

F I N G A L
AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

B O O K V.

A R G U M E N T.

Cuchullin and Connal still remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is described. Swaran is overcome, bound and delivered over as a prisoner to the care of Ossian and Gaul the son of Morni; Fingal, his younger sons, and Oscar, still pursue the enemy. The episode of Orla a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal touched with the death of Orla, orders the pursuit to be discontinued; and calling his sons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngest of them was killed. He laments his death, hears the story of Lamdarg and Gelchoffa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had been sent by Cuchullin, to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Ossian. The conversation of the two poets closes the action of the fourth day.

The fourth day still continues. The poet, by putting the narration in the mouth of Connal, who still remained with Cuchullin on the side of Cromla, gives propriety to the praises of Fingal. The beginning of this book, in the original is one of the most beautiful parts of the poem. The versification is regular and full, and agrees very well with the sedate character of Connal. — No poet has adapted the cadence of his verse more to the temper of the speaker, than Ossian has done. It is more than probable, the whole poem was originally designed to be sung to the harp, as the versification is so various and so much suited to the different passions of the human mind.

Now Connal, on Cromla's windy side,
 spoke to the chief of the noble car. Why
 heart gloom, son of *Semo*! Our friends are
 the mighty in battle. And renowned art
 thou, o warrior! many were the death o
 thy steel. Often has *Bragela* met with blue-
 rolling eyes of joy; often has she met her
 hero, returning in the midst of the valiant;
 when his sword was red with slaughter, and
 his foes silent in the fields of the tomb.
 Pleasant to her ears were thy bards, when
 thine actions rose in the song.

But behold the King of *Morven*; he
 moves below like a pillar of fire. His strength
 is like the stream of *Lubar*, or the wind of
 the echoing *Cromla*, when the branchy
 forests of night are overturned.

Happy are thy people, o *Fingal*, thine
 arm shall fight their battles; thou art the
 first in their dangers; the wisest in the days
 of their pelace. Thou speakest and thy thou-

sands obey, and armies tremble at the sound
of thy steel. Happy are thy people, *Fingal*,
chief of the lonely hills.

Who is so dark and terrible, coming in the
thunder of his course? who is it but *Starno's*
son to meet the King of *Morven*? Behold
the battle of the chiefs: it is like the storm
of the ocean, when two spirits meet far di-
stant, and contend for the rolling of the wave.
The hunter hears the noise on his hill; and
sees the high billows advancing to *Arduen's*
shore.

Such were the words of *Connal*, when
the heroes met in the midst of their falling
people. There was the clang of arms! there
every blow, like the hundred hammers
of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the
Kings, and horrid the look of their eyes.
Their dark-brown shields are cleft in twain,
and their steel flies, broken from their hel-
mets. They fling their weapons down.

Each

Each rushes* to the grasp of his foe,
 Their sinewy arms bend each other: they
 turn from side to side, and strain and stretch
 their large spreading limbs below. But
 when the pride of their strength arose, they
 shock the hill with their heels; rocks tumble
 from their places on high; the green headed
 bushes are overturned. At length the
 strength of *Swaran* fell; and the King of the
 groves is bound.

Thus have I seen on *Cona*; (but *Cona* I
 behold no more) thus have I seen two dark
 hills removed from their place by the strength
 of the bursting stream. They turn from side to

H 5

side

* This passage resembles one in the twenty
 third Iliad.

Close lock'd above their heads and arms
 are mixt;

Below their planted feet at distance fixt;
 New to the grasp each manly body bends;
 The humid sweat from ev'ry pore descends;
 Their bones resound with blows; sides,
 shouldres, thighs,

Swell to each gripe, and bloody tumours
 rise.

Pope.

side and their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they fall together with all their rocks and trees. The streams are turned by their sides, and the red ruin is seen afar.

Sons of the King of *Morven*, said the noble *Fingal*, guaid the King of *Lochlin*; for he is strong as his thousand waves. His hand is taught to the battle, and his race of the times of old. *Gaul*, thou first of my heroes, and *Offian* King of songs, attend the friend of *Agandecca*, and raise to joy his grief. — But, *O'car*, *Fillan*, and *Ryno*, ye children of the race. Pursue the rest of *Lochlin* over the heath of *Lena*; that no vessel may hereafter bound on the dark-rolling waves of *Inistore*.||

They flew like lightning over the heath.
 He slowly moved as a cloud of thunder,
 when the sultry plain of summer is silent.
 His sword is before him as a sun-beam,
 terrible as the streaming meteor of night.
 He

He came toward a chief of *Lochlin*, and
spoke to the son of the wave.

Who is that like a cloud at the rock of
the roaring stream? He cannot bound over
its course; yet stately is the chief! his bossy
shield is on his side; and his spear like the
tree of the desert. Youth of the dark-brown
hair, art thou of *Fingal's* foes?

I am a son of *Lochlin* he cries and strong
is my arm in war. My spouse is weeping
at home, but *Orla** will never return.

Or fights or yields the hero, said *Fin-
gal*, of the noble deeds? foes do not con-
quer in my presence: but my friends are
renowned in the hall. Son of the wave,
fol-

* The story of *Orla* is so beautiful, and
affecting in the original, that many are in
possession of it in the north of *Scotland*, who
never heard a syllable more of the poem. It
varies the action, and awakes the attention
of the reader, when he expected nothing,
but languor in the conduct of the poem, as
the great action was over in the conquest of
Swaran.

follow me, partake the feast of my shells, and pursue the deer of my desert.

No: said the hero, I assist the feeble: my strength shall remain with the weak in arms. My sword has been always unmatched, o warrior: let the King of *Morven* yield. I

I never yielded, *Orla*, *Fingal* never yielded to man. Draw thy sword and chuse thy foe. Many are my heroes.

And does the King refuse the combat, said *Orla* of the dark-brown hair? *Fingal* is a match for *Orla*: and he alone of all his race. — But King of *Morven*; if I shall fall; (as one time the warrior must die;) raise my tomb in the mist, and let it be the greatest on *Lena*. And send, over the dark-bloe wave the sword of *Orla* to the spouse of his love; that she may shew it to her son with years, to kindle his soul to war.

Son of the mournful tale, said *Fingal*, why dost thou awaken my tears? One day the

the warriors must die, and the children see
 their useless arms in the hall. But, *Orla*,
 thy tomb shall rise, and thy white-bosomed
 spouse weep over thy sword.

They fought on the sheath of *Lena*, but
 feeble was the arm of *Orla*. The sword of
Fingal descended and cleft his shield in twain.

It fell and glittered on the ground as
 the moon on the stream of night.

King of *Morven*, said the hero, lift thy
 sword, and pierce my breast. wounded and
 faint from battle my friend have left me here.
 The mournful tale shall come to my love
 on the banks of the streamy *Loda*; when
 she is alone in the wood, and the rustling
 blast in the leaves.

No, said the King of *Morven*, I will
 never wound thee, *Orla*. On the banks of
Loda let her see thee escaped from the hands
 of war. Let thy gray-haired father, who
 per-

perhaps is blind with age hear the sound of thy voice in the hall. — With joy let the hero rise, and search for his son with his hands.

But never will he find him, *Fingal*; said the youth of the streamy *Loda*. — On *Lena's* heath I shall die; and foreign bards will talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. And now I give it to the wind.

The dark blood poured from his side, he fell pale on the heath of *Lena*. *Fingal* bends over him as he dies, and calls his younger heroes.

Oscar and *Fillan*, my sons, raise high the memory of *Orla*. Here let the dark-haired hero rest far from the spouse of his love. Here let him rest in his narrow house far from the sound of *Loda*. The feeble will find his bow at home, but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills, and his boars which he used to pursue,

re-

rejoice. Fallen is the arm, of battle; the
mighty among the valiant is low.

Exalt the voice, and blow the horn,
ye sons of the King of *Morven*: let us go
back to *Swaran*. and send the mighty away
on song. *Fillan*, *Oscar* and *Ryno* fly over
the heath of *Lena*. Where, *Ryno*, art thou,
young son of fame? Thou art not wont to
be the last to answer thy father.

Ryno, said *Ullin* first of bards, is with
the awful forms of his fathers. With *Tra-*
thal King of the mighty deeds. The youth
is low, — the youth is pale. — he lies on
Lena's heath.

And fell the swiftest in the race, said
the King, the first to bend the bow? Thou
scarce hast been known to me; why did
young *Ryno* fall? But sleep thou softly on
Lena. *Fingal* shall soon behold thee. Soon
shall my voice be heard no more, and my
footsteps cease to be seen. The bard's will
tell of *Fingal's* name; the stones will talk

of

of me. But, *Ryno*, thou art low indeed, —
 thou hast not received thy fame. *Ullin*,
 strike the harp for *Ryno*; tell what the chief
 would have been. Farewel thou first in eve-
 ry field. No more shall I direct thy dart.
 Thou that hast been so fair; I behold thee
 not — Farewel.

The tear is on the King; for terrible
 was his son in war. His son! that was like
 a beam of fire by night on the hill; when
 the forests sink down in its course, and the
 traveller trembles at the sound.

Whose fame is it that dark-green tomb,
 begun the King of generous shells? four stones
 with their head of moss stand there and mark
 the narrow house of death. Near it let my
Ryno rest, and be the neighbour of the va-
 liant. Perhaps some chief of fame is here
 to fly with my sons on clouds. O *Ullin*
 raise the songs of other times. Bring to
 memory the dark dwellers of the tomb. If
 in the field of the valiant they never fled from
 dan-

danger, my son shall rest with them, far
 rom his friends, on the heath of *Lenā*.

Here, said the mouth of the song,
 here rest the first of heroes. Silent is *Lam-
 derg* * in his tomb, and *Ullin* King of
 swords. And who soft smiling from her
 cloud, shews me her face of love? Why,
 daughter, why so pale art thou, first of
 the maids of *Cromla*? Dost thou sleep with
 the foes in battle, *Gelchoffa*, white-
 bologed daughter of *Tuathal*? — Thou hast
 been the love of thousands, but *Lamderg*
 was thy love. He came to *Selma's* mossy
 towers, and striking his dark buckler
 spoke:

Where is *Gelchoffa*, my love, the daugh-
 ter of the noble *Tuathal*? I left her in the
 hall

* *Lamh - dhearg* signifies *bloody hand*.
Gelchoffa, *white-legged*. *Tuathal*, *surly*, *Ul-
 fadda*, *long-beard*. *Ferchios*, *the conqueror
 of men*.

hall o *Selma*, when I fought with the gloomy *Ulfadda*. Return soon, o *Lamderg*, she said, for here I am in the midst of sorrow. Her white breast rose with sighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I see her not coming to meet me; and to sooth my soul after battle. Silent is the hall of my joy; I hear not the voice of the bard. — *Bran* * does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of *Lamderg*. Where is *Gelchossa*, my love, the mild daughter of the generous *Tuathal*.

Lamderg! says *Ferchios* the son of *Aidon*, *Gelchossa* may be an *Cromla*; she and the maids of the bow pursuing the flying deer.

Fer-

* *Bran* is a common name of gray-hounds to this day. It is a custom in the north of Scotland, to give the names of the heroes mention'd in this poem, to their dogs; a proof that they are familiar to the ear and their fame generally known.

Ferchios! replied the chief of *Cromla* no noise meets the ear of *Lamderg*. No sound is in the woods of *Lena*. No deer fly in my sight. No panting dog pursues. I see not *Gelchoffa* my love, fair as the full moon setting on the hills of *Cromla*. Go, *Ferchios*, go to *Allad*** the gray haired son of the rock. His dwelling is in the circle of stones. He may know of *Gelchoffa*.

The son of *Aidon* went; and spoke to the ear of age. *Allad!* thou that dwellest in the rock, thou, that tremblest alone, what saw thine eyes of age? I saw, answered *Allad* the old, *Ullin* the son of *Cairbar*. He came like a cloud from *Cromla*; and he hummed a surly song, like a blast

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***Allad* is plainly a druid: he is called the son of the rock, from his dwelling in a cave; and the circle of stones here mention'd is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here consulted as one who had a supernatural knowledge of things; from the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the second sight, which prevailed in the highlands and isles.

in a leafless wood. He entered the hall of *Selma*. — *Lamderg*, he said, most dreadful of men, fight or yield to *Ullin*. *Lamderg*, replied *Gelchoffa*, the son of battle is not here. He fights *Ulfadda* mighty chief. He is not here thou first of men. But *Lamderg* never yielded. He will fight the son of *Cairbar*.

Lovely art thou, said terrible *Ullin*, daughter of the generous *Tuathal*. I carry thee to *Cairbar's* halls. Three days I remain on *Cromla*, to wait that son of battle, *Lamderg*. On the fourth *Gelchoffa* is mine, if the mighty *Lamderg* flies.

Allad! said the chief of *Cromla*, peace to thy dreams in the cave. *Ferchios*, found the horn of *Lamderg*, that *Ullin* may hear on *Cromla*. *Lamderg* * like a roaring

* The reader will find this passage altered from what it was in the fragments of ancient poetry. — It is delivered in a very different manner by tradition, and the translator has chosen

aring storm ascended the hill from *Selma*. He hummed a furly song, as he went, like the noise of a falling stream. He stood like a cloud on the hill, that varies its form to the wind. He rolled a stone the sign of war; *Ullin* heard in *Cairbar's* hall. The hero heard with joy, his foe, and took his father's spear. A smile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his sword by his side. The dagger glittered in his hand. He whistled as he went.

Gelchossa saw the silent chief, as a wreath of mist ascending the hill. — She struck her white and heaving breast; and silent, tearful, feared for *Lamderg*.

Cairbar hoary chief of shells, said the maid of the tender hand; I must bend the bow of *Cromla*; for, I see the dark-brown hinds.

I 3

She

chosen that reading, which favours least of bombast.

She hasted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought. — Why could I tell the King of *Morven*, how wrathful heroes fight! — Fierce *Ullin* fell. Young *Lamderg* came all pale to the daughter of generous *Tuathal*.

What blood, my love, the soft-haired woman said, what blood runs down my warrior's side? — It is *Ullin's* blood the chief replied, thou fairer than the snow of *Cromla*! *Gelchoffa* let me rest here a little while. The mighty *Lamderg* died.

And sleepest thou so soon on earth, 'o chief of shady *Cromla*? three days she mourned beside her love. — The hunters found her dead. They raised this tomb above the three. Thy son, o King of *Morven*, may rest here with heroes.

And here my son shall rest, said *Fingal*, the noise of their fame has reached my ears. *Fillan* and *Fergus*! bring hither *Orla*,

la,

la, the pale youth of the stream of *Loda*.
 Not unequalled shall *Ryno* lie in earth, when
Orla is by his side. Weep, ye daughters
 of *Morven*; and ye maids of the streamy
Loda. Like a tree they grew on the hills;
 and they have fallen like the oak * of the
 desert; when it lies across a stream, and
 withers in the wind of the mountain.

Oscar! chief of every youth! thou
 seest how they have fallen. Be thou, like
 them, on earth renowned. Like them
 the song of bards. Terrible were their
 forms in battle; but calm was *Ryno* in the
 days of peace. He was like the bow of
 the shower, seen far distant on the stream;
 when the sun is setting on *Mora*, and si-

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len-

* — ὡς ὅτε τις δένδρον ἤγειρεν — Hom.
 II. 16.

— as the mountain oak
 Nods to the ax, till with a groaning sound
 It sinks, and spreads its honours on the
 ground.
 Pope.

lence on the hill of deer. Rest youngest
of my sons, rest o *Ryno*, on *Lena*. We
too shall be no more; for the warrior one
day must fall.

Such was thy grief, thou King of hills.
What must the grief of *Offian* be, for thou
thyself art gone. I hear not thy distant voi-
ce on *Cona*. My eyes perceive thee not.
Often forlorn and dark I sit at thy tomb;
and feel it with my hands. When I think
I hear thy voice; it is but the blast of the
desart. — *Fingal* has long since fallen asleep,
the ruler of the war.

Then *Gaul* and *Offian* sat with *Swa-
ran* on the soft green banks of *Lubar*. I
touched the harp to please the King! But
gloom was his brow. He rolled his red
eyes towards *Lena*. The hero mourned
his people.

I lifted my eyes to *Cromla*, and I saw
the son of generous *Semo*. — Sad and
flow

slow he retired from his hill towards the lonely cave of *Tura*, He saw *Fingal* victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The sun is bright on his armours, and *Connal* slowly followed. They sunk behind the hill, like two pillars of the fire of night; when winds pursue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath resounds. Beside a stream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock! One tree bends above it; and the rushing winds echo against its sides. Here rests the chief of *Dunscach*, the son of generous *Semo*. His thoughts are on the battle he lost; and the tear is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame, that fled like the mist of *Cona*. O *Bragela*, thou art too far remote to cheer the soul of the hero. But let him see thy bright form in his soul, that his thoughts may return to the lonely sunbeam of *Dunscach*.

Who comes with the locks of age?
 It is the son of songs. Hail, *Carril* of other
 times, thy voice is like the harp in the halls
 of *Tura*. Thy words are pleasant, as the
 flower that falls on the fields of the sun.
Carril of the times of old, why comest
 thou from the son of the generous *Semo*?

Ossian King of swords, replied the bard,
 thou best raifest the song. Long hast thou
 been known to *Carril*, thou ruler of batt-
 les. Often have I touched the harp to lo-
 vely *Evirallin*. Thou too hast often accom-
 panied my voice in *Branno's* hall of gene-
 rous thells. And often, admidst our voices,
 was heard the mildest *Evirallin*. One day
 the sung of *Cormac's* fall, the youth that
 died for her love. I saw the tears on her
 cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men.
 Her soul was touched for the unhappy,
 though she loved him not. How fair among
 a thousand maids was the daughter of the
 generous *Branno*!

Bring

Bring not, *Carril*, I replied, bring not
her memory to my mind. My soul must
melt at the remembrance. My eyes must
have their tears. Pale in the earth is she
the softly - blushing fair of my love. But
sit thou on the heath, o Bard, and let us
hear thy voice. It is pleasant as the gale of
spring, that sighs on the hunter's ear; when
he wakens from dreams of joy, and has
heard the music of the spirits of the hill.

FIN-