—His face was like the plain of the sun when it is bright: no darkness travelled over his brow. But he came with his thousands to Ullin; to aid the red-haired Cairbar: and now he comes to revenge his death, O king of woody Morven.—

AND let him come, replied the king; I love a foe like Cathmor. His soul is great; his arm is strong, and his battles are full of fame.—But the little soul is like a vapour that hovers round the marshy lake: it never rises on the green hill, lest the winds meet it there: its dwelling is in the cave, and it sends forth the dart of death.

USNOTH! thou hast heard the fame of Etha's car-borne chiefs.—Our young heroes, O warrior, are like the renown of our fathers.—They fight in youth, and they fall: their names are in the song.—But we are old, O Usnoth, let us not fall like aged oaks; which the blast overturns in secret. The hunter came past, and saw them lying gray across a stream. How have these fallen, he said, and whistling passed along.

RAISE the song of joy, ye bards of Morven, that our souls may forget the past.—The red stars look on us from the clouds, and silently descend. Soon shall the gray beam of the morning rise, and shew us the foes of Cormac.—Fillan! take the spear of the  
king;



king; go to Mora's dark-brown side. Let thine eyes travel over the heath, like flames of fire. Observe the foes of Fingal, and the course of generous Cathmor. I hear a distant sound, like the falling of rocks in the desert.—But strike thou thy shield, at times, that they may not come through night, and the fame of Morven cease.—I begin to be alone, my son, and I dread the fall of my renown.

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

One of the Fragments of Ancient Poetry lately published, gives a different account of the death of Oscar, the son of Ossian. The translator, though he well knew the more probable tradition concerning that hero, was unwilling to reject a poem, which, if not really of Ossian's composition, has much of his manner, and concise turn of expression. A more correct copy of that fragment, which has since come to the translator's hands, has enabled him to correct the mistake, into which a similarity of names had led those who handed down the poem by tradition.—The heroes of the piece are Oscar the son of Caruth, and Dermid the son of Diaran. Ossian, or perhaps his imitator, opens the poem with a lamentation for Oscar, and afterwards, by an easy transition, relates the story of Oscar the son of Caruth, who seems to

have bore the same character, as well as name, with Oscar the son of Ossian. Though the translator thinks he has good reason to reject the fragment as the composition of Ossian; yet as it is, after all, still somewhat doubtful whether it is or not, he has here subjoined it.

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

He fell as the moon in a storm; as the sun from the midst of his course, when clouds rise from the waste of the waves, when the blackness of the storm inwraps the rocks of Ardannider. I, like an ancient



cient oak on Morven, I moulder alone in my place. The blast hath lopped my branches away; and I tremble at the wings of the north. Chief of the warriors, Oscar, my son! shall I see thee no more!

But, son of Alpin, the hero fell not harmless as the grass of the field; the blood of the mighty was on his sword, and he travelled with death through the ranks of their pride. But Oscar, thou son of Caruth, thou hast fallen low! No enemy fell by thy hand. Thy spear was stained with the blood of thy friend.

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

They killed mighty Dargo in the field; Dargo who never fled in war. His daughter was fair as the morn; mild as the beam of night. Her eyes, like two stars in a shower: her breath, the gale of spring: her breasts, as the new-fallen snow floating on the moving heath. The warriors saw her, and loved; their souls were fixed on the maid. Each loved her as his fame; each must possess her or die. But her soul was fixed on Oscar; the son of Caruth was the youth of her love. She forgot the blood of her father; and loved the hand that slew him.

Son of Caruth, said Dermid, I love; O Oscar, I love this maid. But her soul cleaveth unto thee; and nothing can heal Dermid. Here, pierce this bosom, Oscar; relieve me, my friend, with thy sword.

My sword, son of Diaran, shall never be stained with the blood of Dermid.

Who then is worthy to slay me, O Oscar son of Caruth? Let not my life pass away unknown. Let none but Oscar slay me. Send me with honour to the grave, and let my death be renowned.

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

They fought by the brook of the mountain, by the streams of Branno. Blood tinged the running water, and curdled round the mossy stones. The stately Dermid fell; he fell, and smiled in death.

And fallest thou, son of Diaran, fallest thou by Oscar's hand! Dermid who never yielded in war, thus do I see thee fall! —He went, and returned to the maid of his love; he returned, but she perceived his grief.

Why that gloom, son of Caruth? what shades thy mighty soul?

Though once renowned for the bow, O maid, I have lost my fame. Fixed on a tree by the brook of the hill, is the shield of the valiant Gormur, whom I slew in battle. I have wasted the day in vain, nor could my arrow pierce it.

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

She



She went. He stood behind the shield.  
Her arrow flew, and pierced his breast.

Blessed be that hand of snow; and blessed  
that bow of yew! Who but the  
daughter of Dargo was worthy to slay the  
son of Caruth? Lay me in the earth, my  
fair one; lay me by the side of Dermid.

Oscar! the maid replied, I have the soul  
of the mighty Dargo. Well pleased I can

meet death. My sorrow I can end.—  
She pierced her white bosom with the steel.  
She fell; she trembled; and died.

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

CARRIC-

