



Reliques of Irish Poetry

By

Charlotte Brooke

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Charlotte Brooke

TITLE PAGE

RELIQUES

OF

IRISH POETRY

**CONSISTING OF
HEROIC POEMS, ODES, ELEGIES, AND
SONGS**

**TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE:
*With Notes explanatory and historical;***

AND

THE ORIGINALS IN THE IRISH CHARACTER,

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED AN IRISH TALE

BY MISS BROOKE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

**A MEMOIR OF HER LIFE AND WRITINGS
BY AARON CROSSLY SEYMOUR, ESQ.
AUTHOR OF "LETTERS TO YOUNG FERSONS," &c. &c.**

**A Oisín, is binn linn do scéala.—Cath Gabhra
*Melodious, Oisín, are thy strains to me.***

**DUBLIN:
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1816.**

MEMOIRS OF MISS BROOKE.

To descend to posterity with honour, and have a name inscribed in the annals of fame, is the earnest desire of multitudes, but the lot comparatively of few. The great mass is soon forgotten, and their memory perishes. An elegant sepulchral monument, though loaded with the praises of the deceased, soon ceases to interest the spectator, and being so common a thing is regarded rather as a proof of the wealth than the virtues of the man.

A good and benevolent tenor of conduct will make a person remembered in his circle during the continuance of that generation. Deeds of public virtue and prowess will be objects of national applause for the same space. Extraordinary actions which, affect the destinies of a kingdom will give a place in the page of history, and secure a lasting remembrance. Such as have been benefactors, not to their own country alone, but to mankind, by the alleviation of human misery, by putting a stop to a general and long continued course of injustice and oppression, and by the introduction of principles calculated to augment the sum of personal and social felicity, will justly possess a wider extent of fame, be celebrated in every country as the friend of man, and descend from age to age with undiminished praise. By those who have attained the first rank in learning, or written books of superior excellence, a renown as extensive and as durable will be acquired.

Biography has always been highly extolled. It has frequently been compared with other kinds of composition, and pronounced peculiarly entertaining and instructive. The utility of it has been even ranked above the advantages resulting from general history; for the aim of all history should be to describe and exhibit persons impartially as they are, that goodness may excite admiration, and vice abhorrence. Upon this principle, individual representations are obviously superior to general and aggregate. When the attention is attracted and confined to one particular object, the view is more distinct, and the impression is more forcible. Expansion and division weaken: multiplicity and variety distract. This may be judged of, says a masterly writer, by the feelings and operations of the mind in the contemplation of other things.— "When from the summit of some lofty mountain, we survey the wide extended landscape, though highly delighted, we feel ourselves bewildered and overwhelmed by the profusion and diversity of beauties which nature spreads around us. But when we enter the detail of nature: when we attend the footsteps of a friend through some favoured, beautiful spot, which the eye and the mind take in at once; feeling ourselves at ease, with undivided, undistracted attention we contemplate the whole, we examine and arrange the parts; the imagination is indeed less expanded, but the heart is more gratified; and pleasure is less violent and tumultuous, but it is more intense, more complete, and continues much longer; what is lost in respect of sublimity, is gained in perspicuity, force, and duration."

It is remarked by our celebrated moralist, Dr. Johnson, "That there has scarcely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not have been useful." If such a remark is generally applicable, much more is it appropriate to persons of profound sagacity, brilliant imagination, amazing fortitude, quickness of perception, and strength of intellect. And if the history of such persons be executed with fidelity and skill, while it exercises the judgment less severely, it will fix down the attention more closely, and make its way more directly and more forcibly to the heart. But it has frequently been observed, that the lives of literary characters are

enlivened by few incidents, and therefore seldom afford any great scope for biographical remark; for variety of action is not to be expected in the closet, or in the privacy of study: a simple narrative, therefore, of their writings and opinions is all that we can hope to find in their history. The life of the late celebrated Miss Brooke particularly exemplifies this observation; for in the retirement which she loved and courted, and the tranquil labours of the closet, there is little room for the display of individual character, however great the abilities of the agent, and however important the effects of her literary exertions on the age in which she lived.

Miss Brooke was descended from one of those families which heralds pronounce ancient and honourable. The family derive their name probably from Brooke in the County of Wilts, of which they have been possessed from a very early period. The pedigree is regularly deduced from William de la Brooke, who lived in the reign of Henry III. anno 1249, and whose descendants were ennobled as Knights, Baronets, and Barons. Sir Basil Brooke, of Madeley, in the County of Salop, Knight, who married Etheldred, only daughter of Sir Edmund Brudenell, ancestor to the Earls of Cardigan, (son of Sir Thomas Brudenell, Knt. by Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Sir William Fitz-William, of Melton, in Northamptonshire, ancestor to the present Earl Fitz-William) was Sheriff of Rutland in 1558, the last year of Queen Mary's reign, and Sheriff of the County of Northampton, in the 6th and 20th of Elizabeth.<1> One of his descendants, Sir Basil Brooke, Knt. settled at Maghrabegg, and Brooke Manor, in the County of Donegal, and was an undertaker in the plantation of Ulster.<2> He married Anne, daughter of Thomas Leicester, of Toft, in the County of Chester,<3> Esq. and dying 15th July, 1633, was buried in St. Werburgh's Church, Dublin, having issue, Sir Henry, of Brookesborough, in the County of Fermanagh, Knt. and two daughters. Which Sir Henry personally served for many years in the wars of Ireland, as a Captain of foot, and in other stations; and during the troubles of 1641 preserved the town and county of Donegal. He was three times married, and had several children, from one of whom descended the Rev. William Brooke, of Rantavan, Rector of the Union of Mullough, in the diocese of Kilmore, who married Miss Digby, of an ancient and honourable family long seated in Ireland.

This gentleman was a person of considerable talents and amiable worth, and elected a member of the Convocation, proposed to be held about the beginning of the last century. His conduct in life was upright, conscientious, and steady in private, friendly and affectionate; in both, pleasant, amiable, and conciliatory. He had issue two sons, by Miss Digby. Robert, the eldest, was a man of excellent understanding and affectionate disposition. He married his cousin, Miss Honor Brooke,<4> daughter of the Rev. Mr. Brooke, a younger brother of the Rev. William Brooke, of Rantavan, by whom he had four sons and one daughter, viz.

1. Henry Brooke, born November, 1738. He was originally intended for the church, and had received an education suited to that profession. But from an extreme delicacy of constitution, he was obliged to relinquish the design, and direct his attention to other pursuits. He was the intimate friend of the celebrated John Wesley, Rev. John Fletcher, the well-known vicar of Madeley, in Shropshire, and several characters in the religious world, with whom he frequently corresponded. He married in April, 1767, Miss Anne Kirchhoffer, daughter of Mr. Kirchhoffer, who kept an eminent furniture warehouse in Dublin; and by this lady, who died in February, 1805, he had eleven children, only three of whom survived him—a son, called William Henry, and two daughters, Maria Jane, married in July, 1794, to Isaac D'Olier, L.L.D. by whom she has issue a numerous family; and Theodosia, married in 1810 to F. H.

Holcroft, Esq. by whom she had one surviving son. This lady died in March, 1813. Mr. Brooke departed this life, October 6th, 1806.<5>

2. Robert Brooke, who early in life embraced the military profession, and went to India, where he quickly rose to the rank of captain. No man ever made a fortune abroad with more deserved renown or greater purity, than Captain Brooke did in India, where his military talents and conduct, and his inflexible integrity had been frequently and beneficially called into action. On his return from India, in 1775, he built the town of Prosperous, in the county of Kildare, and was the means of introducing and establishing the cotton manufacture in Ireland. But his patriotic exertions to promote the interest of his native country, in the genuine feeling of that public-spiritedness which he eminently possessed, proved the ruin of that fortune which he had so hardly earned, by well-fought battles in his country's service. In the year 1788, he was appointed governor of the Island of St. Helena, and was shortly after raised to the rank of colonel. This situation Colonel Brooke filled for several years with considerable advantage to the settlement at St. Helena, and to the East India Company, till declining years and growing infirmities obliged him to resign, and retire on a pension for life. He returned to England, where he lived respected and beloved, and died at Bath in the year 1810.

3. Digby Brooke, who followed his brother Colonel Brooke to the East Indies. He was a young man of very promising talents, amiable disposition, and a remarkably expert engineer. He had hitherto succeeded in his prospects beyond his most sanguine expectations; but having been directed to blow up a fortification, he was rapidly executing his orders, when one of the mines which he had laid for the purpose, did not explode as soon as expected. After waiting a few minutes longer, and impatient for the result, he imprudently entered the fort without adverting, to the necessary precaution of cutting off the communication between the mine and the train of powder by which it was to be set off; almost as soon as he had advanced within the lines, the explosion took place, and he was blown up amidst the undistinguished heap of ruins.

4. Thomas Digby Brooke, a young man, whose mind was vigorous and ardent; sanguine in all its pursuits, and wholly intent in carrying them through with success. He possessed some abilities, and translated with elegance, while he retained the spirit of the celebrated Madame Guion's works, particularly her *Short and Easy Method of Prayer*, which he published in 1775, and the memoirs of her life, in a large volume octavo, which appeared some time after. He married Miss Agnes Kirchhoffer, sister to his brother Henry's wife, by whom he had issue a numerous family. He died of a putrid fever, in January 1786, universally lamented.

5. Miss Sarah Brooke, a young lady of the most amiable manners and disposition, who married Francis Kirchhoffer, brother to Mrs. Henry and Mrs. Thomas Brooke, by whom she had issue.<6>

The second son of the Rev. William Brooke of Rantavan, was the late Henry Brooke, Esq., the celebrated novelist and dramatic writer. He was born in the year 1706. After receiving the usual preparatory education at Dr. Sheridan's school, he was entered at an early age a student of Trinity College, Dublin; and from thence removed to the Temple in his seventeenth year. There the engaging sweetness of his temper, and peculiar vivacity of his genius, caught the notice and esteem of almost all those in London, who were themselves remarkable for talents and for learning. Swift prophesied wonders of him—Pope affectionately loved him. Thus flattered and encouraged, he returned to Ireland, to settle his affairs and be called to the bar.

The illness of an aunt whom he tenderly loved, cut short the paternal caresses and welcome, and hastened him to Westmeath to receive her last adieus. This lady, who had always been passionately fond of her amiable nephew, evinced in her dying moments the most implicit and firm reliance on his honour and worth. She committed to his guardianship her daughter, a fine lively and beautiful girl, of between eleven and twelve, but slightly portioned, and therefore in still the greater need of a protector,—and then died in peace.

He escorted his mourning ward to Dublin, where his father and mother then were, and placed her at a respectable boarding-school. Here she improved in beauty and accomplishments: the visits of her guardian were frequent, and love stole on their young hearts, unperceived by themselves, but plainly apparent to the school-fellows of Miss Meares, whose observations and raillery frequently drew tears of embarrassment and vexation from her eyes. She complained to her cousin but he was too much enamoured to discontinue his attentions and she loved him too much, to sacrifice his company to prudential considerations. A clandestine marriage was at last the consequence; upon discovery of which, they were again married in presence of his father and mother.

By this lady Mr. Brooke had a numerous family. But of all its honours, only two branches remained of this venerable trunk—a son, Arthur, who died a captain in the service of the East India Company, and a daughter, Charlotte, the subject of this memoir, who inherited a large portion of her father's talents, and was one of the brightest literary ornaments of this country. She was the well-beloved and flattering child of his old age; and spent the latter years of his life

"To rock the cradle of declining age."

At a very early age Miss Brooke gave indications of an uncommon capacity, and discovered that love of reading, and that close application to whatever she engaged in, which marked her character through life. Mr. Brooke observing in his amiable and ingenious daughter an excellent capacity for learning, gave her all the advantages of a liberal education. From his society she undoubtedly reaped many benefits. He was a man of genius; and his tragedy of *Gustavus Vasa*, is deservedly estimated "one of the foremost productions of human powers." To impress us with an idea of his virtues, we need only read his works; for he was what he there appears to be. The leading features of his mind were benevolence, meekness, and faith; for his country, patriotism to excess; and for human kind, that ever wakeful regard to the interests of religion and morality, which delighted to employ itself in seizing or creating opportunities of advancing their cause.

These sentiments were early instilled into the tender and susceptible mind of Miss Brooke by her excellent parent. He had formed a plan for her education, with an unalterable determination to pursue it. In this plan he proposed to reject the severity of discipline; and to lead her mind insensibly to knowledge and exertion, by exciting her curiosity, and directing it to useful objects. By this method, Miss Brooke's desire to learn became as eager as her parent's wish to teach; and such were his talents of instruction, and her facility of retaining it, that in her fifth year she was able to read, distinctly and rapidly, any English book. He particularly attended at the same time, to the cultivation of her memory, by making her learn and repeat select passages from the English poets.

During this period Miss Brooke's attention was almost equally divided between her books and a little garden; the cultivation and embellishment of which

occupied all her leisure hours. Her faculties necessarily gained strength by exercise; and the sedulity of a fond parent was without intermission exerted to add to her stock of scientific attainments. He also taught her the rudiments of drawing, in which she afterwards excelled. The quick and early improvement which she made, was an ample recompense for all the pains that had been taken with her. The accomplishments generally attained with labour, expense, and waste of time, seemed with her the mere amusement of a few spare hours, and acquired with little expense, or professional assistance.

It has often been observed, that where nature has bestowed great powers, the love of fame burns with a proportionate ardour, and that the exertions of men of genius are both called forth and rewarded by the admiration which they naturally excite. The observation has been made and received with greater confidence, because the characters which confirm it are by nature prominent, and press themselves on our regard, while those which contradict it delight to retire from public view, and do not enter with their proper weight into our considerations. But an attentive survey of life will discover many who, though distinguished by their powers and attainments, do not seek for happiness in the applause of mankind, but preferring a calm repose to turbulent enjoyments, decline the honours which are placed within their reach. To the number of these is to be added the subject of this memoir. She was modest and unobtrusive, and is described by her intimate friends as a person of a studious and retired character, whose life was a life of incessant reading and thought. Her industry was great; and her love of literature was the result of disposition, and not of submission to control. Books she had always at command; for her father, who contemplated with delight the progress of his daughter, with a wise liberality allowed her unlimited credit on his purse. But of this indulgence, as she knew that his finances were restricted; she availed herself no further than to purchase such books as were essential to her improvement.

Her ardour for knowledge was unlimited; and she was much distinguished at this period of life by the elegance both of her prose and poetical compositions. The early productions of persons of eminence have an interest which is independent of their merit; but the loss of some pieces which Miss Brooke wrote, when very young, is lamented by her friends, with a warmth of regret which only uncommon excellence could have excited.

If Miss Brooke's literary acquisitions be compared with her years, few instances will be found in the annals of biography, of a more successful application of time and talents, than she exhibits; and it is worthy of observation, that she was not less indebted for her attainments, to her uncommon industry and method, than to her superior capacity. The faculties of her mind, by nature vigorous, were improved by constant exercise; and her memory, by habitual practice, had acquired a power of retaining whatever had once been impressed upon it. She seems to have entered upon her career of study with this maxim strongly impressed upon her mind, that whatever had been attained, was attainable by her; and it has been remarked, that she never overlooked, nor neglected, any opportunity of improving her intellectual faculties, or of acquiring esteemed accomplishments.

To an unextinguished ardour for universal knowledge, she joined a perseverance in the pursuit of it, which subdued all obstacles. Reflection and meditation strengthened and confirmed what industry and investigation had accumulated. It was also a fixed principle with her, from which she never voluntarily

deviated, not to be deterred by any difficulties that were surmountable, from prosecuting to a successful termination, what she had once deliberately undertaken. By a regular allotment of her time to particular occupations, and a scrupulous adherence to the distribution which she had fixed, all her studies were pursued without interruption or confusion.

Some years prior to the birth of Miss Brooke, her father removed to London, where he renewed his intimacy with the *belles lettres* and their professors; and wrote his poem of *Universal Beauty* under the eye and criticism of Mr. Pope, who prophesied the expansion of his genius and fame, from a beginning so wonderful in so very young a man. Soon, however, he was obliged to return—family affairs demanded his presence. In the course of a little time he went a third time to London, where his company was sought with avidity by the first characters of the age. The amiable Lord Lyttleton soon distinguished and cherished a mind and genius so similar to his own—Pope received him with open arms—Mr. Pitt (the late Lord Chatham) was particularly fond of him, and introduced him to the Prince of Wales, who caressed him with uncommon familiarity, and presented him with many elegant and valuable tokens of his friendship. Here, flushed with ambition, glowing with emulation, and elevated with praise, his genius soared to its zenith, and snatched all its fire from the altar of Apollo, to animate the foremost production of human powers his tragedy of *Gustavus Vasa*.

"Though in this play," says his elegant and accomplished daughter, "a candid enemy could have discovered nothing exceptionable, yet government took offence at the spirit of liberty which it breathed. They closed the theatre against it, but could not prevent its publication; the press was still open; and his friends, enraged at the treatment he received, took the management of his tragedy into their own hands, and subscriptions poured in upon it in such a golden tide as exceeded his most sanguine ideas and hopes."<7>

It was about this time that the act was passed for licensing plays, of which the first operation was the prohibition of *Gustavus Vasa*, which, having undergone some alterations, was afterwards acted at Dublin, under the title of *The Patriot*; the next was the refusal of *Edward and Eleonora*, offered by Thomson, the poet.<8> The opposition of government, the exertion of Mr. Brooke's friends, and the publication of his play, noised abroad his reputation a thousand-fold, and confirmed his confidence of success. He took a house at Twickenham, in the neighbourhood of Mr. Pope's, for the advantage of his intimacy and friendship, furnished it genteely, hired servants, and sent for Mrs. Brooke, who followed him immediately to London.

Thus every wish was gratified, and every prospect smiled; in love and in friendship, in fortune and in fame—all was flattering, and all was gay. But this bright sky was soon and suddenly overcast. Mr. Brooke was seized with a violent and unconquerable ague; his medical attendants gave him over, and he was ordered, as a last, but forlorn hope, to return to his native air. He did so, and recovered, promising immediately to go back to London, and resume the society and advantages he had left behind. But unfortunately this design was never put into execution; nor could his friends ever draw from him the true reason of a conduct so very unaccountable. To some particular intimates, however, he acknowledged his motive; it was this:— party, while he was in London, ran extremely high. The heart of his beloved patron, the Prince of Wales, went with the people, of whom he was the darling, and detested the venal measures of the ministry. Mr. Brooke was thought to have an eye to this in his

play of *Gustavus Vasa*; and that was the chief cause of its being persecuted by government. But his loyal soul, conscious of its own integrity, was irritated at the undeserved treatment he had received; and openly avowed his resentment. Soon after, the King broke publicly with his son, and the Prince withdrew himself from court, and publicly professed himself averse to a ministry which he looked upon to be enemies both to Country and to King. The breach grew every day wider, and it was feared by many that a civil war might ensue.<9>

Mr. Brooke, who was passionately attached to his Prince, had his ears filled with exaggerated stories of the injurious treatment he met with, and was supposed too tamely to endure. He was enraged: he openly espoused his patron's quarrel, and determined to exert all his powers to thunder forth his virtues and his wrongs to, the world.

Mrs. Brooke, aware of the imprudent zeal of her husband, and trembling for his safety, was terrified at his resolution, and dreaded nothing so much as the thought of his returning to London; the very mention of it threw her into tears and all the agonies of despair. In short, she at last conquered, and prevailed with him to lay aside the lifted pen, to dispose of his house at Twickenham, dismiss his servants, and determine to remain in his native country, safe from the rage of party and all the dangers of ambition. In vain did his friends, on both sides of the water, remonstrate with him on the madness of relinquishing all the bright prospects that smiled so fair and so flattering before him. They could say no more to him than he was conscious of himself; yet in spite of all that his friends, interest, or glory could urge, he still remained in Ireland,

Against his better knowledge not deceived,
But fondly overcome of female charms.<10>

During this period of his life, Mr. Brooke kept up a constant literary correspondence with most of the geniuses of the age; but unfortunately all these letters were consumed, with many other valuable papers and effects, by an accidental fire. Two of them from Mr. Pope are particularly to be lamented. In one of them he professed himself in heart a Protestant, but apologized for not publicly conforming, by alleging that it would render the eve of his mother's life unhappy. In another very long one, he endeavoured to persuade Mr. Brooke to take orders, as being a profession better suited to his principles, his disposition, and his genius, than that of the law, and also less injurious to his health.<11>

Wearied at length with fruitless efforts to rouse the slumbering genius of his country, disgusted with her ingratitude, and sick with her venality, he withdrew to his paternal seat, at Killebeggs, near Naas, in the county of Kildare; and thus, in the society of the muses, and the peaceful bosom of domestic love, consoled himself for lost advantages and disappointed hopes. An only brother whom he tenderly loved accompanied his retirement, with a family almost as numerous as his own; and there, for many years, they lived together with uninterrupted harmony and affection. Here he devoted himself wholly to the muses, and to the cultivation of his daughter's mind. At that period Miss Brooke astonished every beholder by the facility with which she acquired information on every subject. She excelled in every thing that she attempted. It was in the retired scenes of rural life that she first showed an early taste for poetry, of which some specimens remain; but I believe she destroyed most of the effusions of her youthful muse, when an acquaintance with the works of Shakespeare, Milton, and some other English poets, gave a different turn to her thoughts. Her greatest pleasure

seemed to be reading, which she would pursue with unwearied attention, during so many hours, that her parents have often endeavoured to draw her away from her books, as they feared that such close application might injure her health. The sciences and modern languages were not neglected. She likewise studied geography and astronomy with great assiduity. But her attention was chiefly directed to English and French. From the latter language she found great pleasure in translating, which she did with great accuracy. It was that practice, which, by giving her choice of words, and facility of expression, led the way to her becoming an author.

During Mr. Brooke's residence at Killebeggs he wrote several of his finest tragedies, and formed golden hopes of their success upon the English stage, from his interest with Mr. Garrick, who professed for him (whilst he lived in London) the highest esteem: but here he was greatly deceived; for Garrick was no longer, as formerly, his friend. In 1774 he had pressed him earnestly to write for the stage, and offered to enter into articles with him for a shilling a line for all he should write during life, provided that he wrote for him alone. This Garrick looked upon as an extraordinary compliment to Mr. Brooke's abilities: but he could not, however, bring him over to his opinion, nor prevail with him to accept his offer; on the contrary he rejected it with some degree of haughtiness, for which Garrick never forgave him. He was then in the full and flattering career to fortune and to fame; and would have thought it a disgrace to let out his talents for hire, and tie himself down to necessity.<12>

The Irish stage was still open; Mr. Brooke tried it, and was tolerably successful. The *Earl of Essex*, a tragedy, acted at Dublin, and at the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane, with considerable applause, gained him great reputation. The representative of the Earl, during the run of the piece, being in conversation with Dr. Johnson, was loud in the praise of Mr. Brooke's sentiments and poetry. The Doctor, who had neither seen nor read the work recommended, desired to be furnished with some specimen of its excellence. On this Mr. Sheridan repeated the tag at the end of the first act, concluding with the line,

Who rule o'er freemen, should themselves be free.

This mode of reasoning, observed the Doctor, is conclusive in such a degree, that it will lose nothing of its force, even though we should apply it to a more familiar subject, as follows:

Who drives fat oxen, should himself be fat.<13>

"So happy a parody," says a late writer, "ought always to attend the *crambe repetita*<14> of the Earl of Essex." Mr. Brooke, indeed, when he re-published his play, took care to change the line at which the ridicule had been pointed.<15>

This was an important period in Miss Brooke's life, on many accounts. She now frequently enjoyed the society of several eminent literary characters, by whom she was favoured with particular notice; many of whom regarded her intellectual powers and acquisitions with unfeigned admiration. From her local situation, she enjoyed many advantages in acquiring useful knowledge. These opportunities appear to have been duly appreciated and improved by her. Music, drawing, and painting in watercolours, engaged her attention. She spent much time in reading; at once gratifying her thirst after knowledge, and acquiring important and useful information. By this means she extended her knowledge of the world, and acquired that variety and depth of erudition, which justly rendered her an object of admiration to all who knew

her. Moving in a distinguished sphere of life, her family connections, and extensive acquaintance with persons of exalted rank and eminence in the literary world, added great lustre to her merit, and set it off with every advantage. She was admired for her personal charms; and she possessed all the graces of the most polished manners, and the most engaging address.

The British theatre was, perhaps, in the fullest blaze of its lustre and glory about this period. Garrick, its grand luminary, and surrounded by some of the brightest stars that ever shone upon the stage, was then in the zenith of his reputation, and of the talents which produced it; and Miss Brooke was just at the point of age when the magic of such a constellation, with the unrivalled sun in the centre, beamed most powerfully upon her fancy. Borne away on the wing of enthusiasm, she prevailed on her father to introduce her to the private acquaintance of those whose public display of a singular and happy genius, had excited her plaudits and won her heart. Of a glowing fancy, amiable manners, and gentle address, such a character did not find it difficult to gain the notice of the lovers of the drama, who, like herself, had paid nightly homage at the shrine of the British Roscius and his satellites.

There is, perhaps, nothing so full of charms for a warm juvenile heart, nothing that so kindles imagination into its richest glow, as the representations of the theatre. We transfer the generous actions and great achievements of the hero and heroine from the supposed real and original actors, to a person who only studies them by rote, as so many lessons to be performed. We are disposed to believe, that those who can attractively pronounce sentiments so elevated, and deliver themselves in language so eloquent, must be the very models of perfection. We can, in early life, scarcely persuade ourselves that such gifted beings are of mortal mould: their very robes, their looks, their attitudes, become consecrated; and when we are first admitted to the delights and distinctions of conversation with these high and privileged orders, we feel ourselves alternately enlarged and diminished in their presence: we experience, perhaps, a sensation somewhat similar to his, who for the first time, is unexpectedly granted the indulgence of a private audience with the mighty potentates of the earth, after having seen them adorned with all the insignia of royalty, and seated on their thrones in a magnificent apartment.

Under such dangerous influences, Miss Brooke courted the acquaintance of those mock monarchs of the stage, who had assumed the regal honours for an evening, and whose wonderful exploits reigned completely paramount in her vivid imagination. Her rage for the amusements of the theatre soon carried all before it, and would doubtless have proved her ruin, had not Mr. Brooke hurried her from a scene so destructive to the happiness, and so pernicious to the morals of the youthful mind. In after life her sentiments respecting theatrical representations were completely changed; and I believe she never entered a play-house for many years before her death.

Miss Brooke's life affords little scope for narrative: it passed on in a tolerably smooth equable tenor. This was a blessing of which her pious mind was deeply sensible: she was always "thankful for days not marked by calamity, nor blackened by the horrors of guilt." But Miss Brooke lived to experience a severe affliction, which was extremely distressing upon many accounts both to her and her parents. Ever too sanguine in expectations and projects, generous to profusion, and thoughtless of the morrow, Mr. Brooke's hand was as open as his heart was feeling: no friend passed

him by uncherished—no distress unrelieved. In short, he was compelled to mortgage, and at last to sell,

—the fields
Of known endeared idea.

He left the country, and rented a house and domain in Kildare, where he resided for a few years. But his heart still hovered round the scenes of his happiest hours; he left Kildare, and took and improved a farm in the vicinity of his once loved habitation. This, however, he intended for a summer residence only; but was afterwards obliged to settle entirely there, on account of Mrs. Brooke's declining health, which did not permit her to return to Dublin. Shortly after, the spirit of this amiable woman took its everlasting flight to the mansions of felicity and eternal repose; and with her all Mr. Brooke's happiness, and the better part of his existence, fled; for his intellects never after recovered the shock of this separation, after a union of near *fifty* years, enjoyed with a harmony of affection, which misfortune strove in vain to embitter, which no length of time could satiate, nor anything interrupt but death. Mrs. Brooke was a woman of the most elegant manners and refined sentiments. She was favoured with a strong, comprehensive and active mind; and having had a good education, her genius led her to the paths of literature; but this did not prevent her from paying a diligent and exemplary attention to the duties of domestic life, and she was much respected in the characters of a wife, a mother, a friend, and a mistress, by many persons who were strangers to her literary attainments. She was well qualified to educate her children; an important employment, to which she devoted much of her time and care.

From the letters of Miss Brooke to her intimate friend and correspondent, Miss T——, I learn that Mrs. Brooke was a woman of extraordinary piety, and a patroness of the Methodists. She was also herself a Methodist, though against the judgment of Mr. Brooke. A disease, at first painful and lingering, but at last acute and mortal, infested a considerable part of the valuable life which she had spent on earth. By the comforts which the Gospel of Christ is calculated to afford, the pangs of disease were alleviated, and its protracted pressure was softened by Christian resignation. In this mighty struggle she exercised a remarkably striking patience; and mildness endeared those features which disease had invaded. Cheered by the animating prospect which faith discloses, and resting her salvation on the merit and sacrifice of her Saviour, she found herself equal to the last conflict, and fearlessly beheld the yawnings of the grave! Under an accumulation of bodily sufferings, but with the most wonderful tranquillity of mind, her spirit left this world to join that innumerable multitude before the throne above, who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Previous to the death of Mrs. Brooke, the loss of a favourite child (the seventeenth deceased) gave a severe blow to Mr. Brooke's constitution, already weakened by long study, and beginning to bend beneath the pressure of years. The agitation of his mind brought on with extreme violence a megrim, to which he had at times been a little subject from his youth; and the death of his wife completing what that had begun, reduced him for a length of time to a state of almost total imbecility. The care of the physicians, indeed, in some measure restored him; but still the powers of his mind were decayed, and his genius flashed only by fits.<17>

This indeed is too evidently perceivable in those of his works which were written after the powers of his mind began to relax. In the latter volumes of the *Fool*

of *Quality*, and the subsequent novel of *Juliet Grenville*, we trace with a mixture of regret and awe, the magnificent ruins of genius. Both these books were written with a view to moral and religious improvement. "A mere novel," says his accomplished daughter, "could never have been planned by a head and heart like his; he therefore chose his story purely as a conduit for the system he had adopted. And most successfully he chose it; at once he charms, elevates, and melts the soul! If I may use the expression, he steals us into goodness, and cheats us into improvement; and while we think he only means to amuse the imagination, he informs the understanding, corrects the judgment, and mends the heart. The fascinating powers of his genius lay the irritation of the mental nerve asleep, while, with a kind and skilful hand, he probes the mental wound; or, as he makes his Tasso thus elegantly speak in English:

His bitter so the friendly leech conceals,
And with the fraud of latent medicine heals;
To the sick taste he promises delight,
And obvious sweets the infant lip invite:
Health, ambushed in the potion, is imbibed,
For man must even to happiness be bribed.<18>

"He died," says Miss Brooke, "as he lived—a Christian. With the meekness of a lamb, and the fortitude of a hero, he supported the tedious infirmities of age, the languors of sickness, and the pains of dissolution; and his death, like his life, was instructive."<19> This truly excellent man left the troublesome scenes of this wilderness for the never-ending happiness of heaven, on the 10th of October, 1783. "My father," says Miss Brooke, in a letter to the female correspondent already referred to, "was the best of men. Yet he did not die rejoicing. He died resigned, meek, humble. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

Mr. Brooke, with many great and still more amiable qualities, was not without his faults; perfection is not the lot of mortals compassed with infirmities. His feelings never waited the decision of his judgment; he knew not how to mortify, to restrain, or suspend them for a moment—like petted children, they were spoiled by indulgence. "This unhappy softness," observes Miss Brooke, "was the source of a thousand misfortunes to him. In consequence of it, he was perpetually duped in friendship, as well as in charity. His abilities were as warmly exerted in the service or vindication of *apparent* worth, as his purse was open to *apparent* distress; and the first proving as fictitious as the last, reduced him sometimes to the mortifying situation of appearing the advocate and friend of characters diametrically opposite to his own. His feelings were even beyond those of female nature, soft, and exquisitely tender. His wife used often to conceal from him the death of a cottager, lest the grief of the survivors should affect him too much. His temper was meek, almost to a fault: it was nearly impossible to provoke him to resentment—or if provoked, like the Brutus of Shakespeare,

He carried anger as the flint bears fire;
Which, much enforced, yields a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.

From principle as well as temper, "he resisted evil only with good." He was too much a Christian to revenge, and too much a philosopher to resent. Once, when asked what he thought of a humorous, but false and malicious libel, in which he, with several others, were included: his answer was—"Why, sir, I laughed at the wit, and smiled at the malice of it."<20>

Mr. Brooke's poetical works were collected in 1778, in four volumes, octavo, printed very incorrectly, and with the addition of some pieces which were not his. Perhaps few men have produced writings of the same variety, the tendency of all which is so uniformly in favour of religious and moral principle. Yet even in this there are inconsistencies, which I know not how to explain, unless I attribute them to an extraordinary defect in judgment. During a great part of his life, his religious opinions approached to what are now termed methodistical, and one difficulty, in contemplating his character, is to reconcile this with his support of the stage, and his writing those trifling farces we find among his works. Perhaps it may be said that the necessities of his family made him listen to the importunity of those friends who considered the stage as a profitable resource; but by taking such advice he was certainly no great gainer. Except in the case of his *Gustavus Vasa*,^{<21>} and *Earl of Essex*, there is no reason to think that he was successful, and the greater part of his dramas were never performed at all, or printed until 1778, when he could derive very little advantage from them. Nor can I impute it to any cause, except a total want of judgment and an ignorance of the public taste, that he intermixed the most awful doctrines of religion, and the lighter incidents of vulgar or fashionable life, in his novels. He lived, however, we are told, more consistently than he wrote. No day passed in which he did not collect his family to prayer, and read and expound the Scriptures to them. Among his tenants and humble friends he was the benevolent character which he had been, accustomed to depict in his works, and while he had the means, he literally went about doing good.

The following anecdote is given by Miss Brooke, with some regret that he had not been educated for the church. "One Sunday, while the congregation were assembled in the rural church of the parish in which he lived, they waited a long time the arrival of their clergyman. At last, finding he was not likely to come that day, they judged that some accident had detained him; and being loth to depart entirely without their errand, they with one accord requested that Mr. Brooke would perform the service for them, and expound a part of the Scriptures. He consented, and the previous prayers being over, he opened the Bible, and preached extempore on the first text that struck his eye. In the midst of his discourse, the clergyman entered, and found the whole congregation in tears. He entreated Mr. Brooke to proceed; but this he modestly refused; and the other as modestly declared, that after the testimony of superior abilities, which he perceived in the moist eyes of all present, he would think it presumption and folly to hazard anything of his own. Accordingly, the concluding prayers alone were said, and the congregation dismissed for the day."

As a poet, he delights his readers principally by occasional flights of vivid imagination, but has in no instance given us a poem to which criticism may not suggest many reasonable objections. The greater part of his life, he lived remote from the friends of whose judgment he might have availed himself, and by whose taste his own might have been regulated. His first production, *Universal Beauty*, has a noble display of fancy in many parts. It was published without his name, and was very much read and admired for the truly religious and philosophical sentiments which it contained. It is not improbable that Pope, to whom he submitted it, gave him some assistance, and he certainly repaid his instructions by adopting his manner; yet he has avoided Pope's monotony, and would have done this with more effect, if we did not perceive a mechanical lengthening of certain lines, rather than a natural variety of movement. On the other hand, the sublimity of the subject, by which he was inspired, and which he hoped to communicate, sometimes betrays him into a species of turgid

declamation. Harmony appears to be consulted and epithets multiplied, to please the ear at the expense of meaning.<22>

A short, but just and striking character of Mr. Brooke, is contained in the following lines, written by his intimate friend, the late Rev. Philip Skelton, rector of Fintona, in the county of Tyrone, a man incapable of exaggerated panegyric upon any one:

Here lies a casket, which of late resigned
Three jewels brighter than the solar beam!
Such faith, such genius, and a heart so kind,
As in no second breast are found by Fame.

Miss Brooke was now arrived at a time of life when every year was stealing from her some intimate friend or dear relation. She sustained a severe deprivation in the loss of her excellent parent. On this occasion the balm of religious conversation was hers; and in patient submission to the will of God, she found both relief and reward. Studious by a native propensity of the welfare of her nearest relatives, scarcely could Joseph himself demonstrate more tenderness to his venerable father, in the land of Goshen, than she did to her parent, nor attend more constantly to the interest of her intimate friends and relatives; and since the fall of our first parents, there have been but few, perhaps none, who have performed all the endearing offices of friendship more attentively, speedily and anxiously, than she performed them; counting it her honour and happiness so to do. Enthusiastic veneration for the memory of her father was a leading feature in her character; and it was the source of much gratification to her mind, that she had enjoyed the opportunity, by her dutiful and affectionate attendance on her beloved parent during his old age and imbecility, to solace the last years of his life, and smooth his passage to the "Chambers of the grave."

The leading particulars of Miss Brooke's life afford a striking and exemplary instance of self-acquired excellence, and prove that a mind endowed with a strong natural conception, a discriminating judgment, and a thirst for literary and scientific information, may, by perseverance, hope for every thing, independent of foreign aid; and will ultimately surmount every barrier opposed to its progress to merited success and honourable distinction.

Miss Brooke's passion for literature and general information daily increased, and frequently after the family had retired to rest, she would leave her bed, dress herself, and steal down to the study to read. To these nocturnal exercises of her mind she attributed her greatest advances in knowledge and various branches of useful information. The study of antiquities, which present so many images of grandeur and tenderness to interest the imagination and the heart, was that for which she conceived a passionate curiosity. It led her insensibly into the study of the Irish language, to which she adhered so closely and so successfully, that with little or no assistance, she, in less than two years, became perfect mistress of it.

What, indeed, can be more natural, than to proceed by such a gradation, from inquiries concerning the monuments of the history of the ancients, and the remains of their arts, to the study of their languages? "The power to trace the relations of etymology," says a late writer, "is one of the master-keys which open to the knowledge of antiquity. The history of the origin, the descent, the filiations, and the cognations of words, if philosophically written, might involve the whole history of human arts and institutions. We cannot examine the ancient and modern languages of

Europe, without tracing them all to the three grand sources of the Celtic, the Gothic, and the Slavonic; and among these, again, we easily discern so many things to be in common, that they must be considered as radically one and the same: while, in the Persian, the Hebrew, and the Arabic, we can discover an agreement, in primary words, with the Celtic, Gothic, and Slavonic, that may seem almost to conduct us up to the knowledge of one original, universal language, on which all others are variously engrafted, without the destruction of the stem."

Erudition is, amid such investigations, exalted into philosophy: and the study of languages expands and elevates the mind by filling it with the noblest conceptions, and by teaching it to embrace, as it were at once, the history of all ages and of all nations. When Miss Brooke began the study of the Irish language, she had no other helps but those of books. But the famous Clenard began his acquisition of a skill in the Arabic language, by reading, in an Arabic version of the Psalter, those proper names which he might suppose to be the same in the Arabic as in the Hebrew, and thus labouring to distinguish the forms and sounds of the different characters in which the names were in the unknown language expressed. Sir William Jones was much more indebted to his own ardent industry and genius, than to any aid of instructors, for the success with which he conquered all the difficulties of the most abstruse oriental learning. Miss Brooke was no less boldly industrious, and therefore not less fortunate in her studies, than either of the authors here cited as two illustrious examples.

Miss Brooke's first publication was a translation of a song and monody by Carolan, in Mr. Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. To these translations she did not prefix her name. The translation of the monody is thus prefaced by her excellent friend, the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.: "For the benefit of the English reader, I shall here give an elegant paraphrase of this monody by a young lady, whose name I am enjoined to conceal: with the modesty ever attendant on true merit, and with the sweet timidity natural to her sex, she shrinks from the public eye."

A strain of tender pensiveness runs through the whole of this monody. The melancholy spirit which it breathes, is infinitely more affecting than all the laboured pomp of declamatory woe. The original is said to be simple and unadorned, but pathetic to a great degree; "and this is a species of beauty," says Miss Brooke, "in composition, extremely difficult to transcribe into any other language." Much of the simplicity is unavoidably lost; the pathos which remains, may, perhaps, in some measure, atone for my introducing it here.

Carolan's Monody on the Death of Mary Mac Guire.

Were mine the choice of intellectual fame,
Of spellful song, and eloquence divine,
Painting's sweet power, philosophy's pure flame,
And Homer's lyre, and Ossian's harp were mine;
The splendid arts of Erin, Greece, and Rome,
In *Mary* lost, would lose their wonted grace,
All would I give to snatch her from the tomb,
Again to fold her in my fond embrace.

Desponding, sick, exhausted with my grief,
Awhile the founts of sorrow cease to flow
In vain—I rest not—sleep brings no relief;
Cheerless, companionless, I wake to woe.
Nor birth, nor beauty, shall again allure,
Nor fortune, win me to another bride;

Reliques of Irish Poetry

Alone I wander, and alone endure,
Till death restore me to my dear one's side.

Once every thought, and every scene was gay,
Friends, mirth and music, all my hours employed—
Now doomed to mourn my last sad years away,
My life a solitude!—my heart a void!—
Alas, the change! The change again no more!
For every comfort is with Mary fled;
And ceaseless anguish shall her loss deplore,
Till age and sorrow join me with the dead.

Adieu, each gift of nature, and of art,
That erst adorned me in life's early prime!
The cloudless temper, and the Social heart,
The Soul ethereal, and the flight sublime!
Thy loss, my Mary, chased them from my breast!
Thy sweetness cheers, thy judgment aids no more;
The muse deserts a heart with grief opprest
And lost is every joy that charmed before.

Between the late Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. and the family of Mr. Brooke, a long and tender friendship subsisted. There were few individuals for whom he felt a higher esteem and affection, than for the amiable and accomplished subject of this memoir whose splendid abilities and aspiring genius, he early predicted, and was frequently heard to say, would raise her to an elevated rank in the literary circles. His feeling heart, and intimate acquaintance with Miss Brooke, taught him to reverence her virtues, to admire her talents, and to deplore her early departure from all sublunary scenes. The loss of such an accomplished scholar as Mr. Walker will be long and deeply deplored by all true votaries of science and the fine arts; but those only who have had the happiness to be included in the circle of his friends, can justly appreciate and duly regret the many virtues which dignified, and the numerous graces which adorned, his character. "Never," says his affectionate relative, "was there any man who united, in a higher degree, the accomplishments of the gentleman with the attainments of the scholar. His polished manners, his refined sentiments, his easy flow of wit, his classical taste, and his profound erudition, rendered his conversation as fascinating as it was instructive. A frame of peculiar delicacy incapacitated Mr. Walker from the exercise of an active profession, and early withdrew his mind from the busy bustle of the world, to the more congenial occupation of literary retirement. To seek for that best of blessings—health, which his own climate denied him, Mr. Walker was induced to travel. He visited Italy; he embraced with enthusiasm that nurse of arts and of arms; he trod with devotion her classic ground, consecrated by the ashes of heroes, and immortalized by the effusions of poets; he studied her language, he observed her customs and her manners; he admired the inimitable remains of ancient art, and mourned over the monuments of modern degradation; he conversed with her learned men; he was enrolled in her academies, and became almost naturalized to the country." Mr. Walker returned from the Continent little improved in health, but his mind stored with the treasures of observation. He soon retired from the turbulence of a city life, to the tranquillity and pure air of his romantic villa (St. Valeri,) near Bray, in the county of Wicklow. The grounds, which are skirted by a romantic river, were, originally, laid out by Lady Morris Gore, a lady of refined taste and elegant accomplishments. To this lady St. Valeri is indebted for its name, having been so called from that place in France which bears a similar name, where her

ladyship and her husband (the Hon. Mr. Gore,) had, for some time resided, and with the picturesque scenery of which they had been greatly enamoured.<24> Mr. Walker was in the forty-ninth year of his age when death closed at once his life and labours, at St. Valeri, on the 12th of April, 1810; and he breathed his last sigh in the arms of a brother and sister, whose peculiar sorrow seemed equally to defy consolation and description.

Mr. Walker was a member of the Arcadian Academy recently instituted at Rome, and of the Academies of Cortona, Florence, &c., honorary member of the Societies of Dublin and Perth, and an original member of the Royal Irish Academy, whose labours have deserved so well of their country. The study of Italian literature became his favourite pursuit, and, to his latest hour, continued to be his occupation and solace. But, though attached to the literature of Italy, he was not regardless of his native land. The first fruits of his genius were offered on the altar of his country. He devoted the earliest efforts of his comprehensive mind to vindicate the injured character, and to enlighten the disputed history, of Ireland. He dwelt with delight on her romantic scenery; he loved the generous, eccentric character of her children; the native language of Ireland to his ears was full of harmony and force; and the songs of her bards filled his patriotic soul with rapturous emotion. He was, indeed, an Irishman of Ireland's purest times. As a critic and an antiquary, Mr. Walker was equally distinguished. His *Essays* on the customs and institutions of ancient Ireland are written in the true spirit of a native historian, and, as they are eminently useful to the antiquary, must be singularly interesting to every Irish breast. These, his earliest works, (the offspring of his vigorous mind, at a period when young men are not yet emancipated from the tyranny of pupillage,) evince a maturity of judgment, a soundness of criticism, and a range of learning, which would not disgrace the name of the venerable Vallancey.<25>

Shortly after the death of Miss Brooke, Mr. Walker formed the determination of becoming the biographer of his amiable and lamented friend. Having been the intimate acquaintance and friend of Miss Brooke; having frequently associated with her a considerable portion of his life; they had, during an interval of many years, an almost daily intercourse with each other. Thus, such a person seemed to be in every way peculiarly qualified for the task of a biographer: but, in the instance of Mr. Walker, not less so from the profundity of his learning, than from the elegance and purity of his taste.

A variety of circumstances having occurred to interrupt Mr. Walker's arrangements, the *Memoir of Miss Brooke*, which was to have accompanied a uniform edition of her works, was unavoidably postponed, and eventually laid aside. Thus the public have been deprived of that extended and polished memoir, which, had it not been for unforeseen events, would have been produced by the pen of her learned and accomplished friend. Besides contributing to the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Mr. Walker published the following works, in a separate form:-

- 1st. *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. Lond. 1786. 4to.
- 2nd. *An Historical Essay on the Dress of the ancient and modern Irish; to which is subjoined, A Memoir on the Armour and Weapons of the Irish*. Dub. 1788. 4to.
- 3rd. *An Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*. Lond. 1799. 4to.
- 4th. *An Historical and Critical Essay on the Revival of the Drama in Italy*. Edin. 1805. 8vo.

Reliques of Irish Poetry

In the year 1815 a posthumous volume was published by his brother, Samuel Walker, Esq. M.R.I.A. entitled *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni, &c.*, a work of considerable merit. It is dedicated to the Earl of Carlisle, Mr. Walker's intimate friend.

But Miss Brooke was at length prevailed on by Mr. Walker and others of her literary friends, to conquer her timidity, and to engage in a work for which she seemed admirably calculated. Accordingly, in the year 1787, she undertook a translation of such modern works of merit of the ancient and modern Irish bards, as she could collect amongst her friends. This was looked upon by some as a bold step. But Miss Brooke understood not only the bias but the energies of her character;—a rare endowment; and that which would have been romantic, and perhaps ruinous, to a mind less cultivated, was, in hers, only a kind of presage of what would result from an undeviating application of her talents in a pursuit so favourable to the bent of her natural inclinations. There are some minds, which, as it were intuitively, know their vigour as well as their inclination; and while others are trembling, either from fear or love, or balancing between both, at what they predict must be the consequence of a supposed rash measure, such minds keep the poise of their characters, proceed undauntedly in the even tenor of their way, and even mix a sound judgment and cautious policy with an adventurous and daring spirit.

The truth of this remark was illustrated in a most singular manner by Miss Brooke, who, partly from deference to the opinion and solitude of friends, and partly from a modest opinion of herself, invited Mr. Walker, and some well-known colleagues to share the labours and honours of her enterprise. These, however, they politely declined, as they knew her abilities were fully equal to the task. Accordingly, with a mind disposed to encourage the genius she possessed, joined to a most elegant taste, and most extensive erudition, with an uncommon degree of readiness and activity, she availed herself of all the valuable hints which she received from time to time from her literary associates, and has fully shown her competency to the undertaking.

In the year 1788 her *Reliques of Irish Poetry* appeared, a work universally admired, a work which not only reflects honour upon her country, but will hand her name down to the latest posterity. Miss Brooke not only inherited her father's talent for writing, but glowed with his heroic sentiments. She likewise imbibed no inconsiderable portion of the romantic spirit of the most zealous antiquaries of her country, O'Connor, O'Halloran, and Vallancey: but as this spirit is more congenial with poetry than with prose, it perhaps engaged her to perform her task with more energy and fire, than cool reasoning, or a dull and laborious investigation of facts, could have done.

To investigate the obsolete remains of other times; delivered in a language of which few have been hardy or inquisitive enough to attempt the acquisition; to elucidate those writings, and clothe them in the ungenial, I trust not ungraceful, vesture of modern rhyme, are achievements that might have staggered many a literary knight-errant and enterprising antiquary—yet all this has been attempted and accomplished by Miss Brooke, in her first poetical attempt, who stands forward "the avowed champion of her country's lovely muse." "Let it, however," says the reviewer, "be remembered that she is the daughter of the late Mr. Brooke, a name well-known to patriots and poets: and

—*Fortes creantur fortibus.*"<26>

The first heroic poem in this collection is entitled Conloch; the author, and exact time in which it was written, unknown. "But it is impossible," says Miss Brooke, "to avoid ascribing it to a very early period, as the language is so much older than that of any of my originals (the War Odes excepted,) and quite different from the style of those pieces which are known to be the composition of the Middle Ages." "Of the style," said the Critical Reviewers, "we certainly pretend not to judge, yet from some expressions and sentiments; (we draw our opinion from the translation) we can hardly suppose it to have been composed so early as the middle ages. The two following poems, we believe, are of later date, though, like the present, founded on, or framed from, traditionary tales of great antiquity: We cannot well suppose that Greece and Persia were known to the Irish Bards in times preceding the middle ages; that they then understood the classical phrase, 'the palm of valour;' or knew that knights bound themselves by 'the vow of chivalry.' The measure in which this poem is written is irregular; for which the translator; in our opinion, needlessly apologises. It is told in an abrupt and spirited manner, and strongly resembles that in Ossian's. works, entitled *Carthon*. Cuchullin in this kills his son through the same mistake that Clessamor does his in the other: and the young heroes are inspired by the same principle, of its being disgraceful for a warrior to reveal his name to a foe. The resemblance between the compositions of the Irish Oisín, and the Caledonian Ossian, is indeed, very striking. They indeed sufficiently prove that a strict intercourse formerly subsisted between the Irish and the Highland Celts. The same traditionary tales, with some variations, which may naturally be accounted for by their having been preserved for ages by memory alone, are recorded in both countries. Macpherson, who is never mentioned in the present performance, has, we believe, embellished many a story, in itself simple, and possibly absurd but, from what we here find, we cannot suppose, however he adorned or arranged, that. he invented them. Whatever he might be, Miss Brooke is, we doubt not, faithful to her original; and we perceive in the poem that peculiar beauty, a mixture of simplicity and pathos, which is sometimes to be discovered in the artless compositions of antiquity, where

Unresisted nature storms the heart.<27>

The next poem is *Magnus the Great*, and contains a dialogue between Oisín and St. Patrick. Miss Brooke thinks the language of this poem, as it now stands, too modern to be ascribed to an earlier period than the Middle Ages. This phrase includes a very extended space of time, yet possibly the concession should be somewhat greater. A Scandinavian king, called Magnus, is acknowledged to have made some descents on Ireland in the eleventh century: we may naturally suppose, therefore, that this composition did not exist till some considerable time after that event: as likewise from the bard's removing the action of the poem to the days of Oisín and St. Patrick. Whether they were cotemporaries or not, it here signifies but little.<28>

The third heroic poem is entitled *The Chase*: the interlocutors the same as before. It is, I should suppose, of nearly the same antiquity as the preceding. A curious extract, from Mr. Walker's *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, is prefixed. "This poem," say the Monthly Reviewers, "amid all its wildness and inconsistencies, possesses, in its English dress, many beauties."<29>

The fourth heroic poem is entitled "Moirá Borb," and ascribed to Oisín; but "the language is evidently not earlier than that of the middle centuries." The story is wild and extravagant; and resembles, like the former, those which were imported from

the East during the time of the crusades. It is, nevertheless, not destitute of merit, and contains many beauties.

The *War Odes*, and the *Love Elegies*, are extremely fine, and exquisitely pathetic. The first *Elegy* is addressed "to the daughter of Owen," and written by one O'Geran, but his name only remains known. There are two more elegies of a modern date, not devoid of interest and pathos, particularly, if we consider of how few literary advantages those who composed them were possessed. "Miss Brooke's poetico-patriotic spirit," say the reviewers, "shines forth in every advertisement prefixed to the different species of poetry she has translated. She makes many observations in their favour, and modestly regrets her being unable to do justice to their merits. They are of no great antiquity, nor, in our opinions, who can only judge from the translation, eminently beautiful. We discover some marks, however, of originality and genius."<30>

Miss Brooke has put the songs, which she has selected for translation, in very elegant dress. They contain many uncommon thoughts and flowing stanzas.

The concluding tale, which inscribed to Mr. and Mrs. Trant, is extravagantly romantic, as the reader may suppose when I inform him, that the story is "taken from the revolution in the History of ancient Ireland, AM 3649, and is related by Keating, O'Halloran, and Warner." It is, however, well told, and the introduction and conclusion managed with address. It has great merit of incident, generosity, and passion, as well as versification. "Indeed Miss Brooke was so perfectly in possession of the language of poetry, that her versification has rendered the whole work interesting to English readers; which, if undertaken by a person of inferior abilities, would probably never have penetrated beyond the circle of the translator's acquaintance."<31>

The testimony of the Critical Review has not been wanting to this work. "Miss Brooke," say the critics, "is always attentive to her country's literary reputation.

— Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab inceptu processerat.<32>

We are far from condemning her; but hope she will excuse us for sometimes smiling at the excess to which she has carried her enthusiasm. To the poetical talents of her Gaelic ancestors and her own we pay respect. We have been entertained with her translations from every different species of composition mentioned in the title-page, and recess-mend her performance to the antiquary and the man of genius."<33>

If the Easterns had their genii, the people of the north-west of Europe, Celts and Goths, had their fairies. From the tales which are told of this aerial race, even at this day, in Ireland, one would imagine, that "the Island of Saints" was the place of their "dearest abode." The ancient bards of Erin have handed down a regular series of their kings and queens. For some years previous to the publication of the *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, Miss Brooke had begun to collect all the poems that were written in the Irish language, having been often charmed to find many beauties in the songs, even a the unlettered bards, in that tongue. At first she only intended to collect a little nosegay of these poetical flowers. The peasants were so pleased with this intelligence, that they waited on her with all the scattered verses that memory could collect. These grateful offerings made so deep an impression in her breast, that she treasured them up, and resolved to translate them into English, if her health would permit. Many

verses were written to her on this occasion; and, among the rest, the following by the parish school-master:

To Miss Charlotte Brooke.

Since every language has its own conceits,
Its subtle windings and its nice retreats;
Then why should you desert our native tongue,
In which the loves and graces often sung:
Pray do you think our native woods,
Our lofty mountains, and our silver floods,
Our verdant plains and ever-blooming flowers,
Our spreading hedges, and our airy bowers,
Would not call forth what language could impart
If nature stood in need of art?
But all our language wished, kind nature gave,
And art at best is but the poet's slave.

In the course of a few years Miss Brooke found herself in possession of a considerable number of fragments; she selected those in which

Nature spoke, and the rapt bard
Luxuriant roamed, nor did regard
The little niceties of art,
To rouse the soul and rend the heart.

These she published in a quarto volume, with notes, and the originals in the Irish character. The work abounds with many beauties; especially if the circumstances under which it was written are taken into the account: a young lady in a state of ill health, the death of a tender mother, and an only brother, in a distant clime, with a father whom she tenderly loved, bending under a weight of years; without a single hand to guide her through an untrodden path, for she could scarce meet with any person that could read a word of the originals. These circumstances would have even checked a genius of the boldest wing, and would claim that indulgence to which the imperfection of human nature is entitled. I shall conclude this account of Miss Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, already too much protracted, by giving the testimony of the *English Review* to the work: "We have perused all the poems with pleasure, and admired equally her taste in selecting, and judgment in translating them. But we are not to suppose this lady one of those who translate but cannot write. She has convinced us of the contrary, by an original poem, founded on an event that does equal honor to the age of which it is recorded, and to the choice of the poet."

Hitherto Miss Brooke had lived in tolerably affluent circumstances; but by an unforeseen event she was now deprived of all her property; and at a time of life when she might have been supposed to have deeply lamented many consequent privations. It is not recollected that a single instance of a murmur ever escaped her, or the least expression of regret at what she had lost: on the contrary, she always appeared contented and happy. The want of a settled abode interrupted those studies in which she most delighted. She lost the command of all those elegant comforts and conveniences which are generally found so necessary to the formation of female character. But though this period of her life afforded little opportunity for improvement in science, the qualities of her heart never appeared in a more amiable light. Miss Brooke had only resigned that which thousands enjoyed in common with herself; which, though it may shelter us from some sorrows, can never confer happiness; but she retained her best riches, those faculties and feelings which are the

true fountains of enjoyment, and which Providence had bestowed on her with a liberal hand. Poverty neither dimmed her intellect nor chilled her heart; and while her mind was daily occupied with new inquiries after knowledge, her affections were cherished and satisfied with the friendship of those she loved.

Upon a review of the unpleasant circumstances attending her reverse of fortune, a considerable time after, she thus speaks, in a letter to her intimate companion and friend, Miss T——:

Why did not my dear Miss T—— afford me the pleasure of an answer to my last? I will not think that you were offended at the liberty I took in offering my opinion in respect to your concerns—it was dictated by regard so zealous and sincere, that I cannot think it possible you should have taken it amiss. In confidence of this, I write again, to entreat you will not suffer low spirits to keep you silent; this I fear is the real cause, though it ought to produce quite a contrary effect; and to make you seek, and accept, in sympathy, the only consolation that earth can afford to sorrow such as yours.

I am particularly fearful of your falling into dejection, as I am persuaded your mind is not formed for mediocrity, in anything:— of this, you must, yourself, be sensible, and let that knowledge make you well aware of inducing any state of mind that reason disapproves, or religion prohibits. The energies of your mind, wherever directed, will lead you very far—O then, be careful of the path in which you tread.

The remembrance of my own sorrows, of my own escape from despair, enables me, with peculiar interest, to feel and to tremble for your situation.— Deprived of my father, of my brother, of my fortune, and of my health; disappointed in friendship, and betrayed in trust—my affairs ruined by those in whom I most confided, and the best and dearest affections of my heart torn up, as it were, by the very roots! My mind, like your own, was, for a time too much pressed down by anguish to lift itself to God; and when it *did* rise, alas, it was only to murmur, and to vent the complaints of distraction and despair. Like you, I thought myself singled out for suffering, and that, not to despond would be not to feel. On this brink (I do believe) of madness, did the Divine Hand arrest me!—showed me the precipice into which my soul was plunging, and gave me, in resignation, an asylum from woe. The circumstances of my misfortunes have suffered very little alteration since that time: but the mind they had to work on is so changed, that it says to them; Guy, thy sword won't cut.—My father, my brother, are as much lost to me now, as when I mourned them with such distraction: the ingratitude and treachery of those in whom I trusted, has not proved an illusion: it is still the same in itself and in its effects upon my fortune, as it was when it tore every fibre of my heart. My health, though not so bad as formerly, is in a fragile state; and my fortune, though not utterly lost, is still no more than what others would account as nothing. Yet, notwithstanding this, I am happy!—Yes, O my gracious God!—With humble and joyful gratitude, I own that I am blessed as this earth can make me!—That if a sigh heaves, or a tear flows from me now, it is only from the grief that others are not equally happy with myself.

You will easily see, my dear Miss T, that *egotism* has no share in making me write in this manner; and that I do it, merely to show you that it is *possible* to be deprived of every thing that this world calls enjoyment, and yet to be even more than resigned to life. The waters of comfort which were given me to drink of, are equally open to you. There alone can your soul slake its thirst, and allay the fever of its anguish.

The soul, a living, restless, fierce desire,
Caught from the fountain of eternal fire,
Eager for bliss, would drink all nature up,
But, quenchless, finds it all an empty cup!
For ah! external, and eloped from God;

Charlotte Brooke

Gone, with its hunger, and its will abroad;
Forth of its centre, it can find no way;
Where'er it tends, it only tends to stray.

Have you got those sermons of Walker's^{<34>} which I recommended to you? I think you would find them of use. You will pardon, the liberty I take in setting you tasks, when you consider that I learned the lesson of suffering before you did, and am, therefore, qualified to offer my services. Do, write to me, my good Miss T——, and tell me that your mind is more at ease. Believe me, I am very truly and warmly interested in your welfare above all, your mental welfare. Remember now I expect to hear from you soon; say a great deal about yourself—two sheets at least. If you knew how my time is devoured in this odious bustling town, you would write me two letters for my one, instead of leaving any one unanswered.

Miss Walker,^{<35>} whom I saw to-day, desires to be kindly remembered to you; she has not as yet disposed of more than one of the three papers which you gave her, but hopes to 'be more fortunate. Adieu accept the very sincere good wishes of your affectionate

CHARLOTTE BROOKE.

If the circumstances of Miss Brooke's external lot had the effect of depressing and discouraging her mind, it cannot be doubted that they were instrumental, under the Divine benediction, in fostering the peculiar excellencies of her character. These almost overwhelming afflictions doubtless contributed to form in her that love of retirement, that dread of the temptations of the world, that strictness of conversation, that spirit of watchfulness and prayer, which so constantly and so prominently display themselves in her letters. The following extract affords a specimen of the devout feelings which she cherished under the pressure of peculiar difficulties and trials. Writing to her affectionate and sympathizing friend, Miss T——, she speaks thus:

As a father smiles with pity more than anger on the follies of a favoured child; as even in his frowns the look of love is discernible—such has *my* God been to me: so did he mingle consolation with sorrow, and 'stay his rough wind, in the day of his east wind.' So was it attempered "to the shorn lamb," that the storm seemed sent for no other purpose than to drive it into *shelter*; to frighten it back to the *fold*. When I add to all these blessings of affliction and deliverance, the many other blessings I enjoy, tolerable health,—independence,—leisure,—with knowledge and opportunities not granted to the bulk of the world I not only adore and thank and praise my God, but I *tremble* also before him. This it is that makes me sometimes fear for my future destination. For—where much is given, much will be required. Still, however, "in trembling hope," I trust my soul to my Father and my Redeemer.

It is surely profitable to observe how greatly Miss Brooke was indebted for her resources, in the reverse of fortune which she experienced, to her early habit of reading and reflection. These fortified her mind, and enabled her, with religion for her instructress, to form a just estimate of the things which really minister to our happiness. These secured to her friends whose conversation delighted and improved her; whose approbation animated her ardour; whose experience directed her pursuits; and whose tenderness excited, without fear of excess, the most delightful sentiments of our nature. These furnished, through succeeding years, the means of constant occupation; not constrained by necessity, or by a dread of vacancy and restlessness; not limited to a single pursuit, which becomes wearisome from its continued recurrence, and narrows the understanding, even while it quickens the faculties; but always new, always useful; equally fitted for society and solitude, sickness and health, prosperity and misfortune.

Reliques of Irish Poetry

Some years after the institution of the Royal Irish Academy, Miss Brooke, by the advice of Mr. Walker, and some other friends, made interest to procure the situation of housekeeper to that establishment. The state of her health at that period, made the necessity of exertion painful and distressing, and rendered her but little able to struggle with the world. The late Earl of Charlemont was at that time President of the Academy. This accomplished nobleman was the great friend of the celebrated author of *Gustavus Vasa*. His amiable daughter also shared in the esteem and regard of this distinguished scholar. Flattered with the prospect of success, and flushed with the hopes of obtaining a comfortable asylum for life, she drew up the following petition, which was presented to the Royal Irish Academy:

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I should not take the liberty of this address to a society I so highly respect, if I was not provided with an adequate claim to your attention.

I address you as the daughter of *Gustavus Vasa*, a man who—either as a friend, or a patriot, was dear to every member of your Academy.

Since his decease I have known nothing but affliction. The death of my brother, shortly after, deprived me of my only protection, and also a considerable share of my fortune; a principal part of what remained, was involved in the failure of Captain Brooke, and the rest is now lost by the bankruptcy of a trader in whose hands it was placed at interest. I have lost in all to the amount of between one and two hundred a year, and this without any imprudence of my own, which might have drawn down those calamities upon me.

I find myself stripped both of friends and fortune, in a world of which I have but little knowledge—cut off from every dependance, from every protection, but that of Heaven and my country. To the most distinguished individuals of *that* country, I now address myself as a descendant of genius. I request to be intrusted with the care of a house destined to the purpose, and dedicated to the honour of genius.—I will undertake it, if so required, without a salary.

Unaccustomed to solicit, I yet bend with less pain to the task, when I consider *the characters* to whom my application is addressed.—To you, Gentlemen, the memory of my Father cannot plead in vain,—it will, I am confident, be my advocate with *your taste*, and my own most distressing situation, with your *humanity*.

In this protection and support of a female orphan you will also fulfil the purpose for which your elegant and respectable Society was instituted, by showing to the world, that to the Royal Irish Academy, even this spirit of departed Genius was dear. I have the honour to be, my Lords and Gentlemen, with the utmost respect,

Your most obedient servant,
CHARLOTTE BROOKE.

By an odd caprice of fortune Miss Brooke lost a situation for which she seemed eminently qualified. Her claims to the protection of such an institution as the Royal Irish Academy, independent of the many qualities which she possessed, were undoubtedly strong, and such as one would naturally suppose should operate powerfully on the unbiassed and unprejudiced mind of every member of that truly respectable society. Scarcely could the veteran soldier strive more earnestly for conquest in the heat of battle, than Mr. Walker for the advancement of his amiable and accomplished friend. He had interested many in her behalf, and felt much disappointed at the result of his exertions. Success too seldom results from merit; and the fate of Miss Brooke forms no felicitous exception to the general experience of men.

In the year 1791, we find our authoress again soliciting the public notice. Early in this year she published *The School for Christians*, in dialogues, for the use of

children. In the preface to this little work she informs us, that she "was blessed with a parent, whose mind was knowledge, and whose heart was virtue; who stooped to the capacity of her infant years, and replied with unwearied condescension, to the teasing inquisitiveness of childhood. Recollection now serves to remind her of those answers, and that mode of instruction, which conveyed knowledge by the means of sensible images, to her mind: and, from her own experience of the efficacy, and excellence of this plan, she naturally wishes to communicate its utility to others. Let this acknowledgement acquit her of the presumption of pretending to offer *her own* wisdom—*her own* instructions to the world. Her only object in this publication, is, the happiness of seeing it become useful to her species, and the pleasure of bestowing the profits of the book, on the enlargement of a little plan, she has formed, for the charitable education of children whose parents are too poor to afford them the means of instruction."

Miss Brooke's pious labours did not end here. Anxious to do honour to the memory of her father, she formed the determination of publishing a uniform edition of all his works, and of prefixing a memoir of his life. When the productions of Mr. Brooke's pen were first sent from Ireland to the English press, he was in a state of mental derangement, and bodily pain, which rendered him incapable of anything more than a bare assent to their departure; and Miss Brooke was too young to conceive, or prevent the mischief which necessarily ensued. They were submitted to the care of a gentleman who offered his services to superintend their publication; but he, also, pressed down by infirmities and years, was unequal to the task of revision and selection, in which more difficulties occurred than perhaps he had been aware of. Some pieces were printed which had never been intended for the press; also, some that were interpolated by other hands; besides many more which Mr. Brooke never wrote, and had only corrected for his friends: and even his own most favourite productions were printed from unfinished copies, while the perfect ones were overlooked, and unfortunately, remained behind.

In this state, so disgraceful to their author, were his poetical works first published. But the same mismanagement prevailing in the publication, that had done in the printing of them, they lay neglected in a ware-room, and totally unthought of by Miss Brooke, till a few more years brought with them a consciousness, that filial duty had something more than the mortal life of a beloved and honoured parent to care for. Mr. Brooke's life of fame became then an object of importance and feeling concern to his accomplished daughter. His works were opened with triumph, but closed again with anguish and disappointment. "Till then," says Miss Brooke, "I had scarcely ever opened them at all; for memory still retained the impression which a frequent perusal of the manuscripts, in earlier years, had made; and it was not till this began to be effaced, that the mortifying discovery was made, and the cruel comparison between what I remembered, and what I then saw. It was, however, pursued no farther, at that time, than through the course of a few pages: it was attended with feelings too acute for health and spirits, already strained to the utmost, to support and cheer the decline of a parent, whose comfort was dearer to me, even than his fame."<36> The works were, therefore, laid by, and never taken up again until some time after the death of Mr. Brooke, when a relation of his (then in London, and preparing for more distant travel) proposed to Miss Brooke, to write an account of her father's life, prefix it to his works, and publish them anew; promising, before his departure, to arrange all matters with the booksellers, and to settle a correspondence for her, with a literary friend of his, in London, whom he said he would engage to superintend, and acquaint her with

the progress of the work. Part of it was proposed to be displaced by some pieces never before made public; some more to be reprinted from the manuscripts in Miss Brooke's possession, and an apology made for the imperfections necessarily remaining in the rest.

"I was at that time," says Miss Brooke, "in a state of health nearly approaching to dissolution; and I seized, with joy, on the hope of accomplishing, before my death, the only purpose for which I then wished to live. Hardly recovered from the grief of my father's death, and but just deprived of an only brother; with a bleeding heart, a timid mind, and a constitution

'Spun, by anguish, to a sightless thread!'

"I eagerly caught at that assistance, without which I deemed the desired object unattainable. But the event most fatally reversed all my prospects: my relation departed in too great a hurry to settle my business to any purpose; and the gentleman to whom he referred me for information, was always too busy to reply to my repeated applications.

"Wearied at last with fruitless efforts, I ceased to importune him any more; and finding that two years had elapsed, without any notice respecting the work, I concluded that nothing whatever had been attempted; and looked forward to the hope of doing still more justice to the memory of my father, in consequence of this delay, than could have been done at a time when ill health, and injured fortune had sunk my spirits, and secluded me from literary society and assistance. But this flattering idea, though only in prospect, I was not long suffered to enjoy. In a moment least expected, I was suddenly shocked by the appearance of an account in the English papers, that a second edition of my father's works was published without my concurrence, to set the seal to the errors of the first edition; to disgrace still more deeply my father's reputation; to make the world suppose his instructions and example so little effectual, to any honourable purpose, as that his child, scarce ever separated a moment from his presence, could basely take advantage of his death, to build paltry emolument on the ruins of his fame."<37>

Afflicted, almost to death, at this cruel intelligence, the utmost that Miss Brooke could then do to remedy the mischief, was, to write instant orders to stop the sale, and purchase a right to the copy, by paying the expense incurred. Deeply injured in her property by the misfortunes of those in whose hands it had been entrusted, she was unable to command a sum sufficient to reprint the defective parts of her father's works; and a subscription was the only expedient she could think of, to redeem his fame, and give the benefit of his genius and virtues to posterity.

"With this view," says our fair authoress, "I acquainted my friends with what I had already done, and requested their assistance to forward my proposed undertaking. Various were the difficulties and discouragements in the way. Difficulties in the transaction of business with booksellers of another kingdom, whose negligence was rendered still more supine, by knowing that they had only female resentment to fear; and discouragements of the most mortifying kind from those on whose zeal and influence I had rested my principal hopes of success; but who censured me as rash and imprudent for incurring a certain expense, in search of uncertain good. Some, however, there were, of greater feeling, and more elevated -minds; who reached forth the friendly hand, to assist filial duty in its struggle through surrounding obstacles." By their means Mr. Brooke's works were given, in a state not unworthy of their author, to the world; and to them the public are indebted for the sublime and affecting

lessons of virtue which abound in every page. Indeed, but for their assistance, the whole of the edition would have been committed to the flames; for Miss Brooke was determined it should never more appear, unless it could appear with honour.

In this detail of injuries to Miss Brooke's property and her peace, I mean not to criminate any one; and would rather hope that she had suffered through inattention, than want of feeling and integrity in those who were concerned in her affairs. Perhaps, were they sensible of all she had endured, they would regret that they had any share in the infliction. The day, the hour, is rapidly approaching, whether as to her enemies or herself, when the views of all hearts shall be disclosed—when what was devised secretly must be divulged openly and when men will be estimated not by the fallacious surmises of each other, but by the unerring scrutiny of omniscience. I can leave "the hypocritical heart" to him who sees not as man sees; and with him, whose ways are not as our ways, and to whom alone vengeance belongs. I also leave "the punishment due" to the offences of his creatures! Here let me leave her foes. But I cannot prevail with myself to sink in oblivion the following letter of Miss Brooke's, which, while it exposes the conduct of an individual, strikingly displays the abuses to which an unprotected female is subject, even from those whose sex should lead them on every occasion to be the strenuous advocate of their fair countrywomen. This exposure may draw upon my head the censures of those whom I deem my friends. But I entered on my task as a faithful reporter of facts authenticated; and I leave an impartial public to judge of the genuineness of my narrative. I hope I shall never know fear in the path of duty. What I have not unadvisedly undertaken, I shall not pusillanimously abandon.

At the period this letter was written, Miss Brooke was in Dublin, on a visit with her intimate friend Dr. Hill, who behaved towards her through life with paternal affection, and who assisted her in arranging her father's works for publication. It is dated May 15th, 1792.

My dear Miss T—— will, I fear, think sadly of my silence; but in truth I am not to blame; and I can declare with the utmost sincerity, that a single day does not pass, without frequent thoughts of, and cordial good wishes for her welfare. I was as sure of being at Cottage a month ago as I was of my existence. Three times I was on the point of setting out, and each time detained by inevitable and disagreeable business. M'Kenzie (the College printer) who unfortunately printed my father's works, has harassed me by every species of impudence, insolence, and *****.

Until a week ago I was not able to get the last of the books out of his hands, and I then found there were a number of the copies wanting. I refused to pay his bill, till he gave them all up, and he threatened me with a suit. Any court in Christendom would have given it against him, and he was told so; but he knew I disliked contention, and therefore bullied me to obtain what he had no right to. However, my booksellers, Archer and Jones, have taken up the matter, and say they hope to settle it. I suppose I shall lose considerably, besides the far greater vexation of having the work ill done, which is so very dearly paid for: The paper is badly matched; the subscribers complain, and those who do not understand the business will, to be sure, lay the blame upon me. But I have this consolation; that the fame of my father is justified. The work is not the less perfect in itself, for the defect of the paper; and it will descend to posterity in a state not unworthy of its author. Any censure that may fall upon me, when compared with this consideration, is not worth a thought. I have ever lived but for my father, and I shall not *now* divide my little rivulet from the parent stream. Oh, may we never be divided!—may we roll together to that sea from whence we never have return! In life, my soul is his;—in death I trust it shall join him!—You say I know not what it is to have the heart exclusively centered in one object—you

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forgot my father when you said so. I am indeed incapable of any other love—my heart was *intended* for that alone, and nature has not nor ever will have room for any other one. I see none on earth who resemble him, and therefore heaven alone can become his rival in my breast.

I have been looking about for every kind of book which I thought could be useful to you. I have with great difficulty procured Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, which I think is exactly the sort you want and wish for. After all, perhaps we shall not meet. I cannot go down this fortnight yet. But I hope you will not have left Longford before that time. Dear girl, don't punish me for my *involuntary* silence, but write, and write soon. Your elegant and feeling letters are a real indulgence to me. Even your kind partiality is of use: it reminds me of what I ought to be, and instead of vanity excites only an ambition to merit that opinion which it gives me so much, pleasure to possess.

If you knew how harrassed I have been, you would pity instead of blaming me for my silence. Dr. Hill congratulates me that *I am alive*. Indeed I have been wonderfully *supported* as well as *tried*. My health has often sunk under much less than I have had to bear in the course of this business. The whole world could not afford me another cause to induce me to such a conflict. But I shall now lay down my arms, and retire for life from a field where I have nothing left to fight for. All of this world that I want or wish for is mine. God grant I may be equally successful in acquiring my portion of a better world! To *that* let us lift our souls! Let us rejoice in those trials that have lessened the chains which fettered us to this dungeon of clay! I long to get home, that I may endeavour to do so. In this busy scene I can neither get time to read or to think.

To-morrow morning I am obliged to go with my friend, Mrs. Hamilton, to Williamburgs, her country house, within three miles of town. She enjoys the business that detains me and only laughs at my impatience. Direct to Dominic Street, No. 24, and. I shall get your letter with hers. Remember I shall think you are angry with me if you do not write. Have you heard from Mrs. Waller<38> lately, and how is she? She has written to me. I suppose she thinks I am in the country by this time.—Farewell.—God bless you.

Yours most truly,
CHARLOTTE BROOKE."

To this edition of Mr. Brooke's works is prefixed a Memoir of the author, which was drawn up by Miss Brooke about the year 1787, and published with the former edition of his poems. In the prosecution of so arduous a task as the revision and correction of her father's practical works, Miss Brooke was generously assisted by many kind friends, some of whom not only rendered her essential service in the general selection of the pieces, but zealously exerted themselves to forward the sale, in order to prevent her being involved in difficulties. "As to my. affairs," she observes, "I bless God I have succeeded beyond my hopes. After purchasing all my *wishes*, I have still enough left for my *wants*, what need I more. I have suffered considerably by the printer; also in many other instances of disappointment and loss; but still, in the grand points, I am successful."—From the sale of her *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, and her father's works, Miss Brooke was enabled to realize upwards of three hundred guineas, with which she purchased an annuity of forty pounds a year, which was all she possessed at the time of her decease.

Some years previous to Miss Brooke's decease, she had written a play on the popular story of Belisarius, by Marmontell; which, however, it appears she had no intention of publishing. Some time after her death it was found amongst her papers; and having been perused by several literary judges, it was deemed worthy of being brought forward on the London Theatre. Mrs. Siddons was at that period in Dublin.

By the kindness of Mrs. Lefanu, sister to the Right Hon. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, it was introduced to the notice of this celebrated actress. It was afterwards sent to London for the inspection of Mr. Kemble, who, it is said, highly approved of the performance. It remained with this gentleman a considerable time; and several letters were written by Miss Brooke's friends, demanding an explanation for the delay. After many fruitless inquiries, it was at length stated, that the play was lost by the carelessness of a servant. Certain it is, the play was lost to the friends and relations of Miss Brooke, who were never after able to recover it. It is however a curious circumstance, that on Mr. Kemble's return from the Continent, whither he had gone for the purpose of studying the French and Spanish theatricals, and of importing whatever might be serviceable for the improvement of the English stage, he produced a play on the story of Belisarius, which was brought forward on the Liverpool boards.<39>

Here Miss Brooke's literary labours ended. Had she lived it was her intention to have published a new edition of the *Fool of Quality*, and I believe to have revised and considerably abridged the latter volume of that work. Of this she speaks in her letters to Miss T—— "You lament," says "Miss Brooke, "that the *Fool of Quality* was not more read. I was a child when the first volumes were published, but I remember very well what has since been confirmed to me, by those who knew my father at the time, that the demand for it was infinitely greater than that of any other book that had ever appeared. In the course of about a year it went through three editions. But the latter volumes destroyed the credit of the work, and it fell of course. Nevertheless, it is now out of print, and only to be had second-hand. If ever I live to possess the power of hazarding a few score pounds, I will certainly restore it to its original fame, and its *purposed* utility." In a subsequent letter she writes thus: "If the further sale of my father's poems should enable me to run hazards, for my own gratification, I have long proposed to publish another edition of the Fool of Quality. *Till then*, I shall preserve the determination I have made, never so much as to open it. The *second infancy* that shocked me twelve years ago, in every page of the latter volumes of it, would now, in the maturer state of my judgment, torture me almost to death. To this torture I shall not unnecessarily submit; nor will I ever more look upon the wound, till I am gifted with the power of curing it. If I remember right, three volumes would amply contain all that ought to remain of the five; and as to his other and last work of *Juliet Grenville*, it is, I fear, scarcely worthy of revision, and should only be quietly consigned to oblivion."

For the last few years of her life, Miss Brooke principally resided at Cottage, near Longford, with Mr. and Mrs. Browne, who paid her every attention in their power, in order to render her situation as comfortable as possible. When writing to her friend Miss T——, she says, "I find myself extremely comfortable in this little quiet habitation, but not with people towards whom I am indifferent. I am very fond of Mrs. Browne, and absolutely dote on the children, who I think, are the most engaging of any I have ever seen. The only demur to comfort is the excessive badness of the road, which is indeed almost impassable, at best, to any kind of elevated carriage. Either that, or my wish of consequence has kept me very quiet since I came here, for not a soul has been here, as you suppose, to see me; and if this was all, I should be very far from repining at the road, for a consequence so productive of that leisure and retirement which I love, and which I now want, as well as love. The exercise of a car has been prescribed for my health, and here I cannot obtain it without walking to the end of the road that leads up to this house. I attempted it twice since I came, and was

quite foundered in the trial. I have often heard Lady Granard^{<40>} spoken of very highly, and I understand she has *character* enough to make amends for the disadvantage of her *rank*. Still, however, I shall be neither displeased nor surprised should she not think proper to honor me with a visit. I shall not be displeased, because my time will be so much the more my own. And it will be no wonder at all if she discovers that I am thought proud and unbending to the great, and keeps, on that account, her distance. The fact is, that though I am very willing to give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,—the homage of forms,—of place,—of precedence, &c.; yet still, so long as there is nothing more than rank to remind me of dignity in the possessors, I am too apt (without intending it) to forget that it is not fair to deprive them of the little that is their due, and I so seldom remember to pay homage which does not spring from my heart, that the omission, I believe has been felt indeed by some, and with a mortified pride that very seldom forgives. I wish not to occasion those feelings in my fellow-creatures; and indolence and habit incapacitate me for the exertion of those commonplace, but constant attentions, which, in general, are necessary to avoid it. No one thing that I love is to be found in the higher ranks of life: neither cultivated minds, on the one hand, nor uncorrupted simplicity on the other. No charm either of purity or of refinement is there. Nature flies their abodes, and even art itself, *elegant art*, disdains them. Happiness derides, dignity scorns them; and even humility herself finds her pity mingled with contempt, when she looks upon the poor inflated pageants of a self-created vapour, so soon to vanish into air."

But the days of man are numbered. This is not our home, nor our rest; it remaineth in a better world for those who are found faithful unto death. Miss Brooke had, for some years, complaints which alarmed those who knew how much they should feel her loss; and though she struggled with ill health, and hardly suffered it to interrupt her labours, yet it seemed evident the mortal tabernacle was failing. The last winter of her life was spent in Dublin between her friends Dr. Hill and Mrs. Hamilton,^{<41>} of Dominic Street. She also occasionally visited the late Hon. Mrs. O'Neil,^{<42>} a lady whose elegance of mind could only be surpassed by the charms of her person, uniting with the polish of courts the brilliancy of genius, she shone pre=eminent in the fashionable world. With these amiable characters Miss Brooke constantly associated during her stay in the metropolis. Her health and strength were very perceptibly on the decline, and she was advised by her excellent friend, Dr. Hill, to remain with him for some months longer, as the air of the country was too cold for her delicate constitution. With great difficulty she reached Cottage; and shortly after was seized with a malignant fever, which put an end to her valuable life on the 29th of March, 1793. Miss Brooke had no dependance upon her acquisitions, or upon her moral character: her whole trust for acceptance with God, and for happiness in the invisible state, rested solely on the atonement and mediation of her Saviour. There was a striking elevation and dignity combined with simplicity, in her manner and language, during the whole course of her trying illness. Although she manifested no ecstasy of joy, she discovered serenity and complacency of mind, together with great resignation to the will of God in prayer. She departed to another and a better world with perfect calmness and serenity, and in the full possession of all her mental faculties.

How calm her exit!
 Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
 Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
 — Blair.

I shall now close this part of the Memoir of Miss Brooke, with the following poetical effusion to her memory, from the pen of a lady<43> who deeply deplored her early exit from a world like this, but whose modesty has laid an injunction on me, which excludes her name from appearing in this biographical sketch. The poem was sent to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. who immediately forwarded it to the editor of the *Anthologia Hibernica*, accompanied with the following note:

Sir, I was last night favoured with the enclosed lines, from an unknown hand, accompanied with a modest request, that I would forward them to your magazine, in case they should meet my approbation. I do not lose a moment in sending them to you; for, besides possessing many poetical beauties, they breath a spirit of unfeigned sorrow, which particularly recommends them to me, who feel such deep affliction for the ingenious and amiable subject of them.

I am, &c.

J. C. W.

April 13, 1793.

To the Memory of Miss Charlotte Brooke.

Let towering pride erect the sculptured shrine,
And venal flattery garlands twine to deck
The vault where grandeur lies;—but come, oh Muse!
And seek the lowly grave where CHARLOTTE rests.—
Insatiate grave, and faithless! Verdure gay,
In every springing floweret of the year
Adorn thy surface; yet thy envious depth
Veils from my aching sight the fairest flow'r
That graced our clime. Alas! Forever hid
From mortal eyes, dear maid! thy sweetness blooms
In radiant spheres beyond our feeble view. —
Oh! early lost and sudden!—Mighty Powers!
Are virtue, genius, talents, only lent
A little moment, just to raise our hope,
And vanish, transient, as the painted cloud
Which quick dissolves in tears?—Is life no more?
And cannot worth superior ward the dart,
Or bribe a lengthened hour from ruthless death?
Ah! No: could worth prolong the floating date,
I had not wept o'er CHARLOTTE's timeless urn.
Though sad my heart, no single mourner I:
For drooping friendship, in dejection fixed,
Points the mute sorrow labouring for a vent;
And gratitude, with lifted eye pursues
The shade of her, whose generous bosom felt
For every human woe:—nor *felt* alone,
But, with delighted readiness, *relieved*:
Religion too, and filial piety,
Their votary's pale remains exulting own,
Though shrouded in the dust. And lo! reveal
To fancy's wondering gaze, a thousand shapes,
Air-drawn, advance, bright evanescent forms,
Attuning heavenly harps to solemn dirge;
And shadowy choirs of time-ennobled bards,
Whose songs, by her from dark oblivion snatched,
And failing language, charm the ear again

Reliques of Irish Poetry

While kindred genius and congenial worth
Endure, sweet maid! thou ne'er wilt be forgot:
Returning seasons still shall find thy grave
With heartfelt tears, and tributary wreaths
Due honoured: hands unseen shall dress the sod
There pensive contemplation, too, shall steal
From scenes of thoughtless levity, to plume
Her wing for flight sublime, and learn of thee
O'er earth-born ill triumphant to arise;
To live with virtue, and with hope to die.

After what has been advanced in the preceding pages, on the subject of Miss Brooke's abilities as a writer, and her various vicissitudes through life, it is presumed that little more will be expected than a few remarks on some of the prominent features of her character, for the purpose of deriving instruction from the excellencies and defects which they exhibit, and of discharging the duty of a faithful and impartial biographer; especially as these *Memoirs* have already extended beyond the limits which I had prescribed, though without exhausting the materials I had prepared to lay before the reader. It is far from my design to indulge in extravagant panegyric, or in strained eulogium on the character of the favoured individual, whose life we have been contemplating—her character, like that of other sinful mortals, had a certain share of imperfection and infirmity. When a limner sits down to draw a portrait, the first duty which his profession imposes is not so much to produce a pleasing picture as a faithful likeness. Nor shall the person who draws up this brief sketch of her character, aim so much to please the eye of a partial observer, as to portray the subject of it, exactly such as she really was. Be it remembered then, that though it is the likeness of an amiable and accomplished female, which is to be now exhibited, it is the likeness of one "who was subject to like passions as we are."

Among the many blessings of our kind benefactor, that of friendship is none of the least. Insensible indeed must that mind be, which is barred to the admission, callous to the influence, and ignorant of the joys of social affections. In such a person we see human nature woefully depraved; we deprecate sin's direful effects on society, and commiserate the unhappy state of the individual. Still friendship glows in the bosom of a few! Still may it glow with increasing purity and ardour! Where persons are united by the bonds of genuine friendship, there is nothing, perhaps, more conducive to felicity. It supports and strengthens the mind, alleviates the pains of life, and renders the present state, at least, somewhat comfortable. "Sorrows," says Lord Verulam, "by being communicated, grow less, and joys greater." "And indeed," observes another, "sorrow like a stream, loses itself in many channels; while joy, like a ray of the sun, reflects with a greater ardour and quickness when it rebounds upon a man from the breast of his friend."

Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul,
Sweetener of life, and solder of society,
I owe thee much. Thou hast deserved from me,
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay:
Oft have I proved the labour of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
Anxious to please.

—BLAIR.

Friendship exists, and is refined in its nature, in proportion to the moral excellence of the parties; it influences the heart, and manifests itself in all the varying

circumstances of life. In the real friend, not words but actions, every motion, the glow of the countenance, expresses the internal warmth; yea, his very heart shows itself. Whoever undertakes this important part, should be

Prepared for martyrdom, and strong to prove,
A thousand ways the force of genuine love.
To echo sigh for sigh, and groan for groan,
And wet his cheeks with sorrows not his own.
——COWPER.

Miss Brooke had a heart eminently tuned to friendship. Between her and her affectionate correspondent, Miss T——, the strongest attachment subsisted. The latter at one period of her life was deeply enveloped in the thick mists of affliction, and almost overwhelmed by their pressure. No sooner was it known than it was felt more keenly by her friend: formed to sympathy, her heart wept, and her eye dropped the friendly tear, the grief was divided, consolation was suggested, and arising from rational sources, was like oil to the wound. The friendship of Miss Brooke was not a

Name, nor charm that lulls to sleep;<44>

it was an affection which interested and actuated every power; it was a sincere and generous passion, which sought not its own but another's good; and rejoiced in every circumstance which tended in the most remote degree to the happiness of her bosom friend. But all friendships formed on earth are of short duration. Life is uncertain; and the pleasure enjoyed in the company of those we love is dearly purchased by the anguish of separation.

Invidious Grave! how dost thou rend in sunder
Whom love has knit, and sympathy made one!
A tie more stubborn far than nature's band.<45>

Miss Brooke has long since taken her everlasting farewell of earthly scenes; but Miss T—— still survives, and still dwells with grateful recollection on the memory of her departed friend, whose unbounded affection and ardent attachment smoothed many a ragged path in her juvenile years, and made

Her iron cares sit easy.

But is it not a thought calculated to repress every rising sorrow, and wipe away every tear, that the period of separation is very short? How will it appear when it is over? It may seem very distant in perspective; but in retrospect, it will dwindle into a point. O how short, in contrast with eternity, the duration of mortal friendships! Still, however, when *such friends* part, it is the survivor dies; and Miss Brooke's surviving friend can well adopt the beautiful language of the poet on this occasion:

— Of joys departed,
Not to return, how painful the remembrance!<46>

Miss Brooke's charities were extensive. Previous to the loss of her property, when she lived in affluent circumstances, she devoted a considerable portion of her income to charitable purposes. She took a particular interest in educating the children of the poor; and when she lived at Longford established a school, to the support of which she devoted the profits of her little work, entitled *The School for Christians*. In the year of 1778, Dr. Gormley, an eminent physician at Fintona, in the county of Tyrone, dying in very low circumstances, left behind him a very large family of daughters, who by his death were reduced to great poverty. The late Rev. Philip Skelton, a man of an eccentric character, but of great benevolence of disposition, and

always a friend to the friendless and distressed, took the poor orphans under his care, and supported them till he put them in a way of providing for themselves. Those who were of an age fit for it, he recommended for waiting-maids to ladies of fortune. One of them lived in this capacity with Miss Brooke, who kindly took her on the recommendation of Mr. Skelton, and treated her in every respect, so as to make her feel her situation as unlike a dependant as possible. Miss Brooke afterwards informed Mr. Skelton by letter, that this girl, who was bred a Roman Catholic, had voluntarily conformed to the Protestant religion; which intelligence it may be supposed, was extremely pleasing to him; for he had always, through a principle of delicacy, avoided speaking to her on the subject of her religion, lest he might appear to use his influence on her in so nice a point, where one should be directed, not by complaisance, but by conscience,<47> But in all her acts of beneficence, Miss Brooke was exceedingly careful to avoid ostentation. She felt the obligation of that admonition, "When thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right doth; that thine alms may be in secret;"<48> and, from the most conscientious motives, made it quite a system to conceal her name as often as it was practicable, from those to whom she extended relief, or to whom she remitted her contributions for any important object.

One of the most remarkable features of Miss Brooke's character was, her candour in judging. She was slow to discern the faults of others, and backward to mention them. When she found it impossible altogether to justify the actions of some of her fellow-creatures, she did not judge their motives, but rather mentioned such apologies as the case would bear. Unconscious of the superiority of her own attainments, and abashed by a sense of her own infirmities, she was not at all concerned to judge others, but without self-denial embraced that precept, "Honour all men." She felt the force of that question, "Who art thou that judgest another's servant?—For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ."<49> This was the source of her candour; an habitual recollection of judgment to come; a referring of every thing to that awful day. This is very observable in many of her letters, as well as in her general conduct. When writing to a particular friend, she speaks thus: "I wish you had happened to keep Harry's letter to send me along with your own, for I have not received it, and I should be very sorry if it is lost, for, poor man, he has very little time for writing, and I very seldom hear from him. I suppose you will see Mrs. —— at his house, but I don't think you will like her. There is a hardness in her manners, which acts upon me with all the powers of repulsion; and I think the poles could as soon meet, as my heart come into contact with hers. Yet she is really in many respects a most uncommonly good woman. But self-opinion, pride, and ill-temper, must be put off before she becomes a *new creature*. However, there are very few *new creatures* to be met with; as for me I know but one. Shall I therefore condemn all the rest? God forbid! "To their own Master each of them standeth or falleth."<49> Believe me, I neither *dare* nor *wish* to attempt such an impious piece of cruelty or folly. For 'who am I, that I should judge another man's servant?'<49> I have neither right nor inclination to judge them. *As far as I can see* of their state, I would not dare to trust *myself* in such a one; but how far the possibilities of nature may admit of their acceptance from a merciful God, I know not, nor is it fit I should attempt to enquire."

Miss Brooke was possessed of first-rate natural endowments; and claimed a considerable degree of mental superiority. Her apprehension was quick, her judgment was accurate; and her imagination vigorous and bold, fertile and ready. No one could more nicely or instantaneously discriminate the defects or excellencies of a performance; but her candour and self-diffidence generally repressed the declaration

of her sentiments. She was not a person to whom mediocrity, in any sense, could be attributed. Promptitude, vigour, and resolution, marked her entire character. She was fond of music, and played extremely well. She drew correctly from nature; and was an enthusiastic admirer of the sublime and beautiful. She valued erudition in all its branches, and for all its legitimate purposes; and strove patiently and laboriously to gain an extensive knowledge of literature. And her acquisitions, considered in connection with her circumstances, were eminent. Her acquaintance with general science, though not profound, was extensive. She knew no luxury so great as a book: her reading was constant and diversified. But she was averse to novels and works of fiction. "I would not recommend works of imagination," says Miss Brooke, to one of her correspondents; "I was for some years that I did not venture to read any books of fancy—not even the most moral productions. I found they deadened my relish for the only kind of reading that then could be of real use to me. They are too apt to lead the wavering mind aside, and lull its nerve asleep." Her Bible was her companion, her friend, and her counsellor; and the numerous quotations to be found in her epistolary communications evince the extensive knowledge she had acquired of its sacred contents. The writings of Law, and the celebrated Madam Guion, were in her constant perusal. Upon these, and some of the works of Doddridge, she employed much of her time. Biography, and history of eventful periods, interested her even to the last period of her life. These, and other kinds of compositions in which there was a mixture of anecdote, she used to call "eager reading;" and she often pursued it beyond the limits of her strength. 'She was mistress of Italian and French, and translated with ease and elegance many of the best works in these languages. To the study of the Irish she was enthusiastically attached; and the extensive knowledge of that language which she arrived to, plainly proves what progress may be made under the greatest disadvantages. It is frequently the case, that those who have the means and opportunities of improvement, undervalue and neglect them; while others who are desirous of excelling, are denied these assistances. But diligence conquers the hardest things. "An intense desire of knowledge," says a late writer, "will not suffer a man to be idle. It will create the help it does not find. It will detach leisure from distraction, and solitude from company; it will keep open the eyes and the ears; and by lively, active, minute, habitual attention, it will aggregate and multiply intellectual stores; it will render every place a school, and every occurrence a tutor; it will suffer nothing to be lost."

Some minds are tempered happily, and mixed
With such ingredients of good sense and taste
Of what is excellent in man, they thirst
With such a zeal to be what they approve,
That no restraints can circumscribe them more
Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake,
Nor can example hurt them.—<50>

Such was Miss Brooke. Her spirit was ardent and invincible, displaying an almost unequalled decision of character. Her judgment on most points, was generally formed with such force and precision, that she seemed a stranger to hesitation, and seldom found occasion to review any of her resolutions. Having once settled in her own mind the question of right, on whatever subject, she would pursue her object with indefatigable industry, patience, and perseverance. There was a firmness in her principles and proceedings, which neither admitted relaxation nor delay. Difficulties and disappointments, instead of producing discouragement, afforded a fresh excitement to action, and the hope of ultimate success.

Reliques of Irish Poetry

The gift of poetry was hereditary in the family of Mr. Brooke; it descended to his daughter Charlotte, and, like the rest of her relatives, she employed it in the service of religion and virtue. Of her first poetical attempts there are few remains, and as they were written merely to please a few friends in the country, it is probable she would have been sufficiently gratified with their approbation, if they had not called on her to add something more to that fame which those effusions had acquired. In the latter years of her life she wrote a considerable number of pieces, none of which have ever appeared in print, having been exclusively confined to the circle of her own immediate friends and relations. Some of those have come under my notice. Their variety is as striking as their number. I select one, not because it is preferable to many that remain, but for the useful and interesting topic that it treats of, and the pious spirit which it breathes, as well as the poetical merit which it unquestionably possesses.

Like Bartimeus, Lord, I came
To meet thy healing word;
To call upon thy gracious name,
And cry to be restored!

Across thy path my limbs I laid,
With trembling hope elate;
And there, in *conscious rags* arrayed,
A poor blind beggar sate.

I did not ask the alms of gold,
For *sight* alone I cried;
Sight! Sight! A Saviour to behold!
And feel his power applied.

The more the crowd rebuked my pray
And gave it to the wind,
The more I cried thy grace to share
Thy mercy to the *blind!*

At length I heard a pitying voice,
"Pilgrim," he calls, "arise!
Poor Pilgrim, let thy heart rejoice,
He hears thee, and replies."

Up, at the word, with joy I bound
(My cure in hope begun,)
And cast *my garment* on the ground,
That *faster I may run*.

But the "What wilt thou?" yet delays;
Nor yet I view the *light*;
Till faith once more with fervour prays,
O give me,—give me sight!

Transport!—'tis done! I view that face!—
That face of Love divine—
I gaze, the witness of his grace;
And see a Saviour mine!

Next on *myself* mine eyes I cast
Ah! what a sight to find!
All soiled, and shrinking at the blast
Of each inclement wind!

Charlotte Brooke

What shall I do? resume again
The *rags* I cast away;
And on my limbs, beneath my ken,
The *loathsome object* lay!

No, wretched garment, lie thou there,
Nor give me farther shame;
(O welcome, first the rudest air
That may assail my frame!)

With thee may all my follies die!—
To thee may sense adhere!
There, *self*, may all thy cobwebs lie,
And earth, thy cumbrous care!

Far better prospects now arise,
A *better garb* to view;
Since *He* who has *restored mine eyes*,
Has power to *clothe* me too.

His blood shall wash my stains away,
His grace my faith approve;
His righteousness my limbs array,
And shelter me with love!

No more the *sordid alms of earth*
My altered sense delight
All joyous in its recent birth,
The glorious birth *to light*!

"Miss Brooke," says a gentleman, who was on a visit at her father's, in a letter to a friend, "inherits a considerable portion of the countenance of her father; but, she is as pale as a primrose, and almost as thin as her mother. Our conversation at dinner turned chiefly on the customs and manners of the inhabitants in the neighbourhood. You would really think that Mr. Brooke was talking of his own children, they were all so dear to him; he prayed for them, and blessed them over and over again, with tears in his eyes. Miss Brooke dwelt on their talents; ready turns of wit; their passion for poetry, music, and dancing; she gave me some specimens of their poetry, but I have mislaid them. I hope I have not lost them; she also gave me the following love letter, which was actually written by a young man in the vicinity, to a very handsome young woman, to whom he was afterwards married, to the great joy of all the parish:

"My dearest Nanny,—I write this with the quill of a virgin goose, on paper almost as snowy as your breast. This is a compliment justly due to your maidenhood and innocence. It is now so long since I saw you, that I begin to think you have forgotten me. If your lively image treated me as unkindly as you do yourself, I should die of despair; but it does not desert me, sleeping or waking, in or out of company. My companions cannot conceive what it is that makes me so pensive, they little know the cause, and, perhaps, if they did, they would only laugh at me; for if your finger aches, there are a thousand remedies prescribed for it in an instant; but, when your heart is consumed in all the tender flames of love, not one can be found to sympathise with you. I think I have already given you many proofs of the sincerity of my passion; I don't want your pity;—the beggar lives on pity I want your hand and your heart along with it, it is this alone that can make me happy, and restore my mind to that tranquillity which it knew till these unfortunate eyes of mine first met yours. A line will revive my drooping spirits, and give my soul a holiday, which it has not enjoyed since you left this place.

Reliques of Irish Poetry

I am, my dearest Nanny,
Your sincere lover,
T—D—Y."

"In the evening," continued the gentleman already mentioned, "we walked into the garden; his favourite flowers were those that were planted by the hands of his wife and daughter; I was astonished at his skill in botany; he dwelt for some moments on the virtues of the meanest weeds, and then launched out into such a panegyric on vegetable diet, that he almost made me a Pythagorean; especially after the conversation I once had with that amiable and learned man, Dr. Hill, on this subject. When the conversation turned on the poets, I expected that Miss Brooke would have shown me some of her own poetry; but the diffidence and modesty of all her expressions, convinced me, in a short time, that I was not to hope for that favour. I say favour, for I am told by a lady of refined taste, who is very intimate with her, that she has written some verses that breathe, if I may use the expression, Promethean fire. She was kind enough, however, to give me the following lines, written by a young lady, who had never seen the city in her life:

Felicia to Charlotte.

Let those who tread the trophied roads of fame,
Enjoy the sweets ambitious ardours yield;
Let heroes emulate each glorious name,
And reap their laurels in the tented field.

Far other joy from social friendship flows,
Far other feelings from this source arise,
E'en love to thy sweet power submissive bows,
And kindred bonds are loose to friendship's ties.

We oft, Charlotta, share its heart-felt joys,
Its bright influence animates the mind;
How frail to this are courtiers gilded toys,
Blown with the gale, the sport of every wind!

When sol withdraws the golden beams of day,
And planetary worlds around us shine,
When in the concave glows the milky way,
And nipping frosts the watery plains confine.

How pleased we close about the genial fire,
Within the little cot, the seat of age
Of cheerful age that can the scene admire,
When mirth and innocence our thoughts engage.

Then glows the heart, soft as the melting snows,
More free, more open than the halcyon's plumes,
Envy, a hated guest, the dome ne'er knows,
Nor malice here her consequence assumes.

Hail, happy days of innocence and peace,
Of health and favoured ease, and all that's fair,
The wish to cherish and the power to please;
These, these we taste, and freedom's genial care,

Perhaps, when age hath silvered o'er our hairs,
And hoary time, with pinioned haste hath flown,
Reflection back again those scenes may bear,
And sweet remembrance stamp them for her own.

To excel in epistolary writing, is an enviable accomplishment, and may be rendered an instrument of great profit, as well as of pleasure. It has often been justly observed, that there is no way in which we can form a better estimate of the leading features of a person's character, and of his prevailing tone of sentiment, than by his private letters. It is when the feelings are thus poured with unsuspecting confidence into the bosom of friendship, that the true state of the mind most distinctly appears. The talent for writing which Miss Brooke possessed, rendered her correspondence easy and pleasant. The liveliness of her conceptions, and peculiar felicity of expression, imparted to her familiar letters an irresistible charm; whilst the warmth of her affection, her solicitude for the happiness of her friends, and her exalted piety, rendered them lessons of morality and religious instruction. She wrote with uncommon facility; and her letters are full of hints derived from her own circumstances, or application to those of her correspondents; and exhibit much of the Christian and the friend united. The first extract which I shall give is from a letter, the last she ever penned, to her excellent cousin the late Henry Brooke, Esq. in which her deep impressions of the evil of sin, and the total depravity of her nature, are well represented. The letter is dated Cottage, March 13, 1793, and she was summoned to a world of uninterrupted happiness in sixteen days after:

I am afraid you think me better than I really am.—'Make me a clean heart, Oh God, and renew a right spirit within me!' is a prayer that I have still but too much occasion to offer up continually: and I fear, upon the whole, it is only my views and ideas that are changed, and my heart is just the same that ever it was. Formerly I believe I was better than you thought me, now not so good. I always loved God, and feared him; and endeavoured to perform what I thought to be his will. Yet, strange as it may seem, though I read the Bible—heard my father—and studied the law—still

The mists and films that *mortal* eyes involve"

were so thick, that I only perceived by halves, and through a glass, very darkly. It then appeared to me that to take up one's cross, only meant, to bear patiently the evils which were unavoidable—that a denial of *self* meant only a denial of what the world calls *sin*—that I was *forgiving* enough, when I did not *revenge*—*mEEK* enough when I would not allow myself to be *in a passion*, &c. &c.

But *now* I see matters in quite another point of view. I see, to demonstration, that one must be in a manner 'absent to the body' in order to be 'present to the Lord.'—I see the vital necessity of renouncing self altogether—of losing *all* that Adam *found*, in order to *find* what he *lost*. Long experience has convinced me of this necessity and argument could now as soon make me doubt of my existence, as of a truth to which that existence is itself the witness, and the demonstration.—I know not either *when* or *how* this truth began first to be manifest to me; but I believe that *affliction* first gave the *softness*, which was preparatory to the *impression*. Every human prop was plucked from under me, and I was thrown, of necessity, upon God;—but I was not pure enough, in my own estimation, to find my *whole* consolation in him. I dared not pray to him for *human comforts* and he not only forgave, but even granted, in *such a manner* my prayer, as that it has not turned into poison to me. In proportion as my love for the world and the things of it decreased, just in exact measure it was permitted to *smile* upon me; and its goods to minister to my wants, and answer to my petitions for them: but I have now long ceased to petition for them at all. Years have passed since I found myself even *inclined* to pray for any *temporal* good;—that one only excepted, which related to the power of doing justice to the memory of my father. Even in that accustomed morning prayer—'that this day I fall into no sin, neither run into any danger,' I feel *checked*, when I apply 'danger' to anything outward; and am allowed only to use it as implying *danger of*

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offending against that God who will not that I should pray for anything but *Himself*.

Now, is not here a circumstance that one who did not know me, would take to be a certain mark of an advanced state of grace!—yet it is *not* so.—My views and pursuits—hopes, fears, desires, and prayers are all *converted*, it is true—but my spirit and temper are still the same.—Indignity would I am sure, if offered, offend me, as much as ever; and, disappointment in those things for which I have not lost my relish, vexes me for the moment, just in the same degree as it would have done ten years ago. Though to *God* I am humbled almost to annihilation of self—yet, to my fellow-creatures I am proud still. My pride does not prevent me from condescending to my inferiors, provided they don't *forget their distance*—nor to my superiors, *when they don't take airs upon it*,—but when either of these things befall, then I feel that I am proud, though don't always let it be *seen*.—Now, pray observe that it is not for talk's sake I am telling you all this; but that you may *consider my case*, and know how to prescribe for me. Therefore, don't let it be just read, and forgotten; but answer me to it all.

I would be very glad that I could make over to Maria nine-tenths of my little frippery talents; for they might be of use to her, though to me they are wholly unprofitable; the tith of them is as much as I am able to manage, but altogether they are too many for me:—they became my masters instead of my servants.—I have been obliged to discard a great many of them, and the rest have their noses in the corner, till they grow good, and obedient. Yet why should I wish that these gifts once so cultivated and prized, were less rich, or less abundant than they are—I have neither rank, nor wealth, nor power, nor beauty,—nor anything else whatever, that is material, to offer upon the Altar of faith, obedience, and love. This is my son, my only son *Isaac*—given to me by God, and by God reclaimed from me—given to me for good—reclaimed for a *greater* good.—Blessed be the name of the Lord!—blessed when he gives, and not less blessed when (perhaps in *greater* mercy) it is his pleasure to take away!

The deep sense entertained by Miss Brooke of her own unworthiness, together with her ingratitude to God for numerous mercies received, she in the same letter expresses thus:—

As to myself, I can say that, unless my experience is a delusion of the enemy—it declares for Mr. Law's opinion (which appears to me by far the most pious, rational, and consonant to nature, and to all that we conceive of God,)—that *forgiveness* of sin is *cleansing* from sin—that it is impossible for any forgiveness or any good, on the part of the Deity to be withheld from the creature, or to remain uncommunicated to it, but when it is not in the *possibilities* of its nature to receive it. This leaves to God the judgment of his creatures; and permits the humble Christian to tremble without despairing. I never felt anything like what some define the forgiveness of sins;—but I think I have felt impressions of the love of God.—which is not very far from his forgiveness, surely. Were I to die this night, I should have humble hope, though mixed with many fears. But were I to live to attainments greater than any of the best Christians I ever knew—I should still rejoice—*only*—with *trembling*. I am often grieved that I feel not my sins with that keenness and severity of rebuke that I ought to do. Yet still it seems to me that I ought not to make myself *unhappy* about this; because that the dispensations of my merciful God towards me appear to be such as wills me not to receive the "spirit of bondage unto fear,"—but rather to be drawn by the cords of gratitude and love. When I am chidden—it seems only like the reproaches of a jealous and tender parent—reproaching me—not with unrequited *benefits*, but with unrequited love; And the moment that—convinced and grieved—I turn my first step towards "my father's house"—while yet a very far off—the open arms of mercy make haste to meet and embrace me with a sweetness that fills my eyes with tears, and my heart with so much gratitude and joy, that it has no

room left wherein unhappiness or regret might harbour. No sooner do I begin to be sorry, than my sorrow is swallowed up in pardon and joy.—Yet, ought not all this infinite love and goodness of my God to afflict me the more, when I am so culpably unhappy as to offend him? And I offend him every day, and all the day—God help me—my very best endeavours would be an offence, did not mercy weigh the will to a better obedience than anything the deed can produce.—Dear Harry, speak fully to this subject, and set me right, where I am wrong. God knows I would not willingly err. I am, at any rate sincere; and—at least before God—I am humble—even in the very dust. Tell me,—may we not well go on our way *rejoicing*, when certain of being got into the right road—without an absolute *assurance* of salvation? may not an humble application of the blood of Christ, and the gracious terms of the Gospel, be a sufficient ground for our "eating our bread with gladness and singleness of heart?"—even though it reached no farther than a hope that the infirmity of our nature, and imperfection of our obedience, may not be so great, as to leave no possibility for infinite goodness to make us happy, and

"To some humbler Heaven the trembler raise,
There though the last—the first to sing his praise."<51>

The concern which Miss Brooke manifested for the salvation of a particular individual, is feelingly and powerfully conveyed in the following extracts:—

Be assured, my dear Miss T— that the pleasure you so kindly say you take in hearing from me, is as gratifying to me, as my letters can possibly be to you.—You owe me no acknowledgements for those letters;—they spring from the irresistible impulse of my heart;—I *could* not withhold them, even if I *would*. But I am not at all *inclined* to do so—on the contrary, I no sooner conclude and send off my letter, than I recollect twenty things more that I wished to have said; and I only regret that I cannot spend more of my time than I do in painting to you the beauty of that holiness from which you turn, to please yourself with the visionary "shadow of a shade"—the sweetness of that voice which you refuse to hear, that you may attend to the sounding-brass and tinkling cymbals that surround you.—Take care, my friend! You stand upon the brink!—God has plucked the props of every human comfort from under you, that you may lean only on him. Yet you will rather lean upon air itself—anything—nothing—rather than God. Alas, my dear girl, this is a dreadful state!—a state infinitely more culpable than that of the vain and giddy groups of unthinking creatures, who laughed at your seriousness, merely because they did not comprehend it.—But you *do* comprehend.—You you feel, you understand—yet you turn away.

You bid me pray for you.—Can you doubt that I do?—Scarce do my petitions for my own particular want, rise with more fervour to the throne of grace, than they do for those of my poor unhappy friend!—But why, oh, why will you not pray for yourself!—Do you not, then, remember the gracious words of the friend of sinners?—"They that are *whole* need not a physician, but they that are *sick*." Be assured until you pray, you can do nothing.—"Prayer" (says someone—I forget who) "is our messenger to heaven; and it never returns empty handed."—But you say "your prayers are so languid,"—now, what do you mean to express, by this?—that you cannot pray as others do—in eloquent language, sublime, fervour, &c.?—If this is all, do not be discouraged. You know your wants, do you not?—Can you not then wish to be relieved?—If you can wish you can pray. The matter is very simple.—The particular want needs only to be *known* and *felt*; and then we, of course know how to ask relief.—"Save us Lord, or we perish,"—cried the tempest-beaten mariners. "Lord" (cried the sick) "if thou wilt thou canst make me whole."—"Lord that I may receive my sight," cried the blind. The application of all this is very obvious. How can you feel that you are sick; without wishing to be healed? Impossible—unless (indeed) you are as enamoured of misery, as other people are of folly. If this is the strange and fatal state of your heart, why then do you seek for such society and

conversation as may be made a means (under God) of health to you?—No, you would not, surely; and therefore, I trust in God it is not your state. But what then?—Do you hope that good society—good convention—good preaching—good books—will either penetrate the aversion of your will from God—or apply the want of that will?—Do you hope that the prayers of your friends will prevail for you, while your own are silent?—"Ask and it shall be given to you."—But to ask is to pray, and you will perhaps, say you cannot pray. Well then—*desire*—*wish*—and it shall be given you. It is all the same thing. To kneel down in prayer is doing nothing, without it is the previous asking of our heart that throws us prostrate.

I am heartily sorry you have been so prejudiced against the mystic writers;—it is a prejudice that injures you very much. I have just now finished (for, I suppose the tenth or twelfth time) Mr. Law's most incomparable treatise on the very spirit you want—the spirit of prayer; and, were it not that you declared yourself rather hurt than served by his pamphlet on Regeneration, I would strongly recommend it to you. It not only opens (in the most dazzling clearness of demonstration) the whole nature of this blessed spirit, but it also *shows the way to it*. The Bible excepted, I know no other book upon the face of the earth that is like it,—none so adapted (under God) to make—and to accomplish a Christian. Nevertheless, I must not recommend it to you. You fear to be a mystic.—My friend, this is as groundless a fear, as that of a girl learning to spell, apprehending she should thereby become a learned lady. I have been reading Mr. Law these fifteen years; and I am not a mystic, nor perhaps ever shall be. That knowledge which is "too wonderful and excellent for me," I leave with women, untouched; and concern myself only with such as I find to be level to my comprehension, and necessary to my state. The mystic writers lead more directly to Christ than any other; and therefore it is that I read them:—they place the reader with Mary, at the feet of Jesus, and make his divine language be heard in its own genuine truth and efficacy.

In another communication to the same person, Miss Brooke thus expresses herself:—

For Heaven's sake, dear soul, do not give way to such dreadful despondency. Why will you not try the only remedy? Believe me, that incessant guard over every thought, word; and deed—that unremitting strife

"Which sense doth wage with virtue"

And which you seem to think so very difficult—believe me, you would not find it half so wearisome, even in its most trying hours, as that gloomy despair which is dragging you reluctant to the tomb.—Was it not the word of truth itself that assured us, "his yoke was easy and his burden was light?" Aye but, say you, and a thousand others, "we have tried, and we find it is not light, but it is heavy, and we cannot carry it." Alas! but how have you tried it?—"Take these clothes," would a humane Christian say to a naked brother, "take these clothes, and put them on; you will find them comfortable and warm."—His naked brother takes them, and ties them in a bundle on his back; then walks awhile, and cries, "Oh they are very heavy and burdensome!—they only weigh me down, instead of keeping me warm: and I am just as cold as ever I was."—The application is obvious; for alas, it is only in this manner that the yoke of our Lord is in general tried to be worn, and therefore, no wonder it is not found easy. Put it on rightly, and then have patience for a little time, until you have "proved it."—If it does not *fit at first*, it will grow easy *in the wearing*. You had patience with the rudiments of all other kinds, of learning, and why can you not bear those of Christianity also?—or do you think it is in this alone that you can jump into perfection at once, without any previous pains?—But if it should be accompanied with difficulty, will you not have the smiles of a reconciled God to cheer and animate your labours?—Have courage, my friend!—your heavenly father has seen that you are beginning: to be weary of husks—though you consider yourself "yet afar off," he

beholds his returning prodigal—he only waits for you to advance a few steps more, and he thee will meet and embrace you, and his household will rejoice over his child "who was lost and is found."—Still you hesitate—Oh, perhaps you then doubt that he is a kind father reconciled to sinners through Christ! If you do, seek instantly for a solution of your doubts. If you would open your mind to me entirely upon this subject, perhaps I could assist you. Would to God that I could in any degree impart peace and comfort to you.—I aspire not to be myself the means of spiritual comfort to you, (such honour is "too wonderful and excellent for me;") but only to transfer to you those helps that have brought me into the right road.—But perhaps in fact you are much farther advanced in it than I am; and that humility alone leads you into those expressions which make it appear possible that a hand so weak as mine could aid you. If so, pardon a mistake which you yourself have caused; and accept of my hearty good wishes and prayers, if in nothing else I can serve you.

In a subsequent letter, Miss Brooke writes as follows to the same correspondent, who was still sinking under that awful gloom and dejection of mind, which was dragging her reluctant to the tomb:—

I am quite shocked to find you plunged in such dreadful and increasing melancholy. Why, dear girl, why will you not apply yourself in earnest—with all your heart—to the only, only remedy? If this world has lost all its attractions for you, why do you not turn your attention to another? I do not mean, why do you not read sometimes, and think sometimes seriously about it—but why do you not set your *whole heart* upon extracting that comfort from the contemplation of *eternity*, which *time* can never afford you? Why not make God the prime object of at least your ardent prayers and earnest efforts to love?—Why not make his love your constant study, your constant guide? Believe me, without *uniformity* and *constancy*; at least in our *intentions* and *endedvours*—partial acts of worship or of duty are of very little avail. Nay more; when the heart has been long estranged, a quarantine is frequently, and very justly required, before it is received in safety "to the haven where it would be."—The soul, in this case, must often wait with patience the time when "God will be gracious unto her." She must humble herself in prostration and penitence; soften herself in prayer;—guard herself with constant vigilance; and arm herself with frequent meditation. She must, in fine, continue in the patient endeavour to do, in every word, thought, and deed—the will of her God;—in the humble assurance that he will at length, in his own good time, show her fully of his doctrine.

I fear your assent to the doctrines of Scripture is still, in some degree, held back, by the bias of former prejudices. If I am mistaken, you will pardon me if otherwise, let me intreat you to lose no time, but inquire diligently and candidly till you are enabled to discover the truth. Have you read Leslie's *Short Method with the Deists and Jews*, which I lent you? If that is not full enough, I have another volume of sermons, which contains a regular and connected proof of Christianity as old as the creation, in language the most nervous, and argument the most clear, of anything I ever read. Open your mind fully to me on this subject, and perhaps I may be able to help you: I shall with pleasure accept of Mrs. S——'s invitation to write to her, and shall have my letter prepared against Saturday. I return Miss Walker's letter, and beg my most affectionate compliments to her. Adieu.

In a subsequent letter to her afflicted friend, she thus expresses herself:—

I am heartily sorry to find your frame of mind so very dejected, and that in a manner that makes dejection friendless, and that sorrow which was meant to *heal*,—a mere corroder of your heart.—Instead of incessantly lamenting your departed friend, you should cast about for the means of *meeting* him again.—I know that he both believed in and loved his Christ:—if he allowed himself in any instance of sin,—he yet determined on a speedy period to it: he deceived himself in the idea that this was

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enough for the present, and that in a virtuous union he would soon commence a course of *religion* as well as happiness. I mean not by any means to excuse this delay; but only to offer it as a strong presumption of his having before death repented of those sins which he often lamented, even to me, though without expressly naming them.—If, as I strongly hoped, he is now happy with his God;—it is *belief* and *love* that have made him so. Would you then be where he is—would you

"Embrace your wedded Soul in bliss,"

You must *believe* and *love* also. Will you through negligence and coldness, not only risk your eternal separation from God; but also separate yourself for ever from the society of him who, perhaps, in your present idea, would form no inconsiderable share of your heaven, hereafter? You already know that nothing more is wanting to your salvation than just to "turn to God." This knowledge is a great step: but will only increase your condemnation, my poor friend, without you *act* accordingly. I know you will pardon the freedom of my speech; because you are sensible of the motive that impels it.—Let me then tell you all my fears:—let me tell you that I apprehend you have already very much grieved the spirit of God, by repeated and reiterated neglects. Perhaps, in order to conciliate once more those sweet and salutary compunctions, it may be expedient to *chasten* yourself before your God! I meant not *fasting*, when I spoke of self-denial. It is prejudicial to weak constitutions, and therefore certainly improper. Nevertheless, even in eating, self-denial may be used, without fasting at all. To abstain from the *particular kind* of food one most relishes, is a much better abstinence than fasting; because it "brings down the body," without weakening it or rendering it unfit to be an effectual servant in the performance of all its appointed and necessary functions. Every kind of abstinence which injures *health* is not only foolish but *sinful*; because it is a slow suicide, and because, for anything we can tell, by weakening our *bodies* we may weaken our *minds* also, and render the one as unfit to perform its duty as the other. To *chasten* or "bring down" the body is right—to weaken it is certainly wrong. To *you* every kind of allowable self-denial is necessary, till the time of your *probation* in conviction is past. O then delay not to practise it.—In the name of that Saviour through whose merits and intercession you hope to escape the unutterable horrors of eternal death; and in whose glorious presence you desire to meet the object of your hearts dearest affections! By all this I conjure you, delay no longer to turn your face often into company, or sit long enough after meals, and chat with your friends at home, without giving up every hour? Can you not (at least in the general) spend half an hour or an hour before breakfast *with your God*?—Can you not after dinner,—or at least at night, retire in time to afford some leisure for contemplation, to recollect and reflect on the events of the day—to ask pardon for omission, or return thanks for performance—to bring memory to task—to take account of every thought and action. "Have I in the course of this day indulged no idea—permitted no word or deed to escape me, but what might be complacently regarded by him whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity of any kind? Have I ordered my goings in his paths; and been particularly careful to guard against that sin, which most easily besets me?"—Surely a course of this kind is not impossible to *any one*. The busiest may have leisure for this much.

The virtues of self-denial, I think, would much tend to soften and open your heart to divine impressions. It is true that God pours his bounties abroad for the temperate use, not the *rejection* of his creatures; but it is equally true that the religious *patient*, like the *bodily* one, must (in order to the restoration of health) abstain often from even the most wholesome food, in order to adhere to that particular regimen which is suited to the nature of his case. When once cured he may then enjoy the board that heaven spreads, and all the various goods that it bestows, with a temperate relish, and a grateful heart. But *while an invalid* he must *abstain* though others may *enjoy* in safety. He must mortify not his *flesh* alone, but also his affections and

desires. He must take up his cross. Oh happy those who can press it to their hearts!—who can account it "all joy to suffer!"—Oh may you learn at length to do so! —May you (even though it be through much tribulation) enter the glorious kingdom where I trust we shall meet in triumph! We have already "taken sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of our God;" and shall we now separate and turn different ways?—Oh no, no! Let me entreat, let me conjure you, do but try, even for a few days, the course I have taken the liberty to prescribe for you:—it will not interfere either with health or pleasure, but, on the contrary, add greatly to both. It will give you that "spirit of a man that supports his infirmities."—You must learn to pray. In order to do so, avoid all that is in hazard of preventing you. Poor David said, "My sins have taken such hold upon me that I cannot look up."<53> If you cannot look up, then close your eyes and bow down your heart. Summon up every reflection that can call up either *love* or *fear*,—"Mercy and judgment are the habitation of his seat."<54> Do, my dear girl—promise me that you will adhere but for one week to my prescription—were it but to indulge your friend—your true, true well-wisher. I would by no means have you seclude yourself from your friends:—nay, I was even sorry to hear you say the other evening that you had rather be alone than have their company; it looked unkind to Miss W—— who was with you at the time. Perhaps, my dear girl, it would be better for us wait to *weigh* our sentiments a little, before we utter them too hastily, and at all hazards. Indeed it was a lesson I found it very hard to learn, and I am myself no more than a beginner in it yet.

"I would strongly advise you to get Doddridge for a *constant companion*. It is not a book to be read only once and then laid aside:—it furnishes *daily* assistance in almost every possible situation to the humble endeavouring Christian. Do you write to Mrs. S——? I hope you do. If so, and that you think it proper, tell her, with my best respects, that though a stranger to her person, I am none to her character; and should be very glad, if her leisure permits, to be improved by her correspondence. So few are the excellent ones of the earth, that we ought to seek opportunities of being known to them.

In a subsequent communication to the same person, Miss Brooke speaks thus:—

I rejoice to find that it is not *unbelief* which withholds you from seizing on the privileges and promises of our holy faith! A sense of past alienation, then, and a feeling of present weakness, are all that keep you back: is it so? If it is,—do but reflect upon your situation; and then you will exult in the progress of that good work which has been effected in your heart. To convince of sin—is the first and greatest difficulty. This already done, what then remains but to fly to a Saviour. But you *have* done so, it appears; only not in the *manner*—not with *all* the *faith* and *all* the *love* which are required. Cry, then, for more! Pray—pray without ceasing!—wrestle, with all the powers of your soul, for this inestimable blessing; this *finishing* work of the blessed spirit of God; his last and best gift!

I never meant to insinuate that "to walk by faith and not by sight" was an easy attainment;—to man it is an impossible one; but to God all things are possible. The divine hand can, with ease, remove

"The mists and films that mortal eyes involve."<55>—

can present to the view of faith an invisible world—*perceived*, though not *seen*.—can fill the ardent longing of the soul, till it overflows, almost to the exclusion of temporal delights, even of the lawful and the laudable kind.—When I said that the yoke of our Lord was easy and his burden light, I meant that it frees us (as it surely does) from the wearisome yoke with which this outward world is continually loading us; with which we "labour and are heavy laden,"—and it is by laying down the one and taking up the other that we shall "find rest unto our souls."—That sweet rest—that sweet peace

which reposes upon the bosom of its God.—Confidently *assured* of his protecting love, it feels equally secure in the storm as in the calm of life; and blesses the kind physician of souls as much for his bitter as for his cordial cup; assured that they are both alike prepared with unerring skill, and directed by infinite love to the healing of his redeemed ones.

Why do you say you have *unfortunately* imbibed higher ideas of Christian duty than are apparently felt by the mere professors of Christianity? Why *unfortunately*? Oh, rather bless God—bless him and rejoice in his gracious work!—It will be perfected—never fear. "Turn to the strong hold," poor "prisoner of hope!"—Once fortified *there*, you will, of course, obtain all that *unshaken courage and resolution* which you think at present is so difficult to attain. When once it is attained—oh, then how delightful.—How pitiful, how poor,—how childish will then appear those objects of sense which you now complain of, as continually distracting your attention! Do but resist them firmly for one week, (praying meanwhile for divine aid) and you will see how they diminish to your view. Cultivate the pleasures of devotion, and those of sense will vanish before them. Objects "not seen" will then be understood, felt and rejoiced in, beyond all that presses on the outward eye.—Exert—rouse yourself—do what you *can*—do *all* you can—even for a little time, and then make your report;—but, until you put forth all your strength in the contest, you can neither judge of the powers that are permitted to your adversary, nor of those that are given to yourself.—Let me prevail—Remember for one week—one short week.—"Watch and pray" but for one week, and if you do not find a change, I will give up the point.

On the subject of *self denial* Miss Brooke speaks as follows, in a letter to one of her numerous correspondents:—

I agree with you perfectly, as to what you say respecting the insufficiency of abstinence *for its own sake*. Nevertheless, I am assured that he who will not of himself take up crosses, now and then, by way of practice, will never be able to bear them when they are *laid upon* him. Observe I include not *fasting* in abstinence. It is generally injurious to health, and when it is so, becomes sinful.—But I mean *self-denial*—the *spirit of sacrifice* which is the *spirit of love*. In general, the more we endure for a *human* friend, the more they engage our affections. And if endurance in this instance is creative of affection,—affection is also creative of endurance:—they mutually act upon, and stimulate each other. We are even sometimes rejoiced in an opportunity of proving our love, by the sacrifices we are ready to make. No wonder then that we are told to "rejoice when we are accounted worthy to suffer" *for our God!* Self-denial is also useful and even necessary in another point of view—to bring into subjection the "outer man." To make the vassal know his Lord. To keep those lubbard appetites and passions of ours in due subordination, and not suffer them, as they are perpetually inclined, to cock their arms akimbo, and flourish their fists at their masters.—An enlightened heathen (Socrates) was so sensible of this, that it is recorded of him, that he often denied the calls of hunger and of thirst, when he found them unusually violent in their demands; and sometimes, after raising the cup to his lip, laid it down again, and took a turn in his garden, till he found that he *was* the master;—and then he returned, and gave his *servant* a drink.

The writings of the late Rev. William Law, a celebrated mystic, were much admired by Miss Brooke. They are full of the grossest absurdities and most dangerous errors, yet cordially received, and held most sacred by many. It must be confessed, that Mr. Law had a masterly pen, and there are some strokes in his performances, that are exceeded by no writer I ever met with. But though he rails against system-makers, as he calls some writers he does not happen to think with, and blames those who give credit to their writings, or adopt their sentiments, yet he could implicitly follow those

of Jacob Behmen; yea, insist upon Behmen's being as really inspired as St. John was. Thus blind is the heart of man, it blames in others as an error, what itself follows and embraces as truth. To a female friend, from whose mind Miss Brooke wished to remove some unfavourable sentiments which she had imbibed towards the, writings of Mr. Law, she writes thus;—

I have read your remarks on Mr. Law;—but give me leave to ask—did you not read Mr. W——'s letter, before you made them?—I will grant, both to you, and to Mr. W——, that Mr. Law's expressions are not always either guarded or correct; they are too liable to be mistaken by the well-meaning, and misrepresented by the cavilling reader. There is perhaps no writer who does not in some degree partake of this defect. They understand their own meaning, and they conclude of course that no one else can mistake it, let them express it how they may. Mr. Law I always thought a most signal instance of this unhappy carelessness; but I sought the cause where I found it—in that sublime enthusiasm and those beautiful affections which transported him beyond the bounds of language. I do not mean this as an *excuse*, but only as a *reason* for a defect so very perceivable in (indeed) *all* his writings. I think there is *no* excuse for it. Authors should in *cooler moments* revise the works of their genius when glowing with all the colours of fancy and fire of heated imagination,—or of sublime enthusiasm. My knowledge of Mr. Law's defect makes me cautious how I recommend his *spiritual* works to anyone; and it is only to those *bees* whom I think capable of safely imbibing his honey, that ever I do recommend him. I think, however, the *Treatise on Regeneration* has less of apparent obscurity than any other of his spiritual works; and I am confident that had you read it more *at leisure* you would not have objected to any part of it. My sense of his sentiments is this—By *conversion* he means just the common purport of the word:—to be *turned*, which, when applied to Christianity, evidently means, to be turned towards the new Jerusalem—not *arrived* there; in plainer words—to depart from error, and *begin* (by the light of truth and grace in Christ) a new life—a new course—not *finished*, but only then *begun*, when the creature is *first* converted.—By "*growth*," and "*degrees*" of regeneration, he means—growth in grace.—By "*putting off the old man*" he does not mean (as you deduce from the expression) that the old man is totally *dead*, for alas, on this earth, we have no grounds to hope for any such state of utter impeccability as that, of course, must be:—but that we have ceased to indulge him—to permit him the ascendancy over us. And when he says "*completely* put off"—he neither appears (I think) to mean, nor *can* mean any more than that he is completely *subjected* through Christ. Were the old man *dead*, we might still *praise*, indeed, but we need not either watch or pray any longer.—As to those passages you object to where he (Mr. Law) declares the *necessity* of sensible witnesses of the spirit as invariably the characteristic of a highly regenerate state—and elsewhere again (as you seem to think, contradicts himself by) speaking of the Christian knowing himself to be an accepted creature, I confess I cannot see the least contradiction in it. I speak from my own experience. *I*, for instance, know myself to be an accepted creature:—that is, I have found grace and favour in the sight of my Redeemer, in that he has enlisted me his soldier and servant. I am no longer in a state of enmity. Of this I *cannot* be ignorant, and need no witness to inform me of that which the state of my own nature and heart makes it impossible for me not to know. The world is no longer my object, neither the things of it. I neither scheme for them, nor pray for them; but rather fear them as entanglements, and pray that I may not obtain them unless accompanied with grace and ability to turn them to their proper use. For this conversion I offer many ardent thanks and praises to the God of my salvation; but I do not, in consequence, esteem myself in a highly regenerate state—or such as to be assured that my sins are all forgiven me. Conversion is but the beginning—justification is the perfection of the Christian state. I am not in a state of Christian perfection; and if I were much nearer to it than I am, I still would not go about to watch and seek for that "*witness*" which

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some so much insist upon. If I did so, it is very probable I might have long since thought myself possessed of it; because from the natural energies of my feelings and imagination I am often hurried into transports of devotion and joy, the hundredth part of which, I am certain, would be sufficient to pass for "the witness" with many who were not aware of the cheat. But I find by the woeful experience of daily weakness and folly, that I am yet but ill the beginning of my warfare. I have my face turned to the new Jerusalem, it is true—I am in the right road—but I so often stop to pull flowers, that unfortunately my journey advances very slowly.

With respect to Mr. Law's denial of the *wrath* of God.—I do not think he needs any defence, The scriptures speak to human ears, and must, therefore, and do speak human language. They ascribe all the passions of mankind to the Deity.—He is alternately angry and pleased—disappointed and gratified—grieved and delighted. Who does not see that all this is merely to accommodate the *human* auditor—the human reader? It seems to me almost blasphemy to suppose any other.

When God created man, he gave him his proper and particular nature. He created him to be happy; but man, as far as in him lay, endeavoured to defeat the intention of the Deity. He slighted alike the *command*, and the *warning* of God. He disobeyed, and he died. The nature capable of immortality, became mortal by its own choice, by its own act—by the *necessities* of its own laws, in consequence of that act. Here was room enough for the wrath of God, if any such wrath had existed—instead of which we find nothing but love—Almighty unceasing unwearied love!

In vain the desperate rebel would essay
From thee to tear his being far away;
Thy saving hand arrests his mad career—

Throughout the whole process of his procedure towards man, I confess I can see nothing but love. The sinner damns himself, and Doddridge has very beautifully expressed what was always my sentiment on this subject;—see my little book, written long before I ever met with Doddridge, and which I send you.<56>—I now come to the last objection to Mr. Law, which Mr. W—— lays so much stress on.

It is a passage where he professes to think that this world was originally the habitation of the fallen angels. If I recollect right, Mr. Law *does* not make this even in the slightest degree a necessary article of belief: he merely advances it as an idea which to him appeared to open new sources of admiration and gratitude to that boundless love which even before the creation of man was busied in bringing good out of the evil which the creature had introduced into his habitation. For my part, I think his opinion not only a very innocent, but a very probable one, and it seems to be implied, though not expressed by Moses. I can see no reason why Mr. W—— should so violently anathematize an idea which is at once ingenious, beautiful, benevolent, and innocent, even though it should be a mistake. Sure I am that Mr. Law would never have answered him in similar language. *His* wisdom has at least one character of being from above—it is *gentle*. If any man ever possessed a spirit after God's own heart, Mr. Law surely did. He was all love—all a mild light of benevolence beaming forth in every page of his works. His very errors (if errors they are) proceed wholly from this virtue—if possible—to excess. If he has mixed (in *some* of his works) philosophy with religion, he has not made it necessary to it. Those who don't like it may leave it quietly alone. There is some of the Bible which we can't understand; yet none but infidels or idiots would give this as a reason for rejecting it. Mr. Law's practical works are for the multitude, and there is no philosophy introduced into them; but I cannot see why he should be debarred from introducing it into his other works written professedly upon subjects of sublime speculations, in all of which, amidst the greatest heights and depths of his genius, he is the humble, self-abased, grateful, and adoring Christian still. I have read all his works. I do not understand them all, but that is no reason why others may not understand them. The study of astronomy—of

natural philosophy, &c. are by no means necessary to Christianity; yet they add a plume to the wings of love and adoration, and therefore are not only innocent and charming, but highly useful also; and I cannot see why moral philosophy should be exclusively prohibited. To make philosophy necessary to religion, or indeed to mingle it *at all* with *practical* tracts upon religious subjects is, I think, wrong; but, in the speculative parts of it, I see not any reason for shutting out either moral or natural philosophy:—under proper direction they are useful assistants, and surely very allowable ones.

You object to Mr. Law's using the terms *wrath*, &c. &c. and applying them to outward nature. Surely this is very common. The *wrath* of *elements*—the *wrath* of *seasons*—their *mildness*—*sweetness*, &c. &c. are phrases made use of without scruple or reproof by all other writers, and why not by Mr. Law? You also think him wrong in objecting to the new convert's impatience (or as he calls it *making too much haste*) for the perfection, and glory, and "witness," &c. of saints. Now I *know* him to be *right* in saying that such impatience is *wrong*. It involves just the same nature and consequence with respect to the sickness of the soul, as with that of the body. When an invalid of a sanguine and impatient temper gets into the hands of a wise and skilful physician, and feels the first returning dawn of health produced by his care—he directly sets up for being *well at once*—will submit to be *kept low* no longer—must exhibit the same vigour and perfection of body that he sees in the youth, strength, and health of others. Just so with the impatient soul—and the consequence is a *relapse*. Our heavenly physician knows best what *regimen* to appoint, and, it is our business, in full confidence of his wisdom, to submit; even though our cure should go on slowly, and though we should be kept on a spare diet, and debarred of many solaces that are given to others. He who knows the nature of our case is the best judge how to treat it. We should, indeed, as St. Paul exhorts, Press on!—but how?—Why, use all diligence to observe those directions which we are commanded. To use the exercise—the regimen—the medicines appointed, with the most exact observance:—this is our business. Let us leave the cure to him who has faithfully promised, in such a case, to effect it. Too much haste may make us impatient—perhaps desperate—and is, besides, very wide of that spirit of meekness and trust which should leave all things to be done by our God *in his own good time*.

Such are Miss Brooke's sentiments respecting the writing of Mr. Law, which unquestionably possess much that is good, but abundantly more that is injurious. Miss Brooke renews the subject in the following letter to the same correspondent:—

In my last, the limits of my paper did not permit me to speak to you half the fullness of my heart, upon a subject of such infinite importance as that on which your thoughts are at present so much and so justly occupied. You seem to think the mystic writers too much taken up with *speculative* religion, to the neglect or omission of those points of doctrine which would lead to the *practice* of it. If they are so to you, they are not for your purpose; even though they should appear in a light not their own, to you.—No writer is to be valued, on this subject, but for the substantial and practical utility of his doctrine; and if his speculations do not tend to lead into practice, they are useless. But if that which on first view *appears* to me merely fine theory, should *on trial* be reducible to the firmest grounds, and surest help to practice—is it not then to be approved?—We all *profess*, at least, to believe the necessity of a "death unto sin and new birth unto righteousness"—yet how few even conceive a right idea of either, much less make one step towards a trial of them. Every one is willing to detest those particular sins which his *natural man* is averse from. The man of *natural* honor abhors all sins that are dishonorable. *Natural* mildness abhors all sins of revenge and wrath.—*Natural* humanity of temper abhors all sins of cruelty.—*Natural* rectitude abhors the sins of injustice and oppression.—Now all these characters, doing nothing more or better than avoiding what they are

prompted to avoid by the *natural man*—through no higher motive than merely a gratification of those sweet and amiable tempers with which God of his infinite mercy endowed them, to make his yoke a burden still the more *even naturally* easy and delightful to them.—These self-deceived people persuade themselves that they are dead to sin, and alive to righteousness.—Whereas, in fact there is in all possibility but the one only way of dying to sin; and that is, by dying to self. By a constant unremitting vigilance in contradiction and suppression of every rising and working of self in the heart.—This miserable *self*, which is the world into which our first parents fell, when broken off from the paradise and life of God.—This is the world which we thust hate and renounce. —The things of this outward world are no farther hurtful than as they serve to nourish this fallen world of man in the human heart. This self into which Adam fell *must die* before the life of God (which He lost) can be renewed and matured, in us, as it was in him previous to his fall.—Therefore "if ye suffer with me, ye shall also reign with me."—In the nature of things, it cannot be that we should reign without we first suffer.—But nature shrinks from suffering, and therefore will never be weary of trying to find out shorter and smoother paths of her own to the place of her heavenly designation, until she is first convinced beyond a possibility of doubt, that there can be but one only road, and that every other path leads astray.—And how is nature to be convinced of that?—By learning to know herself.—This truth and this knowledge is taught by the mystics beyond any other writers that ever I have read; and it is for this reason I prefer them. It is yet for this reason, that, to those unacquainted with them, they appear too speculative, when, in fact, they are only establishing the grounds and absolute necessity of practice.—You say very truly, that religion ought to be simple, because of the multitude.—But can anything be more simple than this?—In Adam all died; in Christ all shall be made alive.—We cannot be at once both fallen, and renewed.—We must get *out of* the pit of corrupt nature, before we can be delivered from it.—We must die to the corruption of Christ,—And what are those corruptions? Are they what the world calls crimes? No: these are only the offspring of our natural corruption; and that corruption is *self*. We must die to self then, and we can only do it by suffering. How then, you will say; can none who enjoy worldly happiness hope to inherit eternal life? God forbid else! Yet still they must suffer. Surely there are many ways of suffering; and perhaps in a steady and unremitting course of self-denial, when, the "war that sense doth wage with virtue" is kept up without one moments respite to the devoted nature which must die—perhaps this incessant warfare and gradual death is in itself (at least in its first progress) more irksome, and difficult of endurance than most external inflictions.—Do not yet be discouraged, my friend; for while the outward nature groans, the inward one will triumph. When the one is fettered, the other "enlarged," will "*run* in the way of God's commandments." Self-denial therefore, though painful to the flesh, is yet, to the Spirit, delightful.

But perhaps you will ask, if all the investigations of nature, and the *grounds* and *necessity* of suffering laid open by the mystics, be necessary to religion, what then is to become of the *multitude*? I answer, that, to the multitude it is *not* necessary; because, unaccustomed to investigation, and unacquainted with knowledge, they are content to follow when they are led,—at least as far as *notion* or *opinion* goes.—But with persons of a different class and character in life, the case is far otherwise.—With me at least I know it was so.—I was by no means willing to submit my high and mighty reason to any other guide than the scriptures; for the human leaders of the blind appeared so often blind themselves, that I was very unwilling to trust them; and as to the scriptures themselves, I was very loth to suppose they could possibly mean the absolute positive reality and literality of dying to self, (as I now find it,) but wanted to try if a meaning less irksome to flesh and blood might not be discovered in those texts which stood so much in my way.—First, I tried whether the mode of *one* interpreter would answer to procure me the spirit and temper, which I acknowledged

it was desirable to have—that would not do.—Then I tried another—and another—and ran the round of them all.—Then I made experiments of *my own*.—In these also I was disappointed.—Grieved, and vexed, I sat down to consider what now was best to be done.—Fighting with the corruptions of my nature to so little purpose had wearied me completely out; and yet I was afraid of laying down my arms, for fear of being made utterly captive.—By this time, however, the experience of outward and inward suffering, had nerved my mind, and by the grace of God, rendered it less a coward to endurance, than it had formerly been; and then recollected those books which I had long before laid aside as "too hard for me." I took them up once more.—I apprehended them more clearly;—they appeared convincing, yet still very very severe: however, as the mode they prescribed was almost the only one I had left untried for my rescue from those corruptions, which became felt every day more grievously than the former. I was determined to make trial of it. I did so,—and I have found the effect. Whoever objects to its efficacy, I would make them the same answer as the blind man restored to sight made to the unbelieving Jews, who would not credit the possibility of his cure: I would say that "whereas I was blind, I now see." Do not, however mistake me, or suppose highly of my state, in consequence of this declaration.—Convalescence, my friend, is not health.—Yet, convalescence must of necessity, be conscious of departing disease, and rejoice in returning health, though only as yet in its dawn. Alas, it has long been but a very slowly progressive dawn with me. Perhaps I am incapable of the "perfect day."—If so, let me then be content to be a "door-keeper in the house of my God." Yes, O my merciful God! If unworthy to gather up even the crumbs, in the mansions of highest bliss,—

Yet to some humbler heaven the humble raise,
There though the last—the first to sing thy praise!
Some lowly vacant seat, ETERNAL deign;
Nor be Creation and Redemption vain!

You seem to think that the mystics are sometimes at variance with the scriptures. But perhaps they only *appear* so, by taking some passages of those scriptures in a sense different from what you have been accustomed to understand them in—even so,—I grant you, it is expedient to read them with caution, inasmuch as the point is of such infinite importance.—See whether they make the scriptures contradict themselves.—If they do not.—If they, on the contrary, expound them in such a way as to make us still more enamoured of that infinite LOVE which gave them.—If they preach up a "death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness" only in a voice more loud, and words more convincing than others—why should we turn away?

I have already, in my last letter, told you that I myself, though receiving so much benefit from the mystic writers, yet do not, in every particular, acquiesce in their opinions.—In some of those particulars they vary from each other.—But in the firm assertion and clear demonstration of the one great and necessary truth they all agree:—or at least all of them that I have ever met with.—When this is the case, I cannot think it material if they should be mistaken in some points of opinion, the belief or disbelief of which cannot affect our salvation.—The most, perhaps the only important of these is something like intimation of some kind of punishment after death, to cleanse the soul utterly of all its remaining pollutions, previous to its reception into heaven. Now I cannot myself agree with this opinion.—I do not find it authorised sufficiently by scripture, yet many of the early Christians hold the doctrine of Purgatory;—and *thought* they understood it from scripture. Mistakes in opinion will arise in the most enlightened minds, while anything of human remains. I would no more reject the example, or writings of a Christian led by the spirit of God, merely because they possessed not the perfection of heaven—than I would dash the cup of blessing from my lips, because it did not overflow. Some there are, however, who cannot admit the doctrine of any writer at all, unless they can agree with him in every

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particular. If this be your case, you have then great reason to be careful how you read letters full of spiritual matters.

Believe me, I should by no means think "argument lost time," if it could in the least serve either you or myself, in respect to the course of our spiritual acquirements; but I know, by experience, that unless most ably handled, it does often more harm than good:—if it is *not wanted*, it only adds to notions what it takes away from *feeling*—and, if it is *wanted*, it ought to be treated by abler hands than mine. Perhaps I have myself "darkened counsel" by ill-chosen words; yet be assured that my heart goes with every line I write you, in sincere and ardent wishes for your happiness."

These, which are only extracts from a few of many similar letters written by Miss Brooke, and at present in my possession, with various papers on divine subjects, require no commentary. The present transcripts contain a very distinct representation of the views she entertained of some of the leading doctrines of divine truth, and concern for the eternal salvation of others. But what is the design, let it be asked, of introducing these in the present narrative? It is to show what those principles were, which, in their practical operation, produced all those amiable dispositions, that frame and serenity of mind, and Christian deportment, which were so eminently exemplified in her character, and which so particularly inspired that holy composure, in the prospect of dissolution, which so eminently adorned the concluding period of her sojourning on this earth.

With regard to the letters omitted, I would observe that on the one hand, there was nothing in them that could have detracted from the substantial excellency of Miss Brooke: or on the other, that could have been important to her character, either in rendering it useful and impressive, or prominent and distinct. In the selection of what is retained, and now presented to the reader, I have had my motives, and they extended to every part of it: though for the perfection and approbation of them, I must be indebted to the judgment of some, and the candour of others: as in a case of this kind, it cannot be supposed that I would attempt to state or vindicate every view that has influenced me. Some few things would not have obtained permission to appear, but for three reasons. First, an unwillingness to merge the peculiarity of the individual, and rob her of any distinguishing feature. Secondly, a fear of deviating too much from the wishes and expectations of her friends and connections. And thirdly, a supposition that an editor is not deemed answerable for every expression used, or opinion held by the author he publishes.

However, to prevent any mistaken inference from the supposition on which I have presumed, I wish it to be observed, that I am by no means ashamed of many of the leading doctrinal sentiments apparent in the letters of Miss Brooke, and known to be held by the writer. At the same time, I would wish the reader to understand, that I avow myself no partisan for the theological system of Mr. Law, or any other propagator of mysticism, as I conceive it to contain a multiplicity of pernicious errors, many of which are opposed to common sense, and utterly subversive of the scriptures of truth. I believe every unbiassed reader of Miss Brooke's compositions, must admit many of the leading points of her belief to have promoted in her the love of GOD and of mankind, in which all real RELIGION consists. And where there is a general agreement, there may yet be a number of subordinate differences. "There are things," says an elegant writer, "which two individuals may hold to be equally true, but not equally important: they may therefore dissent from each other as to the degree of attention they deserve—and this will considerably affect the proportion in which they

are dispersed. They may hold the same things to be not only equally true, but equally important; and yet dissent from each other as to the manner in which they should be enforced, whether abstractedly in their notions, or in their experimental and practical learning; whether in their qualities or uses; whether in the mechanical exactness of human systems, or in the fine glowing, natural, undefineable freedom of Scripture language."

At one period of her life, Miss Brooke frequently associated with the higher classes of society; but was preserved from being intoxicated by the flattering charms of worldly greatness. The insight into character which she obtained through means of her intercourse with high life, strengthened her conviction of the emptiness and vanity of those things which are generally looked up to with desire and envy; and furnished her with a practical proof of the indispensable necessity, in every condition of life, of the knowledge of vital religion, to communicate true excellence to the character, or impart real enjoyment to the heart. About the year 1786 the late Countess of Moira<57> visited Miss Brooke, and from thence a gradual intimacy grew up between them, which ended only with the life of the latter. Her extraordinary display of genius and acquirements procured her great celebrity, and the learned flocked about her with admiration. Mr. and Mrs. Trant,<58> paid her the most marked attention; and as a small token of Miss Brooke's esteem and regard, she dedicated her "Irish Tale" to this worthy couple. It was also about the same period that she became acquainted with the Hon. Robert Hellen,<59> second justice of his Majesty's Court of Common Pleas, who delighted in her society, and regarded her intellectual powers and acquisitions with unfeigned admiration. In the circle of his amiable happy family, Miss Brooke spent a large portion of her time, where she had every thing she could think of to contribute to her comfort or amusement. To Judge Hellen, with Lady Moira, Dominick Trant, Esq., Eyles Irwin, Esq., and her intimate friend, Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. and others, Miss Brooke acknowledges her obligations, in the preface to the *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, for the valuable assistance which they afforded her in the compilation and translation of that work; a work which is now presented to the public, executed in a manner not unworthy of its author.

It is not surprising, that talents of so high an order should have acquired a most extensive influence; superiority of mind contains a warrant for command, and men in general are willing to obey. Miss Brooke did not assume the dictatorship, it was freely given to her; and the deference paid to her judgment was too frequently carried to extremes. "Probably," says a late writer, "many circles in the world enjoy a similar advantage, where the thinking of one person saves the trouble to all the rest; yet it may be doubted whether this easy expedient be not productive of some injurious effects, and amongst others, that of prostrating the human faculties before the object of their admiration, till it ceases to be tangible, and becomes invested with some imaginary grandeur which it would be awful to approach. Hence arises the timidity in examining character, the disposition to give too high a colouring to biographical sketches, and to confound every just distinction with indiscriminate and unmeaning praise. It is better for us to know that every thing pertaining to man is imperfect, and that where we see much positive excellence, we may expect to find some positive defects; then only are we placed in a situation to contemplate the lives of the best of men to edification and advantage."<60>

To tenderness and elegance of genius, Miss Brooke joined the most amiable social virtues. Few enjoyed the softened pleasures of the society of "Home," or entered with greater feeling into its interests and concerns than she did. There was an

independence and an ingenuousness about her, which could not escape the most transient observer. She scorned every thing that was mean and selfish, and was one of the last persons in the world to plume herself with borrowed feathers. She hated all manner of guile and deceit, and whatever is assumed as a disguise to sentiment and feeling. Affectation and vanity were the objects of her supreme contempt. She had no envious or rancorous feelings about her; her constitution was unproductive of the meaner vices. Disinterested and self-denied, she had no worldly ambition to gratify, no sordid appetites to indulge. There was a transparent sincerity in all her actions, and even the misguided parts of her conduct entitled her to the praise of good intentions. In short, if there ever lived, a woman who, to softness of manners and gentleness of heart, united power of understanding and great energy of mind: with qualities to create love, to secure friendship, and to fix the principles of both in dispositions less steady, perhaps, than her own; and if ever there was a female qualified for performing the strongest as well as the tenderest domestic relations, and while others might change, remain herself the same; I do verily believe Miss Brooke to be that woman.

But I am far from wishing to present Miss Brooke as perfect. We have no such characters in the biography of holy writ; and when we meet with them in other walks, we feel ourselves trifled with, if not insulted. We have fable given us instead of fact. Such characters are imaginary. Perfection is not the lot of mortals on this side the grave. When the moon walketh in her brightness, her shadows are most visible. I disdain the affectation of impeccability in creatures "compassed with infirmities." Biographers too commonly instead of a faithful picture turn panegyrists, and raise suspicions of the truth of their report, by endeavouring to exalt fallible men on such pedestals of perfection, as dishearten rather than excite to imitation. Earth produces no faultless monsters: and Christianity disclaims them. I may venture confidently to assert of every human being, that amidst all his apparent amiability of conduct and sweetness of disposition, his exalted virtues and numerous good qualities, if, as a faithful biographer, he were to describe everything which hath passed in his spirit or conduct with scrupulous fidelity, perhaps there is not a creature who ever existed that would submit the narrative to public view; conscious that it must sometimes at least excite disgust and abhorrence instead of love and veneration. Where much is to be commended, and little to offend, or awaken censure, there the just tribute of praise will be offered. But Miss Brooke needs no posthumous fame to blazon her worth; she is now alike beyond all human censure or applause which can affect her.

The following lines are extracted from a beautifully pathetic elegy, on the death of the late much lamented Joseph Walker, Esq. by Eyles Irwin, Esq. of Cheltenham, a gentleman equally beloved and respected for the amiability of his manners, as for the elegance of his literary talents. They were communicated to Samuel Walker, Esq. by Mr. Irwin's brother-in-law, Doctor William Brooke, of Dublin, a near relative of Miss Brooke, and inserted in the editor's preface to the *Memoirs of Tassoni*, by Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq.

Shades of St. Valeri! Your dell, how long,
The haunt of Erin's eloquence and song!
Shades of St. Valeri! To you were known
The Gaelic spirit and the Theban tone;
That marked the *Reliques* of thy elder time,
Which female genius decked in classic rhyme.
Thy echoes oft resounded to the strain,
Where BROOKE revived the memory of the slain,
Who sleep in honour's bed, proud victors of the Dane!

Charlotte Brooke

For parity of studies, and of mind,
Still to her harp thy master's ear inclined.

Lines under a Portrait of Miss Brooke, by a Friend.

Religious, fair, soft, innocent, and gay,
As evening mild, bright as the morning ray,
Youthful and wise, in every grace mature,
What vestal ever led a life so pure!

AARON C. SEYMOUR.
45, Baggot-street, Dublin, 1816.

NOTES TO MEMOIRS OF MISS BROOKE

Most of these were footnotes in the 1816 edition. Notes addd by the transcriber are marked [TN]

1. Fuller's *Worthies*.
2. Lodge's *Peerage*, Vol. VI. p. 35.
3. A respectable branch of the Brooke family have resided in this county for several centuries. Sir Henry Brooke, the first baronet of this branch, died in 1664. His descendant, the present Sir Richard Brooke, resides at Norton, in Cheshire, and succeeded his father, the late Sir Richard, in 1796.
4. Mrs. Robert Brooke was a lady richly endowed with all those qualities which constitute a virtuous woman, an amiable wife, and an excellent mother. Her manners accorded with the simplicity of her character, and were at once mild and gentle, modest and unassuming. There was a dignity in her deportment, arising rather from her real worth than from any consciousness of it in herself; and it was almost impossible to avoid treating her with the respect she deserved: yet those who approached her with most veneration, were, upon further acquaintance, equally bound to her by the ties of affection and regard. She continued through life a pattern of those virtues that adorn human nature wherever they are found, and died at a very advanced age, early in the present century, having survived her beloved husband nearly eighteen years.
5. *Memoirs of Mr. Henry Brooke*, by his son-in-law, Dr. Isaac D'Olier.
6. *Memoirs of Mr. Henry Brooke*, p. 6, 12, 13, 14, 70.
7. *Life of Henry Brooke, Esq.* prefixed to his *Works*, p. 7.
8. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, Vol. VII. p. 12. Sharpe's edition.
9. *General Biog. Dictionary*, Vol. III.
10. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 9.
11. Miss Brooke's *Life of her Father* prefixed to his *Works*, p. 9.
12. *General Biog. Dictionary*, Vol. III.
13. *Anthologia Hibernica*, Vol. III. p. 80.
14. *Crambe repetita*: "Reheated cabbage" i.e. something which has been repeated too many times. [TN]
15. *Anthologia Hibernica*, Vol. III. p. 80.
16. *Biog. Dram.* Vol. II. p. 97.

17. *General Biog.* Vol. III.
18. *Life of Henry Brooke, Esq.* prefixed to his *Works*, p. 14.
19. *Life of Henry Brooke, Esq.* prefixed to his *Works*.
20. *Life of Henry Brooke, Esq.* prefixed to his *Works*.
21. In the correspondence between Frances Seymour, Duchess of Somerset, better known to the world as the Countess of Hertford, the celebrated patroness of religion, virtue, and literature, and Henrietta Louisa Fermor, Countess of Pomfret, published in 3 vols. 8vo. much information respecting this play will be found. That it contains a considerable portion of party-spirit cannot be denied, and the character of Trollio, the Swedish minister, however unjustly, was certainly intended for Sir Robert Walpole; but it may be doubted whether this minister gained much by prohibiting the acting of a play, which he had not the courage to suppress when published, and when the sentiments, considered deliberately in the closet, might be nearly as injurious as when delivered by a mouthing actor. Dr. Johnson, who at that time ranked among the discontented, wrote a very ingenious satirical pamphlet in favour of the author, entitled, *A complete vindication of the Licensers of the Stage from the malicious and scandalous aspersions of Mr. Brooke, author of Gustavus Vasa*, 1739, 4to.
22. Chalmer's *Biog. Dict.* Vol. VII. Johnson and Chalmer's *English Poets*, 21. vols. 8vo. 1810.
23. *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni*, by J. C. Walker, Esq. preface, page 11-13.
24. *Ibid.* page 70.
25. *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni*, by J. C. Walker, Esq. preface, page 13, 14.
26. *Critical Review* for 1790. ["The strong breed the strong" TN]
27. *Critical Review* for 1790.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Monthly Review* for 1791.
30. *Critical Review* for 1790.
31. *Monthly Review* for 1791.
32. *Servetur ad inum*
Qualis ab inceptu processerat "Let it be maintained to the end, what it was from the beginning" Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 126 [TN]
33. *Critical Review* for 1790.
34. The late Rev. Robert Walker, one of the Ministers of the High Church of Edinburgh, where he died in April, 1783. For nearly 25 years he was associated with Dr. Hugh Blair in the pastoral care of the same congregation. He was endowed with great natural abilities, which he devoted to the service of religion; and was an eminent and successful labourer in the vineyard of his divine Maker. His sermons were published in Dublin in 1787, with a long dedication to Mr. William Sleater, by Miss Brooke's intimate friend, the eccentric Philip Skelton, late Rector of Fintona, in the county of Tyrone.
35. Sister of the late much lamented Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. and the long tried friend of Miss Brooke, whose attachment to her is well known. Miss Walker is still

living, and still cherishes with affectionate warmth the fond remembrance of her dear departed Charlotte.

36. Miss Brooke's *Preface* to her father's *Works*, p. iv,

37. Miss Brooke's *Preface* to her father's *Works*, p. vi, vii.

38. Mrs. Waller of Allentown, county of Meath, the affectionate friend of Miss Brooke. To the kind exertions of this lady, Eyles Irwin, Esq. of Bellvue, county of Fermanagh, and the Rev. Richard Brooke, Miss Brooke was indebted for nearly half the number of subscribers which she obtained for the publication of her father's works.

39. *Biog. Dictionary of Living Authors*, page 185.

40. Lady Granard's maiden name was Lady Selina Rawdon. She was the fourth daughter of John, Earl of Moira, (by the Lady Elizabeth Hastings, only surviving daughter of the celebrated Countess of Huntingdon) and married George, sixth Earl of Granard, 10th of May, 1779, by whom she has issue.

41. Mrs. Hamilton, whose maiden name was Miss Jane Rowan, was the only daughter of William Rowan, Esq. one of His Majesty's counsel at law, and widow of Tichborne Asten, Esq. By her marriage, in May 1750, with Gawen Hamilton, Esq. of Killileagh, in the county of Antrim, (eldest son of Archibald Hamilton, Esq. descended from James Hamilton Earl of Clanbrassil, by Mary, daughter of David Johnson of Tully, in the county of Monaghan, Esq.) she had issue, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Esq. and a daughter Anne, married to the Rev. Benjamin Beresford. Mrs. Hamilton was a woman of strong natural sense, and, possessed a very cultivated mind. In the various duties of mother, wife, and friend, she had few equals, no superiors. She survived her friend Miss Brooke, whom she tenderly loved, and to whom she ever paid the most marked attention, but a few months; and was indeed mercifully taken from the evil to come.

42. This elegant and accomplished lady departed this life, Sep. tember 2nd, 1793. If Mrs. Siddons ever had a rival, it was her friend and first patroness, Mrs. O'Neil; yet her elegant pursuits did not divert her from domestic duties: as a wife and a mother her memory will be revered. Of the effusions of her pen, only one has fallen under my observation: I mean *The Ode to the Poppy*. See Mrs. Smith's *Desmond*. I shall conclude this imperfect sketch of the character of this truly amiable lady with the following lines from a sonnet, addressed to her, by her ingenious and unfortunate friend, Mrs. Charlotte Smith:

"In vain the mimic pencil tries to blend
The glowing dyes that dress the flowery race,
Scented and coloured by a hand divine.
Ah! not less vainly would the muse pretend
On her weak lyre to sing the native grace,
The native goodness of a soul like thine!"—

43. The author of *Charles Townley*, a novel in three volumes; and *The Expedition of Gradasso, a metrical Romance*, translated from the Italian. To the writer of this she expressed her high sense of the abilities and amiable virtues of Miss Brooke, and lamented, almost to tears, the loss of so truly excellent and estimable a friend.

44. *Edwin and Angelina* by Oliver Goldsmith. [TN]

45. *The Grave* by Robert Blair. [TN]

46. Ibid. [TN]

47. See Burdy's *Life of Skelton*, p. 179. This eccentric genius was the intimate friend of Mr. Brooke, who sent him a copy of his poem on *Universal Beauty*, in one of the blank leaves of which he wrote some curious lines, which the reader will find in a little work entitled *Brookiana*, in two volumes 4to. Mr. Skelton was also the friend of Miss Brooke. He died May 4, 1787, in the fifty-ninth year of his ministry, and eighty-first of his age.

48. Matthew 6:3. [TN]

49. Romans 14:4-10. [TN]

50. From *The Task* by William Cowper.[TN]

51. The answer to this letter will be found in the *Memoirs of the Late Henry Brooke, Esq.* p.178.

52. Mrs. S—— of Annadale, in the county of Fermanagh, was a woman of singular excellence, whose whole soul was consecrated to the cause of religion. She was for many years a member of the Methodist Society, and died about the year 1797.

53. Psalm 40:12. [TN]

54. **Psalm 89:14.** [TN]

55. From John Dryden's translation of Virgil's Aeneid, Book 2. [TN]

56. *School for Christians*, which, Miss Brooke says in one of her letters, contains her creed.

57. The Countess of Moira was the eldest and only surviving daughter of Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, (by his wife, the Lady Selina Shirley, second daughter and coheir to Washington, Earl Ferrers) and sister to Francis, the last Earl of Huntingdon. She was a woman of great acquirements and commanding abilities—and inherited a considerable portion of the masculine understanding of her mother, the late Lady Huntingdon, who closed a life of the most extensive usefulness, unbounded intrepidity, and intrinsic excellence in the cause of religion, on June 17th, 1791. Unequivocally may it be said, that her character has never been surpassed or equalled in any age, or in any nation. Lady Moira departed this life April 12th, 1808.

58. The late Dominick Trant, Esq. married *first*, Mary, daughter of Edward Rice, of Mount Rice, in the county of Kildare, Esq. (eldest son of Sir Stephen Rice, Chief Baron of the Exchequer) by Elizabeth St. Lawrence, eldest and only surviving daughter of Thomas Lord Howth, by Mary, daughter of Henry, Lord Viscount Kingsland. The said Mary had for her first husband L. Colonel William Degge, aide-de-cainp to the Duke of Devonshire; and for her second, Arthur Blennerhasset, of Riddleston, in the county of Limerick, Esq., third Justice of the Court of King's Bench. Mr. Trant married *secondly*, Miss Eleanor Fitzgibbon, third daughter of John Fitzgibbon, an eminent lawyer at the Irish Bar, who died in April, 1780, sister to the late Earl of Clare, and the late Mrs. Arabella Jeffries Grove, relict of the late James St. John Jeffries, Esq. of Blarney castle.

59. Judge Hellen departed this life at Donnybrook, July 23dd, 1793, deservedly lamented by a numerous acquaintance.—His virtues, public and social, were of the most distinguished kind: few men possessed a more cultivated taste: his library was one of the best in the kingdom; and his collection of paintings and antiques was

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equally beautiful and interesting. In his judicial capacity he united the urbanity of the gentleman with profound legal knowledge. Whenever he presided in a criminal court, his patient investigation of truth, and the natural clemency of his disposition, equally filled all who heard him with respect and admiration.—May his successors on the bench imitate him in dispensing justice with a steady, firm, yet gentle hand; and receive, as he did, the united applause of all!

60. Morris's *Life of Fuller*, page 487.

PREFACE BY CHARLOTTE BROOKE

IN a preface to a translation of ancient Irish poetry, the reader will naturally expect to see the subject elucidated and enlarged upon, with the pen of learning and antiquity. I lament that the limited circle of my knowledge does not include the power of answering so just an expectation; but my regret at this circumstance is considerably lessened, when I reflect, that had I been possessed of all the learning requisite for such an undertaking, it would only have qualified me for a unnecessary foil to the names of O'Connor, O'Halloran and Vallencey.

My comparatively feeble hand aspires only (like the ladies of ancient Rome) to strew flowers in the paths of these laureled champions of my country. The flowers of earth, the *terrestrial* offspring of Phoebus, were scattered before the steps of victorious war; but, for triumphant genius are reserved the *celestial* children of his beams, the unfading flowers of the Muse. To pluck, and thus to bestow them, is mine, and I hold myself honoured in the task.

"The esteem" (says Mr. O'Halloran) "which mankind conceives of nations in general, is always in proportion to the figure they have made in arts and in arms. It is on this account that all civilized countries are eager to display their heroes, legislators, poets and philosophers—and with justice, since every individual participates in the glory of his illustrious countrymen."—But where, alas, is this thirst for national glory, when a subject of such importance is permitted to a pen like mine! Why does not some son of Anak in genius step forward, and boldly throw his gauntlet to prejudice, the avowed and approved champion of his country's lovely muse?

It is impossible for imagination to conceive too highly of the pitch of excellence to which a science must have soared, which was cherished with such enthusiastic regard and cultivation as that of poetry, in this country. It was absolutely, for ages, the vital soul of the nation; and shall we then have no curiosity respecting the productions of genius once so celebrated, and so prized?

True it is, indeed, and much to be lamented, that few of the compositions of those ages that were famed, in Irish annals, for the light of song, are now to be obtained by the most diligent research. The greater number of the poetical remains of our bards, yet extant, were written during the middle ages; periods when the genius of Ireland was in its wane,

—Yet still, not lost
All its original brightness—.

On the contrary, many of the productions of those times breathe the true spirit of poetry, besides the merit they possess with the historian and antiquary, as so many faithful delineations of the manners and ideas of the periods in which they were composed.

With a view to throw some light on the antiquities of this country, to vindicate, in part, its history, and prove its claim to scientific as well as to military fame, I have been induced to undertake the following work. Besides the four different species of composition which it contains, (the heroic poem, the ode, the elegy, and the song) others yet remain unattempted by translation:—the romance, in particular, which unites the fire of Homer with the enchanting wildness of Ariosto. But the limits of my present plan have necessarily excluded many beautiful productions of genius, as little

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more can be done, within the compass of a single volume, than merely to give a few specimens, in the hope of awakening a just and useful curiosity, on the subject of our poetical compositions.

Unacquainted with the rules of translation, I know not how far those rules may censure, or acquit me. I do not profess to give a merely literal version of my originals, for that I should have found an impossible undertaking. Besides the spirit which they breathe, and which lifts the imagination far above the tameness, let me say, the *injustice*, of such a task, there are many complex words that could not be translated literally, without great injury to the original, without being "false to its sense, and falser to its fame."

I am aware that in the following poems there will sometimes be found a sameness, and repetition of thought, appearing but too plainly in the English version, though scarcely perceivable in the original Irish, so great is the variety as well as beauty peculiar to that language. The number of synonyms<2> in which it abounds, enables it, perhaps beyond any other, to repeat the same thought, without tiring the fancy or the ear.

It is really astonishing of what various and comprehensive powers this neglected language is possessed. In the pathetic, it breathes the most beautiful and affecting simplicity; and in the bolder species of composition, it is distinguished by a force of expression, a sublime dignity, and rapid energy, which it is scarcely possible for any translation fully to convey; as it sometimes fills the mind with ideas altogether new, and which, perhaps, no modern language is entirely prepared to express. One compound epithet must often be translated by two lines of English verse, and, on such occasions, much of the beauty is necessarily lost; the force and effect of the thought being weakened by too slow an introduction on the mind; just as that light which dazzles, when flashing swiftly on the eye, will be gazed at with indifference, if let in by degrees.

But, though I am conscious of having, in many instances, failed in my attempts to do all the justice I wished to my originals, yet still, some of their beauties, are, I hope, preserved; and I trust I am doing an acceptable service to my country, while I endeavour to rescue from oblivion a few of the invaluable reliques of her ancient genius; and while I put it in the power of the public to form some idea of them, by clothing the thoughts of our Irish muse in a language with which they are familiar, at the same time that I give the originals, as vouchers for the fidelity of my translation, as far as two idioms so widely different would allow.

However deficient in the powers requisite to so important a task, I may yet be permitted to point out some of the good consequences which might result from it, if it were but performed to my wishes. The productions of our Irish bards exhibit a glow of cultivated genius, a spirit of elevated heroism, sentiments of pure honour, instances of disinterested patriotism, and manners of a degree of refinement, totally astonishing, at a period when the rest of Europe was nearly sunk in barbarism: and is not all this very honourable to our countrymen? Will they not be benefited, will they not be gratified, at the lustre reflected on them by ancestors so very different from what modern prejudice has been studious to represent them? But this is not all.

As yet, we are too little known to our noble neighbour of Britain; were we better acquainted, we should be better friends. The British muse is not yet informed that she has an elder sister in this isle; let us then introduce them to each other!

Together let them walk abroad from their bowers, sweet ambassadors of cordial union between two countries that seem formed by nature to be joined by every bond of interest, and of amity. Let them entreat of Britain to cultivate a nearer acquaintance with her neighbouring isle. Let them conciliate for us her esteem, and her affection will follow of course. Let them tell her, that the portion of her blood which flows in our veins is rather ennobled than disgraced by the mingling tides that descended from our heroic ancestors. Let them come—but will they answer to a voice like mine? Will they not rather depute some favoured pen, to chide me back to the shade whence I have been allured, and where, perhaps, I ought to have remained, in respect to the memory, and superior genius of a Father—it avails not to say how dear! But my feeble efforts presume not to emulate, and they cannot injure his fame.

To guard against criticism I am no way prepared, nor do I suppose I shall escape it; nay, indeed, I do not wish to escape the pen of the candid critic: and I would willingly believe that an individual capable of no offence, and pretending to no preeminence, cannot possibly meet with any severity of criticism, but what the mistakes, or the deficiencies of this performance, may be justly deemed to merit; and what, indeed, could scarcely be avoided by one unskilled in composition, and now, with extreme diffidence, presenting, for the first time, her literary face to the world.

It yet remains to say a few words relative to the *Tale* which is annexed to this volume: for that I had no original; the story, however, is not my own; it is taken from a revolution in the history of ancient Ireland, Anno Mundi 3649. And nowhere will the Muse be furnished with nobler subjects than that neglected history affords. The whole reign of Ceallachain is one continued series of heroism, and high-wrought honour, that rises superior to all the flight of Romance, and defies Poetic fable to surpass it. Also, the reign of Brian Boru, and the famous retreat of the glorious tribe of Dalcais; besides many other instances too numerous for detail; amongst which I selected the story of *Maon*, as a subject more suited to my limited powers, than those which demand a "Muse of fire," to record them.

I cannot conclude this preface without the gratification of acknowledging the favours with which I have been honoured, since the commencement of my work.

From the judgment and taste of Dominick Trant, Esq. (a gentleman too well known to need my panegyric) I have received much information and assistance.

To the Right Honourable the Countess of Moira. I am indebted for some valuable communications; as also to the learned William Beauford, Esq. of Athy; to Ralph Ousley, Esq. of Limerick; and to Theophilus O'Flanagan, Esq. of Trinity College, Dublin.

To the learning and public spirit of Sylvester O'Halloran, Esq. I owe innumerable obligations; and Joseph C. Walker, Esq. has afforded every assistance which zeal, judgment, and extensive knowledge, could give.

Besides the literary favours of my friends, there are others which I cannot omit to acknowledge, as they equally tend to evince their wishes for the success of this undertaking.

The accomplished family of Castle-Browne, in the county of Kildare, have exerted all the influence of taste, and character, to extend the subscription to this work. The learned author of the *Historical Memoirs Of The Irish Bards*, and his brother, Samuel Walker, Esq., late of Trinity College, Dublin, have also been equally zealous and. Successful; and to these two families I am indebted for the greater

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number of my subscribers, in this kingdom. For the rest, I am obliged to the influence of the Honourable Justice Hellen; Dominick Trant, Esq., Richard Griffith, Esq., the Reverend Edward Ryan, D. D., the Reverend T. B. Meares, and several other friends.

Amongst those of our sister country who have exerted themselves to promote the success of this work, the liberal spirit of William Hayley, Esq. has been most particularly active. From the height of his own pre-eminence in literary fame he is ever ready to reach, unasked, the voluntary hand to those who come to pay their vows at the shrine of his favourite Muse. I have also the same obligations to the Reverend Doctor Warner, the son of him whose historical justice, superior to modern prejudices, so generously asserted the dignity and character of Ireland, in a work which must ever reflect the highest honour on the candour, and philanthropy, as well as the abilities of its author.

NOTES TO THE PREFACE

1. See the elegant and faithful O'Connor upon this subject; (*Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, p. 53. 3d. edit.) and he is supported by the testimonies of the most authentic of ancient and modern historians.
2. There are upwards of forty names to express a *Ship* in the Irish language, and nearly an equal number for a *House*, &c.

HEROIC POEMS

ADVERTISEMENT.

I have not been able to discover the author of the *Poem of Conloch*, nor can I ascertain the exact time in which it was written; but it is impossible to avoid ascribing it to a very early period, as the language is so much older than that of any of my Originals, (the War Odes excepted,) and quite different from the style of those pieces, which are known to be the compositions of the middle ages.

With equal pride and pleasure, I prefix to it the following Introduction, and regard it as an ornament and an honour to my work. For many other valuable communications, I am also indebted to Mr. O'Halloran; and am happy in this opportunity of returning my public acknowledgments for the kind zeal with which he has assisted me, in the course of my undertaking; besides the information, which (in common with his other admiring readers) I have received from his inestimable *Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Ireland*; a work fraught with learning, rich with the treasures of ages, and animated by the very soul of patriotism, and genuine honour!

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE TO THE POEM OF CONLOCH

By Sylvester O'Halloran, Esq. M.R.I.A.

Had the ancient history and language of Ireland been regarded in the very important light, which both most assuredly merit, our accounts of the laws, customs, legislation and manners of the early Celtae, would not now be so imperfect and confused; nor would modern writers presume so flatly to contradict the facts recorded of them by the ancient Greek and Roman historians. But this is not the place to expatiate on so interesting a subject: as an introduction to the following poem, I shall only say a few words relative to the antiquity of chivalry in Europe.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

It is a fact unanimously subscribed to, that the custom of creating knights in Europe, originated not from the Romans, but amongst the Celtae themselves. The Romans, wherever they carried their arms, waged war against arts and sciences, as well as against mankind; and hence it partly proceeds, that our accounts of the greatest nations of antiquity are now so meagre and mutilated. The ancient Celtae were amongst the number of those states that experienced this sad truth; for though the early Greeks confess how much they were indebted to them for letters and philosophy, though Pausanias bears testimony to their knights, and though Caesar, an eye-witness, confesses, that these knights were the second order amongst the Gauls; yet, because the succeeding Romans were so industrious in the destruction of their records, that scarce a trace remains behind: our writers of the present, and of the two last centuries, agree, that the first institution of chivalry, in Europe, was about the time of the Crusades. But though all the other nations in Europe were overrun, and, of course, their annals destroyed, yet Ireland still remained free and independent, receiving into her fostering arms the distressed, and the proscribed, of Britain and of the Continent. *Here* did those arts and sciences flourish, which *there* were annihilated by war and rapine; and *here* it is, that Pezron, Menage, Bochart, Aldrite, &c. should have appealed, for a satisfactory explanation of the feudal laws and customs; the want of which has led them to represent their early ancestors as a rude and illiterate people, (notwithstanding the fullest Greek and Roman testimonies to the contrary,) and that the feudal system and military tenures were instituted, *for the first time*, after the expulsion of the Romans from Gaul; whereas *these*, as well as chivalry, flourished among the ancient Celtae, in those days of politeness and erudition, which long preceded the conquests in Gaul, and were always in force in Ireland.

With us chivalry flourished from the remotest antiquity: there were five orders of it; four for the provinces, and one confined to the blood-royal; and so highly was this profession respected among us, that a Prince could not become a candidate for the monarchy, who had not the *gradh-gaoisge*, or order of knighthood, conferred upon him. At a very tender age, the intended cavalier had a golden chain hung round his neck, and a sword and spear put into his hands. At seven years old he was taken from the care of the women, and deeply instructed in philosophy, history, poetry and genealogy. The using his weapons with judgement, elegance and address, was also carefully attended to; principles of morality were sedulously inculcated, and a reverence and tender respect for the fair, completed the education of the young hero.

By his vows he was obliged to protect and redress the injured and the oppressed. He was not to reveal his name or his country to any uncourteous knight, who seemed to demand it as a right. He was not to go out of his road for any menace. He could not decline the combat with any knight, how intrepid soever. And still further to show to what a pitch of elevation they carried their ideas of military glory; even in death, they were to face this destroyer of mankind, armed, and ready to oppose force to force. This is so true, that on Cuchullain's being mortally wounded at the battle of Muirhevna, he had his back placed against a rock, with his sword and spear in his hands, &c.

And Eoghan More, after the battle of Lena, was laid out completely armed, as our history has recorded. See also how these accounts illustrate later periods: De Saint Palaye, in his *Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry*, tells us, that, always, on the decease of a knight, he was laid out in complete armour. And Hume mentions an English knight, who, dying, ordered himself to be armed, with his lance and sword by him, as if ready to encounter death! The Chevalier Bayard, one of the bravest and most accomplished knights of France, during the reign of Francis the First, finding himself mortally wounded in battle, ordered his attendants to place his back against a tree, with his sword in his hand, and died thus facing his conquering, though commiserating enemies.

The history of the following poem is briefly this:—In the reign of Conor Mac-Nessa, king of Ulster, (about the year of the world 3950) Ireland abounded in heroes of the most shining intrepidity; insomuch, that they were all over Europe, by way of eminence, called, *The Heroes of The Western Isle*. Amongst these were Cuchullain, the son of Sualthach; Conall Cearnach and the three sons of Uisneach, Naoise, Ainnle, and Ardan, all cousins-german. Cuchullain, in one of his continental expeditions, returning home by way of Albany, or modern Scotland, fell in love, at Dun Scathach, with the beautiful Aoife, daughter to Airdgenny. The affairs of his country calling him home, he left the lady pregnant; but, on taking leave, he directed, in case his child should be a son, to have him carefully brought up to arms, at the academy of Dun Scathach: he gave her a chain of gold to be put round his neck, and desired, that he should be sent to Ulster, as soon as his military studies were completed, and that he should there recognise him by means of the golden chain. He also left the following injunctions for his conduct: that he should never reveal his name to a foe; that he should not give the way to any man, who seemed to demand it as a right; and, that he should never decline the single combat with any knight under the sun.

The youth (his education completed) came to Ireland to seek his father; but it appears that he arrived in armour, a manifest proof, according to the etiquette of those days, that he came with a hostile intention, and to look for occasions to signalize his valour. On his approaching Eamania, the royal residence of the Ulster kings, and of the Croabh Ruadh, or Ulster knights, Conor sent a herald to know who he was? A direct answer, and he armed, would have been improper; it would have been an acknowledgment of timidity: in short, the question was only a challenge; and his being asked to pay an eric, or tribute, implied no more, than that he should confess the superiority of the Ulster knights. On his refusal to answer the question, Cuchullain appeared: they engaged, and the latter, hard pressed, threw a spear, with such direction, at the young hero, as to wound him mortally. The dying youth then acknowledged himself his son, and that he fell in obedience to the injunctions of his mother. It appears, however, from the poem, that when Cuchullain left her those injunctions, he was far from expecting that his son should have put them in force upon

his arrival in Ireland. On the contrary, it appears the effect of jealousy in the lady, and of revenge, hoping that Cuchullain (now advanced in years) might himself fall in the conflict; for, though a gallant and most intrepid knight, yet our history proves that he was by no means constant in his attachments to the Fair.

As to the numbers of knights engaged and vanquished by Conloch, previous to his conflict with Cuchullain, it is all poetic fiction, to raise the characters of the two heroes. Even Conall Cearnach, master of the Ulster knights, is made to submit to Conloch, who then falls the greater victim to the glory of his own father.

CONLOCH: A POEM.

Conloch, haughty, bold and brave,
Rides upon Ierne's wave!
Flushed with loud-applauding fame,
From Dunscaik's walls he came;
Came to visit Erin's coast;
Came to prove her mighty host!

Welcome, O youth of the intrepid mien,
In glittering armour dressed!
Yet, thus to see thee come, I ween,
Speaks a strayed course, illustrious guest!<1>
But now, that safe the Eastern gale
Has given thee to our view;
Recount thy travels, give the high detail
Of those exploits from whence thy glory grew.
Do not, like others of Albania's land,
Reject our fair demand;
Nor from its sheath the sword of conquest call,
To cause thy youth, like theirs, to fall:
Should'st thou, like them, with fruitless pride, delay
The usual tribute of the bridge to pay."

"If such," (the youth replied,) "ere while,
Has been the practice of your worthless isle;<2>
Yet never more a chief shall it disgrace,
For this right-arm shall your proud law efface."

Thus, while he spoke, collecting all his might,
Fierce he addressed his conquering arms to fight;
No stop, no stay, his furious falchion found,
Till his dire hand an hundred warriors bound:
Vanquished, they sunk beneath his dreadful sway,
And low on earth their bleeding glories lay.

Then Conor to his blushing host exclaimed,<3>
"Of all our chiefs, for feats of prowess famed,
Is there not one our glory to restore?
So cold is then become our martial heat,
That none will dare yon haughty youth to meet,
His name and errand to explore,
The slaughter of his dreadful arm restrain,
And force his pride its purpose to explain!"

'Twas then the kindling soul of Conall rose,<4>
Victorious name! The terror of his foes!
His threatening arm aloft the hero raised,
And in his grasp the deadly falchion blazed!

Secure of conquest, on he moved,
The youthful foe to meet;

But there a force, till then unknown, he proved!
Amazed we saw the strange defeat;
We saw our champion bound;
Subdued beneath fierce Conloch's arm he lay;
No more, as erst, to boast unvanquished sway,
A name, till then, for victory still renowned.

"Quick let a rapid courier fly!"
(Indignant Auliffe cried,)
"Quick with the shameful tidings let him hie,
And to our aid the first of heroes call,
From fair Dundalغان's lofty wall;<5>
Or Dethin's ancient pride!"<6>

"Welcome, Cuchullain! mighty chief!<7>
Though late, O welcome to thy friend's relief!
Behold the havoc of yon deadly blade!
Behold our hundred warriors bite the ground!
Behold thy friend, thy Conall bound!
Behold—nor be thy vengeful arm delayed!"

"No wonder" (he replied) "each foreign knight
Should now insult our coast!
Lost are the souls of martial might,
The pride of Erin's host!
Oh! since your deaths, ye favourite sons of fame!<8>
Dismay, defeat, distress, and well-earned shame,
Alike our loss, and our reproach proclaim!—

"For me, my friends, what now remains,
When I behold yon mighty chief in chains?
With such a hero's conqueror should I cope,
What could my humbler boast of prowess hope?<9>
How should you think my arms could e'er prevail,
Where Conall-Cearach's skill and courage fail?

"And wilt thou then decline the fight,
O arm of Erin's fame!
Her glorious, her unconquered knight,
Her first and favourite name!
No, brave Cuchullain! Mighty chief
Of bright victorious steel!
Fly to thy Conan, to thy friend's relief,
And teach the foe superior force to feel!"

Then, with firm step, and dauntless air,
Cuchullain went, and thus the foe addressed
"Let me, O valiant knight," (he cried,)
"Thy courtesy request!
To me thy purpose, and thy name confide,
And what thy lineage, and thy land declare?
Do not my friendly hand refuse,
And proffered peace decline;

Yet, if thou wilt, the doubtful combat choose,
The combat then, O fair-haired youth! Be thine!"

"Never shall aught so base as fear
The hero's bosom sway!
Never, to please a curious air,
Will I my fame betray!
No, gallant chief! I will to none
My name, my purpose, or my birth reveal;
Nor even from *thee* the combat will I shun,
Strong though thine arm appear, and tried thy martial steel.

"Yet hear me own, that, did the vow of chivalry allow,
I would not thy request withstand,
But gladly take, in peace, thy proffered hand.
So does that face each hostile thought control!<10>
So does that noble mien possess my soul!"

Reluctant then the chiefs commenced the fight,
Till glowing honour roused their slumbering might!
Dire was the strife each valiant arm maintained,
And undecided long their fates remained;
For, till that hour, no eye had ever viewed
A field so fought, a conquest so pursued!

At length Cuchullain's kindling soul arose;
Indignant shame recruited fury lends;
With fatal aim his glittering lance he throws,
And low on earth the dying youth extends.

Flown with the spear, his rage forsook
The hero's generous breast,
And, with soft voice, and pitying look,
He thus his brave, unhappy foe addressed.
"Gallant youth! that wound, I fear,
Is past the power of art to heal!
Now then thy name and lineage let me hear,
And whence, and why we see thee here, reveal!
That so thy tomb with honour we may raise,
And give to glory's song thy deathless praise!"

"Approach!"— the wounded youth replied:—<11>
"Yet—yet more closely nigh!
On this dear earth—by that dear side
O let me die!—
Thy hand—my Father!—hapless chief!
And you, ye warriors of our isle, draw near,
The anguish of my soul to hear,
For I must kill a father's heart with grief!

"O first of heroes! hear thy son,
Thy Conloch's parting breath!
See Dunscaik's early care!<12>
See Dundalgan's cherished heir!

See, alas! thy hapless child,
By female arts beguiled,
And by a fatal promise won,
Falls the sad victim of untimely death!"

"O my lost son!—relentless fate!
By this cursed arm to fall!—
Come wretched Aoife, from thy childless hall,
And learn the woes that thy pierced soul await!
Why wert thou absent in this fatal hour?—
A mother's tender power
Might sure have swayed my Conloch's filial breast!
My son, my hero, then had stood confessed!
But it is past!—he dies!—ah woe!—
Come, Aoife, come, and let thy sorrows flow!
Bathe his dear wounds!—support his languid head!
Wash, with a mother's tears, away, the blood a father shed!"

"No more," (the dying youth exclaimed,)
"No more on Aoife call!
Cursed be her art!—the treacherous snare she framed
Has wrought thy Conloch's fall!
Curse on the tongue that armed my hand
Against a father's breast!
That bound me to obey her dire command,
And with a lying tale my soul possessed;
That made me think my youth no more thy care,
And bade me of thy cruel arts beware!"

"Cursed be the tongue to whose deceit
The anguish of my father's heart I owe:
While thus, to bathe his sacred feet,
Through this unhappy side,
He sees the same rich crimson tide
That fills his own heroic bosom flow!
O yes! Too surely am I thine!
No longer I the fatal truth conceal;
Never before did any foe
The name of Conloch know;
Nor would I now to thee my birth reveal,
But safety, even from thy dear hand decline,
Did not my ebbing blood, and shortening breath,
Secure thy Conloch's honour—in his death.

"But, ah Cuchullain!—dauntless knight!—
Ah—had'st thou better marked the fight!
Thy skill in arms might soon have made thee know
That I was only *half* a foe!
Thou would'st have seen, for glory though I fought,
Defence,—not blood I sought.
Thou would'st have seen, from that dear breast,
Nature and love thy Conloch's arm arrest!"

Thou would'st have seen his spear instinctive stray;
And, when occasion dared its force,
Still from that form it fondly turned away,
And gave to air its course." <13>

No answer the unhappy sire returned,
But wildly thus, in frantic sorrow mourned.
"O my loved Conloch! Beam of glory's light!
O set not yet in night!
Live, live my son, to aid thy father's sword!
O live, to conquest and to fame restored!
Companions of the war, my son, we'll go,
Mow down the ranks, and chase the routed foe!
Ourselves an host, sweep o'er the prostrate field,
And squadrons to my hero's arm shall yield!
Not mighty Erin's self, from wave to wave,
Not all her chiefs could our joint prowess brave!

"Gone!—art thou gone?—O wretched eyes!
See where my child! My murdered Conloch lies!
Lo!—in the dust his shield of conquest laid!
And prostrate, now, his once victorious blade!
O let me turn from the soul-torturing sight!
O wretch! Deserted and forlorn!
With age's sharpest anguish torn!—
Stripped of each tender tie! Each fond delight!

"Cruel father!—cruel stroke!—
See the heart of nature broke!—
Yes, I have murdered thee, my lovely child!
Red with thy blood this fatal hand I view!—
Oh, from the sight distraction will ensue,
And grief will turn with tearless horror wild!

"Reason!—whither art thou fled?
Art thou with my Conloch dead?
Is this lost wretch no more thy care?
Not one kind ray to light my soul;
To free it from the black contro!
Of this deep, deep despair!

"As the lone skiff is tossed from wave to wave,
No pilot's hand to save!
Thus, thus my devious soul is borne!
Wild with my woes, I only live to mourn!

"But all in death will shortly end,
And sorrow to the grave its victim send!
Yes, yes, I feel the near approach of peace,
And misery soon will cease!
As the ripe fruit, at shady autumn's call)
Shakes to each blast, and trembles to its fall;

I wait the hour that shall afford me rest,
And lay, O earth! my sorrows in thy breast."

Here ends the Poem of Conloch: the subject is indeed continued in the following poem; but it is in a distinct and separate piece, of which I have seen a number of copies, all in some degree differing from each other, and none of them connected with the above, except in this one copy, which I got from Mr. O'Halloran. The following poem, however, is possessed of considerable merit; and, besides the pathos that it breathes, it exhibits a species of originality in its way, that is unique, and striking to a very, great degree.

The above translation is made from Mr. O'Halloran's copy, but the original of the poem here subjoined, being rather fuller than the one which was annexed to his, I have for that reason adopted it.

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NOTES ON THE POEM OF CONLOCH

It is feared the measure chosen for the translation of this poem, may appear greatly out of rule; but, in truth, I tried several others, and could succeed in none but this. I am conscious, that the measure of an irregular ode is not strictly suited to an heroic poem; the reader, however, as he advances, will perhaps find reason to acquit me; as he will perceive, that the variety in the subject required a variety in the measure; it is much too animated for the languid flow of Elegy, and too much broken by passion for the stately march of Heroics:—at least it exceeded my limited powers to transfuse into either the spirit of my original.

1. *Yet, thus to see thee come, I ween,
Speaks a strayed course, illustrious guest!*

It is here evident, that the herald only affects to mistake the meaning of Conloch's martial appearance, with a view, perhaps, to engage him to change his intention; or, possibly, through politeness to a stranger, he would not seem to think him an enemy, until he had positively declared himself such. But, be this as it may, we cannot avoid perceiving the extreme elegance and delicacy with which the herald addresses him, and makes his demand.

2. *the practice of your worthless isle.*

The fierceness of this reply plainly denotes the impression which Conloch had received of Ireland, from the jealousy and resentment of his mother, and that he came firmly purposed to evince it by all his actions.

3. *Then Conor to his blushing host exclaimed.*

Conor Mac-Nessa, king of Ulster.

4. *the kindling soul of Conall rose.*

Conall Cearnach, master of the Ulster knights, cousin-german and intimate friend to Cuchullain.

5. *fair Dundalغان's lofty wall.*

Dundalغان, (now Dundalk,) the residence of Cuchullain.

6 *Or Dethin's ancient pride.*

Dun-Dethin, the residence of Dethin, the mother of Cuchullain.

7. *Welcome, Cuchullain!*

This passage exhibits a species of beauty, that has been often and deservedly admired: here is the poet's true magical chariot, that annihilates space and circumstance in its speed! We scarce know that the messenger of Conor is gone, until we find him returned; and without the tedious intervention of narrative, the bard places his hero at once before our eyes.—Thus, in the inimitable *Ballad of Hardyknute*:

"The little page flew swift as dart,
Flung from his master's arm,
Cum down, cum down Lord Hardyknute,
And red your King frae harm!"

8. *Oh! since your deaths, ye favourite sons of fame!*

Cuchullain here alludes to the death of his kinsmen, the three sons of Usnoth, (or Uisneach,) who were cut off some time before by the perfidy of Conor. As their story may perhaps be acceptable to my readers, I will here present them with it, in all its fabulous array.

Deirdre, the beautiful daughter of Feidlim Mac-Doill, secretary to Conor, king of Ulster, had, from her infancy, been shut up, and strictly guarded in a fortress, to frustrate the prophecy of a Druid, who had foretold at her birth, that she should be fatal to the house of Ulster. On a day, as she looked abroad from her prison, she perceived a raven feeding on the blood of a calf, that had been killed for her table, and had tinged with crimson some new fallen snow. Immediately turning to Leavarcam, (her governess,) she asked, if there was any one in the world so beautiful as to have hair black as that raven's wing; cheeks of as bright and pure a red as that blood; and a skin of the same dazzling fairness as that snow? Leavarcam replied, that there was; and that Naoise, the son of Usnoth, more than answered the description.

Deirdre, curious to behold this wonder, entreated her governess to contrive some means by which she might procure a sight of him; and Leavarcam, pitying her situation and confinement, and thinking this a good opportunity to effect her deliverance from it, went directly to the young and gallant Naoise, informed him of the circumstance, extolled her pupil's charms, and promised to indulge him with an interview, provided he would, on his part, engage to free the fair captive, and make her his wife. Naoise joyfully accepted the invitation: they met; mutual astonishment and admiration concluded in vows of the most passionate love! Naoise, with the aid of his brothers, Ainle and Ardan, stormed the fortress, and carried off his prize; and escaping thence to Scotland, they were there joined in marriage.

But the fatal beauty of Deirdre prevented the peaceable enjoyment of her happiness. A Prince of great power in Albany saw her, and was enamoured; and finding that it was in vain to sue, he had recourse to arms, to force her from the protection of her husband. But Naoise, with a few faithful followers, cut his way through all opposition, and made good his retreat to one of the adjacent islands; where expecting to be again attacked, he dispatched messengers to Ulster, to entreat the aid of his friends.

The nobility of that province, on being informed of his situation, went in a body to the King, requesting that Naoise might be assisted and recalled; and Conor, now trembling for the event of the prophecy, and perceiving, that he could not by open force effect the deaths of those whose lives he feared would fulfil it, veiled his treacherous purpose under the mask of generous forgiveness to the rashness of a youthful lover; he affected to engage with pleasure in the cause of the unhappy pair; he granted the desired repealment, and sent a ship to convey them back to Ireland, and

a body of troops to wait their arrival on the shore, and escort them to the palace of Emania. But Eoghain, the commander of this body, had received private orders from the King to cut off the little band of Naoise on their landing; and particularly not to let Deirdre and the three sons of Usnoth escape. His commands were too successfully obeyed; and, in spite of the most gallant resistance, the unhappy brothers were slain. But Deirdre was reserved for still further woe: the murderous Eoghain, struck with her beauty, could not lift his arm against her; he therefore brought her back a prisoner to the palace, and requested her from the King, as the reward of his guilty service. The base and inhuman Conor consented to his wishes, on obtaining a promise that she should be kept confined, and strictly watched, to prevent the accomplishment of the prediction. The wretched victim was accordingly placed in the chariot, and by the side of her husband's murderer, who aggravated her anguish by the most brutal raillery; and convinced her, that death alone could free her from horrors, yet worse than any she had hitherto endured. Inspired with the sudden resolution of despair, she watched a moment favourable to her purpose, and springing with violence from the chariot, she dashed herself against a rock, and expired.

But the cruel Conor drew down on his house the denunciation, that he dreaded, by the very means through which he sought to avoid it. The friends of the unhappy lovers, enraged at his perfidy, assembled all their forces, and took ample vengeance on the tyrant for his cruelty and breach of faith. His whole army was routed; his palace of Emania was seized upon, and given up to the plunder of the soldiery; and his favourite son, together with the chief officers of his household, and all who were supposed to be his friends, fell in the carnage of that day, as so many victims to the manes of the murdered sons of Usnoth.

Whatever part Cuchullain had taken in revenging the deaths of his young kinsmen, it appears that a kind of sullen reconciliation was afterwards effected between him and the King of Ulster; Since we here find him (though reluctantly) consenting to fight his battles, and obey his commands. But the severity of reproach, and the bitterness of recollection, which is implied in the speech before us, plainly demonstrate, that his grief and his injuries were still keenly felt, and warmly resented.

9. *With such a hero's conqueror should I cope,
What could my humbler boast of prowess hope?.*

Cuchullain had been once a candidate for the Mastership of the Ulster Knights, but voluntarily resigned his claim to his kinsman Conall, as to one who had exhibited greater proof of soldiership than he himself had, at that time, been happy enough to have an opportunity of evincing.

10. *So does that face each hostile thought control!*

Deeply, as it is evident, that Conloch had been prepossessed against Cuchullain, yet nature here begins to work; and the sight of the paternal face raises strong emotions in his breast. This is finely introduced by the masterly poet, to heighten the distress of the catastrophe.

11. *Approach!"—the wounded youth replied.*

From this line, to the end of the poem, my readers will perceive the necessity of an irregular measure in the translation.

12. *See Dunscaik's early care!*

Dun-Scathach, (i.e. the fortress of Scathach,) in the Isle of Skye. It took its name from a celebrated Albanian heroine, who established an academy there, and taught the use of arms.

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13. *Still from that form it fondly turned away,
And gave to air its course.*

Here is one of those delicate strokes of nature and sentiment, that pass so directly to the heart, and so powerfully awaken its feelings!—Sympathy bleeds at every line of this passage, and the anguish of the father and the son are at once transfused into our breasts!

THE LAMENTATION OF CUCHULLAIN, OVER THE BODY OF HIS SON CONLOCH.

Alas, alas for thee,
O Aoife's hapless son!
And oh, of sires the most undone,
My child! my child! woe, tenfold woe to me!
Alas! that e'er these fatal plains
Thy valiant steps received!
And oh, for Cualnia's wretched chief! <1>
What now, alas, remains!
What, but to gaze upon his grief!
Of his sole son, by his own arm bereaved!

O had I died before this hour!—
My lost, my lovely child!
Before this arm my Conloch's arm opposed;
Before this spear against him was addressed;
Before these eyes beheld his eye-lids closed,
And life's warm stream thus issuing from his breast!
Then, Death, how calmly had I met thy power!
Then, at thy worst of terrors, had I smiled!

Could fate no other grief devise?—
No other foe provide?—
Oh!—could no arm but mine suffice
To pierce my darling's side!—
My Conloch! 'tis denied thy father's woe
Even the sad comfort of revenge to know!—
To rush upon thy murderer's cruel breast,
Scatter his limbs, and rend his haughty crest!—
While his whole tribe in blood should quench my rage,
And the dire fever of my soul assuage! <2>
The debt of vengeance, then, should well be paid,
And thousands fall the victims of thy shade!

Ultonian knights! <3> ye glory of our age!
Well have ye scaped a frantic father's rage!
That not by *you* this fatal field is won!
That not by *you* I lose my lovely son!—
Oh, dearly, else, should all your lives abide
The trophies from my Conloch's valour torn;
And your Red-Branch, in deeper crimson dyed,
The vengeance of a father's arm should mourn!

O thou lost hope of my declining years!
O cruel winds that drove thee to this coast!
Alas! could Destiny afford
No other arm, no other sword,
In Leinster of the pointed spears,

On Munster's plains, or in fierce Cruachan's host,<4>
To quench in blood my filial light,
And spare my arm the deed, my eyes the sight!

O had proud India's splendid plain
Beneath thy prowess bled,
There, sunk on heaps of hostile slain,
Had thy brave spirit fled,
That then Emania might the deed pursue,<5>
And, for thy fate, exact the vengeance due!
Expiring millions had thy ransom paid,
And the wild frenzy of my grief allayed!

O that to Lochlann's land of snows
My son had steered his course!
Or Grecian shores, or Persian foes,
Or Spain, or Britain's force!
There had he fallen, amidst his fame,
I yet the loss could bear;
Nor horror thus would shake my frame,
Nor sorrow be—Despair!—

Why was it not in Sora's barbarous lands
My lovely Conloch fell?
Or by fierce Pictish chiefs, whose ruthless bands<7>
Would joy the cruel tale to tell;
Whose souls are trained all pity to subdue;
Whose savage eyes unmoved that form could view!

Rejoice, ye heroes of Albania's plains!
(While yet I hie, my conquering troops to lead,)
Rejoice, that guiltless of the deed
Your happy earth remains!
And you, ye chiefs of Gallia's numerous host;
Bless the kind fate that spared your favoured coast!<8>

Bute what for me—for me is left!
Of more, and dearer far than life, bereft!
Doomed to yet unheard of woe,
A father, doomed to pierce his darling's side,
And,—Oh! with blasted eyes abide
To see the last dear drops of filial crimson flow!

Alas!—my trembling limbs!—my fainting frame!—<9>
Grief!—is it thou?
O conquering Grief!—I know thee now!
Well do thy sad effects my woes proclaim!
Poor Victor!—see thy trophies, where they lie!—
Wash them with tears!—then lay thee down and die!

Why, why, O Aoife! was thy child
Thus cruelly beguiled!
Why to my Conloch didst thou not impart
The fatal secret of his father's art?

To warn him to avoid the deadly snare,
And of a combat on the waves beware.<10>

Alas, I sink!—my failing sight
Is gone!—'tis lost in night!
Clouds and darkness round me dwell!
Horrors more than tongue can tell!
See where my son, my murdered Conloch lies!
What further sufferings now can fate devise!
O my heart's wounds! well may your anguish flow,
And drop life's tears on this surpassing woe!

Lo, the sad remnant of my slaughtered race,
Like some lone trunk, I wither in my place!—
No more the sons of Usnoth to my sight
Give manly charms, and to my soul delight!
No more my Conloch shall I hope to see;
Nor son, nor kinsman now survives for me!
O my lost son!—my precious child, adieu!
No more these eyes that lovely form shall view!
No more his dark-red spear shall Ainle wield!<11>
No more shall Naoise thunder o'er the field!
No more shall Ardan sweep the hostile plains!—
Lost are they all, and nought but woe remains!—
Now, cheerless earth, adieu thy every care:
Adieu to all, but Horror and Despair!

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NOTES ON THE LAMENTATION OF CUCHULAINN.

1. *Cualnia's wretched chief.*

Cuchullain was called, by way of pre-eminence, the Hero of Cualnia, that being the name of his patrimony, which it still retains, in the county of Louth.

2. *And the dire fever of my soul assuage.*

What a picture of a heart torn with sorrow is here exhibited, in these wild startings of passion! The soul of a hero, pressed down with a weight of woe, stung to madness by complicated aggravations of the most poignant grief, and struggling between reason, and the impatient frenzy of despair? How naturally does it rave around for some object, whereon to vent the burstings of anguish, and the irritations of a wounded spirit!

3. *Ultonian knights!*

These were the famous heroes of the Red Branch.

4. *Cruachan's host.*

In Connaught.

5. *That then Emania might the deed pursue.*

By Emania he means the Knights of the Red-Branch, as a considerable part of that palace was occupied by this celebrated body. The part appointed for their residence was called *Teach na Craoibhe Ruadh*, (i.e. the palace of the Red-Branch,) where there was also an academy instituted for the instruction of the young knights,

and a large hospital for their sick and wounded, called *Brón Bhearg*, or the *House of the Warriors' Sorrow*. See O'Halloran, *Int. to the Hist. of Ireland*, p. 40. 4to. See also Keating.

The palace of Emania, or Eamania, stood near Armagh. Some ruins were remaining of it so late as the time of Colgan. See *Collect. de Reb. Hib.* vol. iii. p. 341.

6. *Or Grecian shores, or Persian foes.*

The anti-ibernian critic will here exclaim "What knowledge could Cuchullain possibly be supposed to have had of Greece, or Persia, or of proud India's splendid plain? Does not the very mention banish every idea of the antiquity of this poem, and mark it out, at once, as a modern production? It is granted, that this would indeed be the case, had our early ancestors been really such as modern writers represent them:—barbarians, descended from barbarians, and ever continuing the same; but their Phoenician origin of itself sufficiently accounts for their knowledge of the situation, inhabitants, manners, &c. of the various nations of the earth; since the Phoenicians, a maritime and commercial people, traded to every port, and were acquainted with every country.

Besides this, the literary and intellectual turn of the ancient Irish, frequently sent them, in quest of knowledge, to different parts of the globe. Our early writers (says Mr. O'Halloran) tell us, (and Archbishop Usher affirms the same,) that the celebrated champion Conall Cearnach, Master of the Ulster Knights, was actually at Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour, and related the story to the King of Ulster on his return. He also adds, that one of our great poets, in the fifth century, traversed the East, and dedicated a book to the emperor Theodosius. Many similar instances and proofs could also be here subjoined; but the limits of my design oblige me to refer my readers to the learned works of O'Conor, O'Halloran and Vallancey, names dear to every spirit of liberality and science, but by Irishmen particularly to be revered.

7. *Or by fierce Pictish chiefs.*

The period, when the Picts first invaded North-Britain, has not (I believe) been exactly ascertained. We here find that country divided between the Picts: and the Albanians, and the former mentioned as a bloody and cruel people. It was not till two centuries after this, that a third colony from Ireland, under Carby Riada, was established there.

8. *Ye chiefs of Gallia's numerous host,
Bless the kind fate that spared your favoured coast.*

I had nearly forgotten to acknowledge, that some stanzas of the original of this poem are omitted in the translation; Cuchullain, before this, enumerates the heroes of the Red Branch; viz. Conall Cearnach, Loire Buahach, Cormac Conluingeas, Dubthach, Forbuidh, &c. &c. and tells them, one by one, that they happily escaped being guilty of the death of his son, and the vengeance that he would have exacted. In some other copies of the poem I do not find these stanzas; I therefore took the liberty of leaving them out, as I thought they broke the pathos of the composition; and, besides, they were (in point of poetry) rather inferior to the rest of the piece.

9. *Alas!—my trembling limbs!—my fainting frame!*

The beautiful lines, in my original, from which the three following stanzas are translated, were not in Mr. O'Halloran's copy.

10. *A combat on the waves beware.*

Some of our romances and poems ascribe to Cuchullain the property of being

invincible in water, and in relating this circumstance of his life, say, that (when hard pressed by Conloch) he took the refuge of a ford, and then threw the fatal *Gathbolg*, with which he was sure of killing his antagonist. The preceding poem makes no mention of this fable, perhaps through tenderness for the honour of Cuchullain; and from this, and some other circumstances, I am tempted to think they were not written by the same hand.

11. *No more his dark-red spear shall Ainle wield*

Ainle, Naoise, and Ardan, were the three sons of Usnoth, whose tragical story is related in the notes to the preceding poem.

MAGNUS THE GREAT

ADVERTISEMENT.

The language of the following poem, as it now stands, is certainly too modern to be ascribed to an earlier period than the middle ages; but, whether it did or did not exist, prior to those times, in a dress more ancient than that in which we now find it, is a matter which I confess myself unqualified to determine: for, though there be many reasons to suppose that this is really the case; yet there are also some circumstances in the poem, which seem to contradict the supposition. If, by the Magnus of our bard, he means the King of that name, who made some descents on Ireland, about the latter end of the eleventh century, he is then guilty of a great anachronism, in synchronising heroes, who flourished at such different periods; and we must fix the date of his composition at some time in the twelfth, or thirteenth century. This, however, is mere conjecture; upon the strength of which, it would be unfair to judge, much less to condemn our bard. Magnus is a name so common amongst the Northern princes, that it cannot determine our opinion.

According to the accounts that Irish history gives of Danish invasions in this kingdom, the earliest was about the end of the eighth century; we, therefore, cannot safely rest upon the credit of our bards, who tell us of numberless descents, which that fierce and warlike people made upon our coasts, wherein they were opposed and beaten back by kings and heroes, who flourished here in the earliest ages of Christianity. Yet, small as is the faith to be placed in mere poetical authority, it ought not to be wholly disregarded: it seems to me, that they must have had some foundation for their perpetual allusions to the early period of Danish depredations in Ireland; nor is the silence of our history a sufficient reason for concluding, that all their accounts are founded in fiction only. The greater part of our historical records are lost, and, doubtless, amongst them, many authentic accounts of events much more interesting than this now in question; and which are not mentioned in the few of our annals that yet remain. Besides this, an invasion, such as that recorded by our bard, might easily have passed unnoticed by either a concise or a careless historian. The Danes, under his hero, acquired no footing, gained no victory in our island; they were only just landed, and beaten back: so fruitless an attempt might have been purposely omitted by the historian, as not of sufficient consequence to take up room in his annals; or it may perhaps have been noticed in some of our more voluminous records, which are lost. Add to this, that numbers of the Latin writers (from the commencement of the fourth, to the close of the tenth and eleventh centuries) speak fully of an intercourse between the old Inhabitants of Ireland, and the Northern nations. All these circumstances considered, it is left to the judgment of the reader, whether to acquit our bard of anachronism, or not.

There are numberless copies of this poem in the hands of learned and curious. The one from which I have translated is in the collection of Mr. Joseph C. Walker. The author (or perhaps only the moderniser of the piece) is said to have belonged to the family of the O'Neills; but, what his name was, I have not been able to learn.

THE POEM <1>

OISÍN.

I care not for thee, senseless clerk!
Nor all thy psalming throng,
Whose stupid souls, unwisely dark,
Reject the light of song:

Unheeding, while it pours the strain,
With Fenian glory swelled;
Such as thy thought can scarce contain,
Thine eye has ne'er beheld!

ST.PATRICK.

O son of Fionn, the Fianna's fame
Thou gloriest to prolong;
While I my heavenly King proclaim,
In psalm's diviner song.

OISÍN

Dost thou insult me to my face?
Does thy presumption dare
With the bright glories of my race
Thy wretched psalms compare?

Why did my folly let thee live,
To brave too patient age,
To see how tamely I forgive,
And preach me from my rage!

ST.PATRICK.

Pardon great chief!—I meant no ill;
Sweet is to me thy song;
And high the themes and lofty skill
Its noble strains prolong.

Sing then, sweet bard! thy purposed tale,
While gladly I attend,
And let me on thy grace prevail!
Its lovely sounds to lend.

OISÍN

Once, while we chased the dark-brown deer,<2>
Along the sea-girt plain,
We saw a distant fleet appear,
Advancing on the main.

Quick ceased the hunt:—to east, to west
Our rapid mandate hied;
With instant march the Fianna pressed
To join their leader's side.

Beneath the chief of mighty fame,
Whom lovely Morna bore,<3>
Seven warlike bands to join us came,<4>
Collected on the shore.

Then Fionn, the soul of Erin's might,
With fame and conquest crowned;
To deeds of glory to incite,
Addressed the heroes round.

"Which of my chiefs the first will go
To yon insulted shore,
And bravely meet the daring foe,
Their purpose to explore!"

Then Conan of the froward mind,<5>
The bald McMorni spoke,
And as his spleenful soul inclined,
His sneering accents broke.

"O chief of Erin's battling host!
Whom should yon navy bring
Haply some Prince, or hero's boast,
To match our wondrous King.

Let Fergus, peaceful bard, advance
To meet their haughty lord;
He, with accustomed art, perchance
The threatened blow may ward."<6>

"Peace, tongue accursed, bald, froward fool!"
(The graceful Fergus cried)
"Thinkst thou I move beneath thy rule,
To go or to abide?—

"Yet, for the Fianna, I will go
To yon insulted shore,
And meet, for them, the daring foe,
Their purpose to explore."

Bright in the glittering blades of war,
The youthful Fergus goes;
Loud sounds his martial voice afar,<7>
And greets the distant foes.

"Whence are those hosts? Come they the force
Of Fenian arms to brave?—
Or wherefore do they steer their course
O'er Erin's guarded wave?"

"Mac-Mehee, of the crimson shields,<8>
Fierce Magnus heads our bands,
Who Lochlann's mighty sceptre wields,
And mighty hosts commands."

"Why does he thus our coasts explore,
And hither lead his power?
If peace conducts him to our shore,
He comes in happy hour."

The furious Magnus swift replied,
With fierce and haughty boast,
(The King whose navy's speckled pride<9>
Defied our martial host.)

"I come" (he cried) "from Cumhal's son
A hostage to obtain;
And, as the meed of conquest won,
His spouse and dog to gain.<10>

"His Bran, whose fleetness mocks the wind,<11>
His spouse of gentle love:
Let them be now to me resigned,
My mightier arm to prove."

"Fierce will the valiant Fianna fight,
And thin will be their host,
Before our Bran shall, in their sight,
Perform thy haughty boast;

"And Fionn will swell green Erin's wave
With Lochlann's blood of pride,<12>
Before his spouse shall be thy slave,
And leave his faithful side."

"Now by that generous hand of thine,
O Fergus! hear me swear,
Though bright your Fenian glories shine,
And fierce you learn to dare;

"Or Bran shall soon the dark-brown deer
O'er Lochlann's hills pursue;
Or soon this arm shall teach you fear,
And your vain pride subdue."

"Though strong that valiant arm you deem,
Whose might so loud you boast;
And high those martial troops esteem,
Whose numbers hide our coast;

"Yet, never with thy haughty will
Shall Erin's chief comply;
Nor ever deer, o'er Lochlann's hill,
Before our Bran shall fly."

Mild Fergus then, his errand done,
Returned with wonted grace;
His mind, like the unchanging sun,
Still beaming in his face.<13>

Before bright honour's generous chief,
His noble sire, he goes;
And thus unfolds, in accents brief,
The message of his foes.

"Why should I, from the valiant ear,
The words of death withhold;
Since, to the heart that knows no fear,
All tidings may be told.

"Fierce Magnus bids thee instant yield,
And take the granted hour;
Or soon the dire contested field
Shall make thee feel his power;

"Fleet-bounding Bran, his deer to chase,
And prove his mightier arm;
And thy soft love, his halls to grace,
And his fierce soul to charm;

"These are his proud, his stern demands,
Or soon, from shore to shore,
His spear shall desolate thy lands,
And float thy fields with gore."

(Fionn replies)

"From me shall my soft love be torn,
A stranger's halls to grace?
Or my fleet Bran away be borne,
A stranger's deer to chase?

"Oh! first shall cease this vital breath,
And useless be this blade;
And low in earth, and cold in death,
This arm be powerless laid!

"O Goll! shall these redoubted bands
Stand cold and silent by;
And hear such insolent demands,
And not to vengeance fly!

"Shall we not chase yon vaunting host,
With rout and death away,
And make them rue their haughty boast,
And rue this fatal day?"

(Oscar replies)

"Yes, by that arm of deathful might,
O Cumhal's noble son!
Soon shall our swords pursue their flight,
And soon the field be won;

"Yon King, whose ships of many waves
Extend along our coast,
Who thus thy power insulting braves,
And dares our gallant host.

"Soon shall this arm his fate decide,
And, by this vengeful blade,
Shall that fierce head of gloomy pride

In humble dust be laid!

"Not so!" (with eager warmth exclaimed
My generous son of Love)
"Yon King, though fierce, though widely famed,
Thy Oscar's arm shall prove!

"Soon his twelve judges' tribe before<14>
My valiant troop shall flee;
And their proud King shall fall, no more
His isle of boars to see."

"No, mine,"(the famed Macluya cried)<15>
"Mine be yon vaunting foe!
Mine be the task to check his pride,
And lay his glories low!

"Dark Norway's King myself will meet,
And well his arm employ:
For danger, in thy cause, is sweet,
And life is risked with joy."

"No, I to glorious fame will spring!"
(Brown Dermid cried) or die;<16>
Mine be to meet yon stranger King,
His boasted arm to try;

"Strong though it be, it soon shall yield,
While in thy cause I fight;
Or soon these eyes, on yonder field,
Shall close in endless night."

"My vision now I call to mind!"
(The starting Fallan cried)<17>
"I dreamed that with the Moorish King,<18>
Alone the fight I tried:

At length, methought, one lucky aim
Struck off his gloomy head;
And thence my soul forebodes our fame,
And sees our glories spread!"

"Blest be your souls, ye arms of war!"<19>
(The blooming Fionn exclaimed)
"May victory bear your triumphs far,
To distant nations famed!

"But, my brave troops! your chief alone,
Shall chief in danger be;
And Magnus shall be all my own,
Whate'er the fates decree.

"Strong though his arm, the war to wage,
I mean that arm to try;

Nor from his might, nor from his rage,
Shall Erin's chieftain fly." <20>

Then, girding on each warlike blade,
And glorying in their might,
Our martial host advanced, arrayed,
And ardent for the fight.

Auspicious arms around us blazed,<21>
Each thigh its weapon graced;
And, on each manly shoulder raised,
A spear of war is placed.

Each chief with ardent valour glows,
To prove the faith he swore;
And forth we march, to meet the foes
Encamped upon the shore.

No mirth conducts the night along;
No wax illumines our board:
Nor saffron, banquet, wine or song,<22>
The darksome hours afford.

At length we see grey morning rise
Upon its early dew;
And the first dawn of eastern skies
Gives Lochlann's host to view.

Before us, on the crowded shore,
Their gloomy standard rose,
And many a chief their navy bore,
And many princely foes.

And many a proud and bossy shield,
And coat of martial mail,<23>
And warlike arms of proof they wield,
To guard, or to assail.

And many a sword with studs engraved
In golden pomp was there;
And many a silken standard waved
In splendid pride in air.<24>

And many a chief in fight renowned,
Fionn of the banquets led,
And many a helmet darkly frowned<25>
On many a valiant head.

And many a warlike axe was there,<26>
To hew the ranks of fight;
And many a glittering spear in air<27>
Arose with stately height.

And many a chief of martial fame,<28>
And prince of mighty sway,

All ranged beneath our banners came
That memorable day.

Bright waving from its staff, in air,
Gall-grena high was raised<29>
With gems that India's wealth declare<30>
In radiant pomp it blazed.

The next in rank, and next in name,
Goll's *Fuillaing-torrigh* rose,<31>
Attendant on its master's fame,
And dreadful to his foes;

Oft, while the field of death he braved,
Triumphant in his might,
High o'er the ranks its beauty waved,
And led the rage of fight!

At length we moved;—then was the shock!
Then was the battle's roar!
Re-echoing shouts from rock to rock
Resounding, shook the shore!

With tenfold might each nerve was strung;
Each bosom glowed with flame!
Each chief exulting, forward sprung,
And rushed to promised fame!

The foe recoiled!—fierce on we prest,
For freedom or for death!
Each arm to vengeance was addressed,
And victory gasped for breath.

Almost the bloody field was won,
When through the ranks of fight,
Dark Lochlann's king, and Cumhal's son,
Rushed forth, like flame, to sight.

Round on their falling hosts, their eyes
With rage and grief they threw;
Then, swift as bolts from angry skies,
They fierce to vengeance flew!

Each chief, with the collected rage
Of his whole host was fired;
And dire was the suspense, O Sage!
That dreadful sight inspired!

As when two sinewy sons of flame
At the dark anvil meet;
With thundering sound, and ceaseless aim
Their mighty hammers beat:

Such are the fierce contending kings!
Such strokes their fury sends;

Such thunder from their weapons rings,
And sparkling flame ascends!

Dire was the rending rage of fight,
And arms that streamed with gore;
Until dark Lochlann's ebbing might
Proclaimed the combat o'er.

Beneath the mighty Fionn he lay,
Bound on the blood-stained field; <32>
No more to boast his martial sway,
Or hostile arms to wield.

Then, base of soul, bald Conan spoke—
"Hold now the King of Spears,
Till, with one just and vengeful stroke,
I ease our future fears!"

"Ungenerous chieftain that thou art!"
(The hapless Magnus cried)
"With thee no mercy can have part;
No honour can abide!"

(Fionn replies)

"Not for thy favour e'er to cal!
My soul shall I abase;
Beneath a hero's arm I fall,
Beneath a hero's grace."

"Since then to me the glory fel!
Thy valour to subdue,
My arm shall now thy foes repel,
Nor injure those who sue.

"For thou thyself an hero art, <33>
Though Fortune on thee frown;
Rise therefore free, and free depart,
With unimpaired renown.

"Or choose, strong arm of powerful might!
Choose, Magnus, now thy course:
With generous foes in peace unite,
Or dare again their force.

"Better our friendship to engage,
And be in peace allied,
Than thus eternal warfare wage,
Defying and defied."

(Magnus)

"O never more my arm, through life,
Against thee, Fionn, shall rise!
O never such ungrateful strife
Shall Mehee's son devise!

"And O! that on their hills of snow
My youths had still remained,
Nor thus against a generous foe
Unprosperous war maintained!

"Exulting in their conscious might,
And glorying in their fame,
And gay with spoils of many a fight,
And flushed with hope they came.

"(O sad reverse! O fatal hour!
In mangled heaps to die!)
Too mighty Erin! to thy power,
Pale victims, here they lie."

Thus was the mighty battle won
On Erin's sounding shore;
And thus, O Clerk! Great Cumhal's son
The palm of valour bore!

Alas! Far sweeter to my ear
The triumphs of that day,
Than all the psalming songs I hear,
Where holy zealots pray.

Clerk, thou hast heard me now recite
The tale of Lochlann's shame,
From whose fierce deeds, and vanquished might,
The battle took its name.

And by that hand, O blameless sage!
Hadst thou been on the shore,
To see the war our chiefs could wage;
The sway their prowess bore:

From Laogare's sweetly flowing stream,<34>
Had'st thou the combat viewed,
The Fianna then thy thoughts would deem,
With matchless force endued.

Thou hast my tale. Though memory bleeds,
And sorrow wastes my frame,
Still will I tell of former deeds,
And live on former fame!

Now old, the streams of life congealed,
Bereft of all my joys!
No sword this withered hand can wield,
No spear my arm employs.<35>

Among thy clerks, my last sad hour
Its weary scene prolongs;
And psalms must now supply the power
Of victory's lofty songs.

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NOTES ON THE POEM OF MAGNUS THE GREAT.

1. *Magnus the Great*

Magnus is pronounced in the Irish, *Manos*; but the name being a foreign one, is here purposely written according to the spelling of the original. The Irish names are, in general, given in such spelling as will convey the sound of the original.

2. *Once, while we chased the dark-brown deer.*

"These hunting matches" (says O'Connor) "continued several days; and, in some seasons, several months: at night they encamped in the woods, and reposed in booths, covered with the skins of the animals they hunted down. The chase was also, to them, a sort of military school, which rendered toil easy, and annexed pleasure to the rudest fatigue. It gave them great muscular strength, and great agility and firmness against the severity of the most rigorous seasons. It besides, taught them vigilance, skill in archery, and great patience under long abstinence from food. They came out of the forest expert soldiers; and no nation could excel them in rapid marches, quick retreats, and sudden sallies. By these means it was, that they so often baffled the armies of South-Britain, and the Roman legions, united." O'Connor's *Dissertations*, p. 57, 111. 3d edit.

3. *Whom lovely Morna bore.*

Morna, or *Muirne monchaoimh*, (i. e. the beloved maid, with the gentle, or engaging wiles,) was the mother of Fionn, and it was in right of her that he possessed his palace of Almhain. Vide keating.

4. *Seven warlike bands to join us came.*

These were the *Fianna Eireann*, the celebrated militia, so renowned in the annals of this country, and in the songs of her bards. Dr. Warner gives the following account of that formidable body.—

"The constant number of this standing army in times of peace, when there were no disturbances at home, nor any want of their assistance to their allies abroad, were nine thousand men, divided equally into three battalions. But in case of any apprehensions of a conspiracy, or rebellion against the monarch, or if there was any necessity for transporting a body of troops to Scotland, in order to defend their allies, the Dalriadans, it was in the power of Fionn, the generalissimo, to increase his forces to seven battalions, of three thousand each. Every battalion was commanded by a Colonel; every hundred men by a Captain; an officer, in the nature of a Lieutenant, was set over every fifty; and a Sergeant, resembling the *Decurio* of the Romans, was at the head of every five and twenty. When they were drawn out for action, every hundred men were distributed into ten files, with ten (of course) in each; and the leader of the file gave the word to the other nine. As it was thought a great honour to be a member of this invincible body of troops, their General was very strict in insisting on the qualifications necessary for admission into it.

"The parents (or near relations) of every candidate for the militia, were to give security that they would not attempt to revenge his death, but leave it to his fellow-soldiers to do him justice. He must have a poetical genius, and be well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry. He was to stand at the distance of nine ridges of land, with only a stick, and a target; and nine soldiers were to throw their javelins at him at once, from which he was to defend himself unhurt, or be rejected. He was to run through a wood, with his hair plaited, pursued by a company of the militia, the breadth of a tree only being allowed between them at setting out, without being overtaken, or his hair falling loose about him. He was to leap over a tree, as high as

his forehead; and easily stoop under another that was as low as his knee. These qualifications being proved, he was then to take an oath of allegiance to the King, and of fidelity to Fionn, his commander in chief.

"The reader will judge of the propriety of most of these qualifications; but this was not every thing that was required, in order for admission into this illustrious corps, every soldier, before he was enrolled, was obliged to subscribe to the following articles. That, if ever he was disposed to marry, he would not conform to the mercenary custom of requiring a portion with his wife; but, without regard to her fortune, he would choose a woman for her virtue, and courteous manners. That he would never offer violence to any woman. That he would be charitable to the poor, as far as his abilities would permit. And that he would not turn his back, nor refuse to fight with ten men of any other nation.

"In the times of peace, they were required to defend the inhabitants against the attempts of thieves and robbers; to quell riots and insurrections; to levy fines, and secure estates that were forfeited for the use of the crown; in short, to suppress all seditions and traitorous practices in the beginning; and to appear under arms, when any breach of faith required it. They had no subsistence money from the monarchs but during the winter half-year, when they were billeted upon the country, and dispersed in quarters. During the other part of the year, from the first of May to November, they were encamped about the fields, and were obliged to fish and hunt for their support. This was not only a great ease to the monarch and his subjects, but it inured the troops to fatigue, preserved them in health and vigour, and accustomed them to lie abroad in the field: and in a country which abounded so much with venison, fish, and fowl, as Ireland did, it was no other hardship than what was proper to the life of soldiers, to be obliged to draw their subsistence in the Summer season from these articles.

"They made but one meal in the four and twenty hours, which was always in the evening; and besides the common method of roasting their meat before the fire, they had another very remarkable, and which they seem most to have practised. The places which they chose to encamp in, were always in the neighbourhood of water, where great fires were made, in order to heat some large stones, for cooking of their meat; here large pits were dug, into which they threw a layer of stones, when they were hot, and then a layer of flesh, covered up in sedges or rushes; then another course of stones, and another of flesh, till the pit was full, or their quantity of meat was finished. While their food was stewing in this manner, they washed their heads, necks, &c. till they had cleansed themselves from the dust and sweat, occasioned by hunting; and this contributed as much to take off their fatigue as it did to promote their health and cleanliness. When they were dressed, and their meat was ready, they uncovered the pits, and took out their food, of which they ate large quantities with great cheerfulness and sociability.

"If their exercise led them, as it often did, to too great a distance to return to the camp, as soon as dinner was ended they erected little temporary tents or booths, in which their beds were laid out, and constructed with great exactness. Next the ground were placed the small branches of trees, upon which was strewed a large quantity of moss, and over all were laid bundles of rushes, which made a very commodious lodging, and which, in the old manuscripts, are called, 'The Three Beds of the Irish Militia.' The marks of their fires continue deep in the earth, in many parts of the island, to this day; and when the husbandman turns up the black burnt clay with his plow, he immediately knows the occasion of it; and even now that soil is called by the name of *Fullacht Fionn*. The militia were as much under discipline, when encamped thus in the summer, as when they were at quarters, and they were at stated times

obliged to perform their military exercise. Besides these regulations for the army, the celebrated Fionn, who was as great a philosopher as a general, drew up several axioms of jurisprudence, which were incorporated into the celestial judgments of the state."

Warner's *Hist of Ireland*, p. 289.

5. *Conan of the froward mind.*

Conan, wherever he is mentioned, or wherever he appears, always bears the same character for insolent perverseness: but, like Homer's Thersites, he was endured; and probably for the same reason.

6. *O chief of Erin's battling host!
Whom should yon navy bring?
Haply some Prince, or hero's boast,
To match our wondrous King!
Let Fergus, peaceful bard, advance
To meet their haughty lord;
He, with accustomed art, perchance
The threatened blow may ward.*

In the translation of this passage, more is given than is absolutely expressed in the original, but not more than is implied; the words of Conan here are very few; he only says, "Who, O mighty Fionn of battles! Who should there be but some great chief, or prince, coming against thee? Let Fergus then, with his consummate art, go and meet him; he is accustomed to such errands." From the epithet *perverse*, or *froward*, being bestowed on Conan, immediately before; and from the angry reply of the usually gentle Fergus, I collected the full force of the intended irony, and understood whatever my translation has added.

7. *Loud sounds his martial voice afar.*

"With us" (says Mr. Walker) "as with the ancient Greeks, (*Iliad*, book v.) before the use of trumpets was known in our armies; it was the business of those herald-bards, (who had stentoric lungs,) to sound with the voice the alarm, and call the squadrons together." *Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards*.

A loud and well toned voice was, indeed, peculiarly necessary to the bard; since, without it, it was impossible, that the animated exhortations of his *Rosc Catha* [battle cry] could be heard, amidst the din of arms.

8. *Mac-Mehee, of the crimson shields.*

The shields of the Danes were usually coloured crimson. We find in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, where he describes the army led by Hasculphus against Dublin, in the reign of Henry II, that their shields, bucklers and targets, were round, and coloured red, and bound with iron. Perhaps, however, it is only in a figurative sense, that the red shield is here mentioned by the poet, as having been often dyed in the blood of the enemy; it is in this sense, that we frequently read of the *red spear*, the *red sword*, &c.

9. *Whose navy's speckled pride.*

Breac, speckled. I have nothing but conjecture to offer upon this epithet; and must leave it to those who are better versed in Northern antiquities, to determine what kind and degree of ornament is here meant.

10. *As the meed of conquest won,
His spouse and dog to gain.*

It is not certain, whether such a demand as that of "the spouse and dog" was usual, upon similar occasions, amongst the Scandinavians, or Celtic nations. Among the Asiatics and other ancients, it was the custom to demand earth and water, as a token of submission. The spouse and dog are here insisted on, evidently in the same sense; and perhaps it was the practice of the Northerners to do so.

11. *His Bran, whose fleetness mocks the wind.*

This Bran is much celebrated in many of the Fenian tales and poems, for fidelity and extraordinary endowments.

12. *Lochlann's blood of pride.*

Lochlann is the Gaelic name for Scandinavia in general.

13. *His mind, like the unchanging sun,
Still beaming in his face.*

The reader's attention is particularly called to the peculiar beauty of this image, and indeed of the whole preceding passage. How exquisitely is the character of Fergus supported! he greets the enemy with courtesy: he is answered with insolence; yet still retains the same equal temper, for which he is everywhere distinguished. We see his spirit rise, but it is with something more noble than resentment; for his reply to Magnus breathes all the calmness of philosophy, as well as the energy of the patriot, and the dignity of the hero.

14. *Soon his twelve judges' tribe.*

In the original, *Clann an dhá comharleach déag*. (Tribe of the twelve counsellors or judges.)

"Odin, the conqueror of the North, established in Sweden a supreme court, composed of twelve members, to assist him in the functions of the priesthood, and civil government. This, doubtless, gave rise to what was afterwards called the senate; and the same establishment, in like manner, took place in Denmark, Norway, and other Northern states. These senators decided, in the last appeal, all differences of importance; they were, if I may so say, the assessors of the prince; and were in number twelve, as we are expressly informed by Saxo, in *his Life of King Regner Lodbrog*. Nor are there other monuments wanting, which abundantly confirm this truth. We find in Zealand, in Sweden, near Uppsala, and, (if I am not mistaken) in the county of Cornwall also, large stones, to the amount of twelve, ranged in the form of a circle, and, in the midst of them, one of superior height. Such, in those rude ages, was the hall of audience; the stones that formed the circumference were the seats of the senators; that in the middle was the throne of the King." Malley's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 44, note

15. *Macluya.*

Written *Mac Luigheach*.

16. *Brown Dermid cried.*

For an account of Dermid, see notes on *The Chase*.

17. *Fallan.*

Written *Fælan*.

18. *I dreamed that with the Moorish King.*

Rígh tire na bhfear ngorm—The King of "the Country of the Moors;" literally, the King of the country of the blue men. This seems a strange passage, and I must confess myself unable to conjecture whence it could have taken rise, or what connection there could have been between the Irish and the Moors.

19. *Blest be your souls, ye arms of war!*

How natural and how beautiful is this burst of feeling! We see the affections of Fionn exult still more in the attachment of his heroes, than his pride does in their prowess.

20. *Nor from his might, nor from his rage,
Shall Erin's chieftain fly.*

There is not one of the heroes who speaks with so much modesty as Fionn, the greatest of them all. The rest promise, with confidence, a certain success to their valour; he alone speaks without a boast, and is modest, though determined.

21. *Auspicious arms around us blazed.*

The pagan Irish had a custom, which was introduced by the Tuatha-de-Danaan, of using charms to enchant their weapons, previous to their going to battle; but perhaps, by the word auspicious, the poet only means, that their weapons had been tried and victorious in fight.

22. *Nor saffron, banquet, wine or song.*

I cannot conjecture the reason why saffron is here introduced, and must therefore dismiss the passage without anything more than a faithful adherence to my original.

23. *And many a proud and bossy shield,
And coat of martial mail.*

We here see a marked difference between the arms and appearance of either host. The troops of Magnus are covered with steel; but we meet with no coats of mail amongst the chiefs of the Fianna.

"It should seem" (says Mr. Walker) "that body armour of any kind was unknown to the Irish previous to the tenth century, as we find King Muirceartach, in that century, obtaining the ascetic name of *Muirchertach na Cochall Craicinn*, ("Moriarty of the leather cloaks") for so obvious an invention as that of the leather jacket. Yet coats of mail are mentioned in the Brehon laws, and the word mail is supposed to be derived from mala in Irish. Though the poets* of the middle ages describe the heroes of Oisín, as shining in polished steel, no relic of that kind of armour has escaped the wreck of time in Ireland; nor has there even a specimen of the brass armour, in which it is said the Danes so often met the Irish, fallen under my observation. Smith indeed tells us, that corselets of pure gold were discovered on the lands of Clonties, in the county of Kerry** but these might have been left there by the Spaniards, who had a fortification, called Fort del Oro, adjoining those lands.

That the bodies of Irishmen should have been totally defenceless with respect to armour, during their several bloody contests with the Danes, I am neither prepared to admit nor deny; but I confess myself inclined to think, that their inflexible attachment to their civil dress would not yield to the fashion of the martial garb of their enemies, though it gave those people an evident advantage over them in the field of battle. It is however certain, that the English did not find them cased in armour."*** *Hist. Essay on the Dress and Armour of the Irish*, p. 106.

* The poet before us is, however, (as well as many others,) an exception.

** *Nat. and Civ. Hist. of Kerry*, p. 187. One of these corselets was purchased by Mr. O'Halloran, the gold of which was so ductile, as to roll up like paper. *Introd. to Hist. of Ireland*, p. 210.

*** Vide Spenser's *State of Ireland*.

24. *And many a sword with studs engraved
In golden pomp was there;
And many a silken standard waved
Its splendid pride in air.*

I am not certain whether these four lines relate to the troops of Magnus, or those of Fionn, and have therefore purposely given to the translation, the same ambiguity which is found in the original. It is, however, most probable, that the poet here speaks of the Fianna, because the two lines from which this verse is translated begin a stanza in the original, and in the third line, Fionn of the Banquets comes in. However, golden-hilted swords have been found in great abundance in this kingdom; and we are told, in the Life of St. Bridget, that the King of Leinster presented to Dubtachus, her father, a sword ornamented with many costly jewels, which the pious virgin purloined from Dubtachus, and sold for the charitable purpose of relieving the necessities of the poor. *Hist. Essay on the Dress and Armour of the Irish*, p. 118.

25. *And many a helmet darkly frowned.*

At what period helmets were first worn in Ireland, is a matter of mere conjecture. That they were in use, previous to the tenth century, is certain, from some coins, discovered in the Queen's County, in the year 1786; (*Trans. of the Royal Irish Acad.* 1787. See also Simon's *Essay on Irish Coins*.) But how much earlier, or of what kind of metal they were formed, I have never been able to discover. Mr. Walker's *Memoirs of our ancient armour*, give an account of a golden helmet, which was found in the county Oo Tipperary; it is described as resembling in form a huntsman's cap, with the leaf in front divided equally, and elevated, and the skull encompassed with a riband of gold crimped. Golden helmets are sometimes, but seldom, mentioned in the Irish poems which have fallen under my observation; but with helmets of some sort, all their warriors are armed. *Clogad* in general they are called, but hardly ever described; and when they are, it is in such figurative language, that one can neither determine on the form, nor the material of which they are composed. "The strong helmet," and "the dark frowning helmet," are the most common; but sometimes we meet with "the golden helmet," "the helmet entwined with gold," and "the helmet blazing with gems of the East." These latter are in general described as a part of the armour of foreigners, not of Irish.

26. *And many a warlike axe was there.*

The Irish were particularly expert in the use of the *tua catha* or battle-axe. Cambrensis, in speaking of this dreadful weapon, as wielded by our countrymen, says, "They make use of but one hand to the axe, when they strike, and extend their thumb along the handle, to guide the blow, from which neither the crested helmet can defend the head, nor the iron folds of the armour, the body; whence it has happened, in our time, that the whole thigh of a soldier, though cased in well-tempered armour, hath been lopped off by a single blow of the axe; the whole limb falling on one side of the horse, and the expiring body on the other."

27. *And many a glittering spear.*

A great number, and variety of spear-heads have been found, in different parts of this kingdom. The *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis* has furnished drawings of several, and several more are given in Mr. Walker's *Memoir on the Armour of the Irish*.

Stanihurst has described the dexterous manner in which the Irish use the spear or lance. "They grasp" (says he) "about the middle, heavy spears, which they do not hold pendant at their sides, under their arms, but hurl with all their strength over their

heads." In spite of the incommensurable length of these weapons, Harris tells us, that the Irish usually cast them with such might, as no haubergeon or coat of mail were proof against their force, but were pierced through on both sides. *Hibern.* p.51.

The helmet, the sword, the axe, and the spear; are the only arms with which the poet before us has furnished the Irish troops,* though to the enemy he has given coats of mail, and shields; and this circumstance so far confirms the most correct ideas that we have been enabled to form of the arms of our ancient countrymen. This, however, does not invalidate the authority and antiquity of other poems, in which we find some of the most distinguished chiefs of the Fianna possessed of shields; not the wicker target, but of metal, and sometimes embossed with gold. These, we may very well suppose, were trophies borne away from vanquished enemies, and therefore, though we should find them still more frequently mentioned, it would not be a matter of wonder.

* Even the target is not mentioned; but this appears only an omission of the poet, for it is certain that it was universally in use amongst the ancient Irish.

28. *And many a chief of martial fame.*

The repetition of the word many is exactly literal; it had an admirable effect in the original, and, I thought, also, appeared well in an English dress.

29. *Gall-grena high was raised.*

Gall-grena = The blazing sun. This was the celebrated standard of the Fenian general.

30. *With gems that India's wealth declare.*

The words in the original are *Cloichibh tìre anoir* i.e. precious stones from the country of the east.

31. *Goll's Fullang-torrigh rose.*

The standard of the tribe of Morna.

32. *Beneath the mighty Fionn he lay,
Bound on the blood-stained field.*

From this, and many similar passages, it appears that our ancient countrymen, in their martial contests, thirsted rather for honour than for blood. In the heat and confusion of a mixed engagement, numbers were necessarily slaughtered; but, where ever mercy could be shown, we find, that the conqueror spared the life of even his bitterest enemy, and was content with the honour of laying him "bound on the field."

33. *For thou thyself an hero art.*

The ancient Irish have been repeatedly stigmatised with the name of barbarians. Their souls, their manners, and their language, were thought alike incapable of any degree of refinement. The reader will easily judge how little of the marks of barbarism appear in the passage before us; yet this poem has been the favourite of many centuries; and its antiquity has never been questioned, though the date cannot be exactly ascertained. Here, however, it may be urged, that we do not contend for its being of prior date to the middle ages. Does this then invalidate the proof? And were we less barbarians, when torn with civil broils, and foreign invasions, than when we were a conquering and flourishing people?

34. *From Laogare's sweetly flowing stream.*

In hopes of being able to ascertain the scene of this battle, I have endeavoured to find which of our rivers was anciently called by the name of *Laogare's stream*, but in vain. I can discover nothing more of it than what the poem points out, that it is near to and within sight of the sea.

35. *Now old,—the stream of life congealed,
Bereft of all my joys,
No sword this withered hand can wield,
No spear my arm employs.*

How beautifully pathetic is the close of this poem! Surely every reader of sensibility must sympathise with a situation so melancholy, and so very feelingly described!

THE CHASE: A POEM

ADVERTISEMENT.

My curiosity respecting the poem of *The Chase*, was first awakened by a long extract from it, which I saw in Mr. Walker's *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*. I accordingly wrote to that gentleman, to request an entire copy of it, and also his opinion respecting the age in which it was composed; together with any anecdotes upon the subject, which his knowledge of Irish antiquities might enable him to afford me. To this request I received an answer, from which I have obtained Mr. Walker's permission to give the following extract, as an introduction to the Poem.

"I am happy to find that my work has been the means of introducing the poem of *The Chase* to your notice. It is indeed eminently deserving of the judgment you have passed upon it. The story is extremely interesting, and admirably well conducted; and for brilliancy of fancy, and powers of description, we may almost rank the author with Ariosto himself.

"I am sorry I cannot afford you all the information I could wish, upon the subject of this beautiful poem: indeed I have little more to offer than vague conjecture.

"The legend, which either gave rise to, or was taken from the poem of *The Chase*, is frequently alluded to in many of the written, as well as traditional tales of the Irish: It is also ingeniously interwoven with the romance of *Féis Tighe Canain*. Of its antiquity I cannot speak with any certainty; all my enquiries concerning the author, and the age in which it was written, have been unsuccessful. Nor can we give it (at least in its present dress,) either to Oisín, or to any other poet of the age in which he lived. The marks of a classical hand appear frequently throughout the whole; and the mention of bells also seem to bring it forward to more modern times; so that I fear we should risk an error in ascribing it to any period earlier than the middle ages.

"I have never had an opportunity of visiting the scene of this poem, though I often saw Slieve Gullion, at some distance, as I travelled through the county of Armagh. But a friend, whose business often leads him to that mountain, drew up, at my request, the following description of it, in which you will find mention of the lake where the poet tells us the gallant Fionn paid so dearly for his complaisance, when he sought the Enchantress's ring; and also of the cave whence she issued, when pressed by the Fenian heroes to restore their beloved chief to his pristine form.

"I am tenant to a lady for Slieve Gullion," (says my correspondent,) "and often visit it, during the summer, to see my cattle. In July last (1788) I went over the extent of this mountain: from bottom to top it is reckoned two miles. On the summit there is a large heap of stones, which is called *Cailleach Birrn's House*; in which it is said that Fionn Mac Cumhal lies buried; and, at an hundred paces distance, on nearly the same level, there is a circular lake, the diameter of which is about one hundred feet; and is about twenty deep. On one side of this lake, another heap of stones is piled; and round it, at all seasons, is a beaten path, leading to the Old Lady's, or Witch's House. Lately, some peasants, expecting to find out this old woman, who, however, has at no time thought proper to appear, threw down her house, and came to a large cave, about twenty feet long, ten broad, and five deep, covered with large flags, in which either the dame or money was expected, but only a few human bones were found. From the

summit of this mountain, if the day happens to be clear, you command an extensive prospect of Lough Neagh and all the circumjacent country."

Mr. Walker, after this description of the mountain by his friend, adds his regret, that he was not possessed of a complete copy of *The Chase*; but I afterwards procured one from Maurice Gorman, of this city, (a professor of the Irish language,) and from that copy I have made my translation,

THE POEM.

OISÍN.

O son of Calphruin!—sage divine!
Soft voice of heavenly song,
Whose notes around the holy shrine
Sweet melody prolong;

Did e'er my tale thy curious ear
And fond attention draw,
The story of that Chase to hear,
Which my famed father saw?

The Chase, which singly o'er the plain,
The hero's steps pursued;
Nor one of all his valiant train
Its wondrous progress viewed.

ST. PATRICK.

O royal bard, to valour dear,
Whom fame and wisdom grace,
It never was my chance to hear
That memorable Chase.

But let me now, O bard, prevail!
Now let the song ascend;
And, thro' the wonders of the tale.
May truth thy words attend!

OISÍN.

O Patrick!—to the Fenian race
A falsehood was unknown;
No lie, no imputation base
On our clear fame was thrown;

But by firm truth, and manly might
That fame established grew,
Where oft, in honourable fight
Our foes before us flew.

Not thy own clerks, whose holy feet
The sacred pavement trod,
With thee to hymn, in concert sweet,
The praises of thy God;

Not thy own clerks in truth excelled
The heroes of our line,

Reliques of Irish Poetry

By honour trained, by fame impelled
In glory's fields to shine!

O Patrick of the placid mien,
And voice of sweetest sound!
Of all thy church's walls contain
Within their hallowed round,

Not one more faithful didst thou know
Than Cumhal's noble son,
The chief who gloried to bestow<2>
The prize the bards had won!

Were Morna's valiant son alive,<3>
(Now in the deedless grave,)
O could my wish from death revive
The generous and the brave!

Or Mac-O'Dhuibhne, graceful form,<4>
Joy of the female sight;
The hero who would breast the storm
And dare the unequal fight.

Or he whose sword the ranks defied,
Mac-Garra, conquest's boast,<5>
Whose valour would a war decide,
His single arm an host,

Or could Mac-Ronan now appear,<6>
In all his manly charms;
Or—Oh my Oscar! wert thou here,<7>
To fill my aged arms!

Not then, as now, should Calphruin's son,
His sermons here prolong;
With bells, and psalms, the land o'er-run,
And hum his holy song!

If Fergus lived, again to sing,<8>
As erst, the Fianna's fame;
Or Daire, who sweetly touched the string<9>
And thrilled the feeling frame;

Your bells, for me, might sound in vain,
Did Hugh the little, live;<10>
Or Fallan's generous worth remain,<11>
The ceaseless boon to give;

Or Conan bald, though oft his tongue<12>
To rage provoked my breast;
Or Fionn's small dwarf, whose magic song<13>
Oft lulled the ranks to rest.

Sweeter to me their voice would seem
Than thy psalm-singing train;

And nobler far their lofty theme,
Than that thy clerks maintain!

ST. PATRICK

Cease thy vain thoughts, and fruitless boasts;
Can death thy chiefs restore?—
Son of the King of mighty hosts,
Their glories are no more.

Confide in him whose high decree
O'er-rules all earthly power;
And bend to him thy humble knee,
To him devote thy hour;

And let thy contrite prayer be made
To him who rules above;
Entreat for his almighty aid,
For his protecting love!

Though (with thy perverse will at strife,)
Thou deem'st it strange to say,
He gave thy mighty father life,
And took that life away.

OISÍN

Alas! thy words sad import bear,
And grating sounds impart;
They come with torture to mine ear,
And anguish to my heart!

Not for *thy* God these torrents spring,
That drain their weeping source,
But that my Father, and my King,
Now lies a lifeless curse!

Too much I have already done,
Thy Godhead's smile to gain;
That thus each wanted joy I shun,
And with thy clerks remain!

The royal robe, the social board,
Music and mirth are o'er,
And the dear art I once adored
I now enjoy no more;

For now no bards, from Oisín's hand,
The wanted gift receive;<14>
Nor hounds, nor horn I now command,
Nor martial feats achieve!

O Innisfail! thy Oisín goes<15>
To guard thy ports no more;
To pay with death the foreign foes
Who dare insult thy shore!<16>

I speak not of the fast severe
Thy rigid faith has taught;
Compared with all the rest I bear,
It is not worth a thought.

ST. PATRICK

O! Oisín of the mighty deed
Thy folly I deplore;
O cease thy frenzy thus to feed,
And give the subject o'er.

Nor Fionn, nor all the Fenian race,
Can with his power compare,
Who to yon orbs assigns their place,
And rules the realms of air!

For man yon azure vault he spreads,
And clothes the flowery plains;
On every tree soft fragrance sheds,
And blooming fruit ordains!

'Tis he who gives the peopled stream,
Replete with life to flow;
Who gives the Moon's resplendant beam,
And Sun's meridian glow!

Would'st thou thy puny King compare
To that Almighty hand,
Which formed fair earth, and ambient air,
And bade their powers expand?

OISÍN

It was not on a fruit or flower
My King his care bestowed;
He better knew to show his power
In honour's glorious road.

To load with death the hostile field;
In blood, his might proclaim;
Our land with wide protection shield,
And wing to heaven his fame!

In peace, his tranquil hours to bless,
Beneath soft beauty's eye
Or on the chequered field of chess,<17>
The mimic fight to try;

Or Sylvan sports, that well beseem<18>
The martial and the brave;
Or, plunged amid the rapid stream,
His manly limbs to lave.

But, when the rage of battle bled!—
Then—then his might appeared,

And o'er red heaps of hostile dead.
His conquering standard reared!

Where was thy God, on that sad day,
When, o'er Ierne's wave,
Two heroes ploughed the watery way,
Their beauteous prize to save?

From Lochlann's King of Ships, his bride,
His lovely Queen they bore,
Through whom unnumbered warriors dyed,
And bathed in blood our shore.<19>

Or on that day, when Tailk's proud might<20>
Invaded Erin's coast;
Where was thy Godhead in that fight,
And where thy empty boast?

While round the bravest Fianna bled,
No help did he bestow;
'Twas Oscar's arm avenged the dead,
And gave the glorious blow!

Where was thy God, when Magnus came?<21>
Magnus the brave, and great;
The man of might, the man of fame,
Whose threatening voice was fate!

Thy Godhead did not aid us then;
If such a God there be,
He should have favoured gallant men,
As great and good as he!

Fierce Anninir's wide-wasting son,
Allean, of dreadful fame,<22>
Who Tamor's treasures oft had won,
And wrapped her walls in flame;

Not by thy God, in single fight,
The deathful hero fell;
But by Fionn's arm, whose matchless might
Could every force repel!

In every mouth his fame we meet,
Well known, and well believed;
I have not heard of any feat
Thy cloudy King achieved.

ST. PATRICK

Drop we our speech on either side,
Thou bald and senseless fool!<23>
In torments all thy race abide,<24>
While God in heaven shall rule.

OISÍN

If God then rules, why is the chief
Of Cumhal's generous race
To fiends consigned, without relief
From justice, or from grace?

When, were thy God himself confined, <25>
My King, of mild renown,
Would quickly all his chains unbind,
And give him back his crown.

For never did his generous breast
Reject the feeling glow;
Refuse to succour the distressed,
Or slight the captive's woe.

His ransom loosed the prisoner's chains,
And broke the dire decree;
Or, with his hosts, on glory's plains,
He fought to set them free!

O Patrick! were I senseless grown,
Thy holy clerks should bleed,
Nor one be spared, to pour his moan
O'er the avenging deed!

Nor books, nor crosiers should be found, <26>
Nor ever more a bell,
Within thy holy walls should sound,
Where prayers and zealots dwell.

ST. PATRICK

O Oisín, of the royal race!
The actions of thy sire,
The king of smiles, and courteous grace,
I, with the world, admire;

Thy story therefore I await,
And thy late promise claim,
The Chase's wonders to relate,
And give the tale to fame.

OISÍN.

O Patrick! though my sorrowing heart
Its fond remembrance rend,
I will not from my word depart,
Howe'er my tears descend!

Full joyous past the festive day
In Almhain's stately hall, <27>
Whose spears, with studded splendours gay,
Illumed the trophied wall

The feast was for the Fianna spread; <28>
Their chiefs, assembled round,

Heard the song rise to praise the dead,
And fed their souls with sound.

Or on the chequered fields of chess
Their mimic troops bestowed;
Or round, to merit or distress,
Their ample bounty flowed.

At length, unnoticed of his train,
The Fenian king arose,<29>
And forth he went where Almhain's plain
With neighbouring verdure glows.

There, while alone the hero chanced
To breathe the fragrant gale,
A young and beauteous doe advanced,
Swift bounding o'er the vale.

He called his fleet and faithful hounds,
The doe's light steps to trace;
Sgeolan and Bran obeyed the sounds,<30>
And sprung upon the chase.

Unknown to us, no friend to aid,
Or to behold the deed;
His dogs alone, and Luno's blade,<31>
Companions of his speed.

Swift on to steep Slieve Gullion's foot,<32>
The doe before him flew;
But there, at once, she mocked pursuit,
And vanished from his view!

He knew not whether east or west
She passed the mountain's bounds,
But east his random course he pressed,
And west his eager hounds!

At length he stopped, he looked around,
To see the doe appear;
When soft distress, with plaintive sound,
Assailed his gentle ear.

The plaintive sound, quick to his breast,
With wonted influence sped;
And on he followed in its quest,
Till to Lough-Shieve it led.

There he beheld a weeping fair,
Upon a bank reclined,
In whose fine form, and graceful air,
Was every charm combined.

On her soft cheek, with tender bloom,<33>
The rose its tint bestowed;

And in her richer lip's perfume,
The ripened berry glowed.

Her neck was as the blossom fair,
Or like the cygnet's breast,
With that majestic, graceful air,
In snow and softness dressed:

Gold gave its rich and radiant dye,<34>
And in her tresses flowed;
And like a freezing star, her eye
With Heaven's own splendour glowed.<35>

Thyself, O Patrick! hadst thou seen
The charms that face displayed;
That tender form, and gracefulmien,
Thyself had loved the maid!

My king approached the gentle fair,
The form of matchless grace.
"Hast thou, sweet maid of golden hair!
Beheld my hounds in chase?"

"Thy chase, O king, was not my care;
I nothing of it know;
Far other thoughts my bosom share,
The thoughts, alas, of woe!"

"Is it the husband of thy youth,<36>
O fair one, that has died?
Or has an infant pledge of truth
Been torn from thy soft side?"

"White-handed mourner! speak the grief
That causes thy distress;
And, if it will admit relief,
Thou may'st command redress!"

"Alas, my ring, for whose dear sake
These ceaseless tears I shed,
Fell from my finger in the lake!"
(The soft-haired virgin said.)

"Let me conjure thee, generous king!<37>
Compassionate as brave,
Find for me now my beauteous ring,
That fell beneath the wave!"

Scarce was the soft entreaty made,
Her treasure to redeem,
When his fair form he disarrayed,
And plunged into the stream.

At the white-handed fair's request,
Five times the lake he tried;

On every side his search addressed,
Till he the ring descried.

But when he sought the blooming maid,
Her treasure to restore;
His powers were gone, he scarce could wade
To reach the nearest shore!

That form where strength and beauty met,<38>
To conquer, or engage,
Paid, premature, its mournful debt
To grey and palsied age.

While magic thus our king detained,
In hateful fetters bound;
We in fair Almhain's halls remained
And festal joy went round.

The mirthful moments danced along
To music's charming lore;
And, to the sons of lofty song,
Wealth poured her bounteous store!

Thus fled the hours, on heedless wing,
From every care released;
Nor thought we of our absent king,
Nor missed him from the feast:

Till Caoilte, struck with sudden dread,<39>
Rose in the Hall of Spears
His words around strange panic spread,
And waked misgiving fears!

"Where is the noble Cumhal's son,
Renowned assembly! Say—
Or is our arm of conquest gone,—
Our glory passed away!"

We stood aghast. Conan alone,
The rash Mac Morna, spoke;
"O joyful tidings! I shall groan
No more beneath his yoke.

"Swift Caoilte, of the mighty deed!<40>
On this auspicious day,
I, to his fame and power, succeed,
And take the sovereign sway."

We laughed to scorn his senseless boast,
Though with a grieving heart;
And Almhain saw our numerous host,
With headlong haste depart.

The van myself and Caoilte led,
The Fianna in the rear;

And on our rapid march we sped,
But saw no king appear.

We followed, where he led the chase,
To steep Slieve Gullion's foot;
But there we could no further trace,
And stopped the vain pursuit.

North of the mount our march we stayed,
Upon a verdant plain,
Where conquest once our arms arrayed,<41>
Though bought with heaps of slain!

Hope threw each eager eye around,
And stilled attention's ear,
In vain,—for neither sight or sound
Of our loved chief was near.

But, on the borders of a lake,
A tall old man we spied,
Whose looks his wretched age bespake
To want and woe allied!

Bare withered bones, and ghastly eyes,
His wrinkled form displayed;
Palsied and pale, he scarce could rise,
From age and strength decayed.

We thought, perchance, that famine gave
That wan and wasted frame,
Or that from far, adown the wave,
A fisherman he came.

We asked him, had he seen in chase,
Two hounds that snuffed the gale,
And a bold chief, of princely grace,
Swift bounding o'er the vale.

The head of age in silence hung,
Bowed down with shame and woe,
Long ere his hesitating tongue<42>
The cruel truth could show.

At length, to Caoilte's faithful ear,
The fatal change he told,
And gave our raging host to hear
The dreadful tale unfold!

With horror struck, aghast and pale,
Three sudden shouts we gave.
Affrighted badgers fled the vale,
And trembling sought the cave!

But Conan gloried in our grief;
Conan the bald, the base;

He cursed with rage the Fenian chief,
And all the Fenian race.

"O, were I sure," (he fiercely said)
"Thou wert that heart of pride,
Soon should this blade thy shaking head,
From thy old trunk divide!

"For never did thy envious mind
Bestow my valour's weed;
In secret has thy soul repined
At each heroic deed.

"I grieve not for thy strength decayed,
Shrunk form, and foul disgrace;
But that I cannot wave my blade
O'er all thy hated race.

"Oh, were they all like thee this day,
My vengeance, as a flood,
Should sweep my hated foes away,
And bathe my steel in blood!

"Since Cumhal of the Hosts was slain
Upon the ensanguined field,<43>
By Morna's son, who ne'er in vain
Upreared his golden shield;<44>

"Since then, our clan in exile pine,
Excluded from thy sight;
And the famed heroes of our line
But live in thy despite."

CAOILTE.

"Did not my soul too keenly share
In our great cause of woe,
On aught like thee to waste its care,<45>
Or any thought bestow;

"Bald, senseless wretch! thy envy, soon
This arm should make thee rue;
And thy crushed bones, thou base buffoon,
Should bear thy folly's due!"

OSCAR.

"Cease thy vain babbling, senseless fool!<46>
Bald boaster, stain to arms,
Still forward to promote misrule,
But shrink at war's alarms!"

CONAN.

"Cease thou, vain youth, nor think my soul<47>
Can by thy speech be won,

Servile to stoop to the contro!
Of Oisín's beardless son.

"Even Fionn, who, head of all thy line,
Can best their boasts become,
What does he do, but daily dine,
Upon his mangled thumb.<48>

"'Twas not the sons of Boishne's clan,
But Morna's gallant race,
That thundered in the warlike van,
And led the human chase.

"Oisín, this silken son of thine,
Who thus in words excels,
Will learn of thee the psalming whine,
And bear white books and bells.<49>

"Cease Oscar, cease thy foolish boast,
Not words, but deeds decide;
Now then, before this warlike host,
Now be our valour tried!"

My son high raised his threatening blade,
To give his fury sway;
But the pale Conan shrunk dismayed,
And sprung with fear away:

Amid the scoffing host he sprung,
To shun th' unequal strife;
To 'scape the forfeit of his tongue,
And save his worthless life.

Nor vainly did he importune;
The host, as he desired,
Engaged my son to give the boon
His cowardice required.

Once, twice, and thrice, to Erin's chief
The sorrowing Caoilte spoke:
'O say, loved cause of all our grief!
Whence came this cruel stroke?

"What cursed Tuathan's direful charm<50>
Has dared that form deface?
O! who could thus thy force disarm,
And wither every grace?

"Gullion's fair daughter," (Fionn replied,)
The treacherous snare designed,<51>
And sent me to yon magic tide,
Her fatal ring to find."

Conan who, penitent of tongue,
Would now his guilt revoke,

Forward, with zeal impatient sprung,
And vengeful ire bespoke.

"May never from this hill" (he cried,)
"Our homeward steps depart,
But Gullion dearly shall abide
Her dark and treacherous art!"<52>

Then our stout shields with thongs we bound,
Our hapless King to bear;<53>
While each fond chieftain pressed around,
The precious weight to share.

North of the: mount, to Gullion's cave,
The altered form we bore;
Determined all her art to brave,
And his lost powers restore.

Eight nights and days, without success,
We tore the living tomb,
Until we pierced the last recess
Of the deep cavern's gloom.

Then forth the fair Enchantress came,
Swift issuing to the light,
The form of grace, the beauteous dame,
With charms too great for sight.

A cup quite full she trembling bore
To Erin's altered chief,
That could his pristine form restore,
And heal his people's grief.

He drank.—O joy! his former grace,
His former powers returned;
Again with beauty glowed his face,
His breast with valour burned.

Oh, when we saw his kindling eye
With wonted lustre glow,
Not all the glories of thy sky
Such transport could bestow!

The Hero of the stately steeds,
From magic fetters free,
To Fenian arms and martial deeds
Thus—thus restored to see!

Scarce could our souls the joy sustain!
Again three shouts we gave;
Again the badgers fled the plain,
And trembling sought the cave!

Now, Patrick-of the scanty store,
And meagre-making face!

Say, didst thou ever hear before
This memorable Chase?

££

NOTES ON THE POEM OF THE CHASE.

There are numberless Irish poems still extant, attributed to Oisín, and either addressed to St. Patrick, or like this, composed in the form of a dialogue between the Saint and the poet. In all of them, the antiquary discovers traces of a later period than that in which Oisín flourished; and most of them are supposed to be the compositions of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries. But be they of what age they may, as productions abounding with numberless beauties, they plead for preservation, and recommend themselves to taste: and as (at the very latest period to which it is possible to ascribe them) they must certainly relate to an age of much antiquity, and reflect much light on manners customs and events, that, in consequence of modern pyrrhonism, have been doubted to have ever existed, they surely have a high and serious claim to attention, and call equally upon the poet, the historian, and the public. spirited, to preserve these reliques of ancient genius amongst us! But Irishmen—all of them at least who would be thought to pride themselves in the name, or to reflect back any part of the honour they derive from it; they are particularly called upon, in favour of their country, to rescue these little sparks from the ashes of her former glory.

1. *Where oft, in honourable fight.*

"The heroes of ancient Ireland were sworn never to attack an enemy at any disadvantage".—O'Halloran.

2. *The chief who gloried to bestow
The prize the bards had won!*

In all these poems, the character of Oisín is so inimitably well supported, that we lose the idea of any other bard, and are for a time persuaded it is Oisín himself who speaks. We do not seem to read a narration of events, wherein the writer was neither a witness, nor a party:—it is the *Son*, the *Father*,—the *Hero*,—the *Patriot*, who speaks; who breathes his own passions and feelings on our hearts, and compels our sympathy to accompany all his griefs; while, in a strain of natural and impassioned eloquence, he descants on the fame and virtues of a parent whom he describes as at once so amiable, and so great; and bewails the loss of all his former friends, kindred, and companions, and laments his own forlorn and disconsolate state, in apostrophes that pierce the very soul of pity!—Besides passages which occur in this, and the two poems of *Magnus* and *Moirá Borb*, the *Agallamh Oisín agus Phadraig* ["Dialogue of Oisín and St. Patrick"] exhibits a very pathetic instance, where, lamenting the loss of his father and his celebrated Fianna, he exclaims, "To survive them is my depth of woe! The banquet and the song have now no charms for me! Wretched and old, the poor solitary remnant of the Fianna! Why, O why am I yet alive? Alas, O Patrick? Grievous is my state! The last of all my race! My heroes are gone! My strength is gone! Bells I now hear, for the songs of my bards; and age, blindness and woe, are all that remain of Oisín!"

3. *Were Morna's valiant son alive.*

The celebrated Goll, or Gaul Mac Morna. He is a favourite hero in most of the Fian tales; and is in general ranked next to Fionn Mac Cumhal, and equal to Oscar, in point of prowess. Great as is Oisín's partiality in favour of the heroes of his own race,

yet we find him, on all occasions, doing ample justice to the character and valour of a chief, who was not allied to his family, and whose tribe had even, at different times, been their very bitterest enemies.

4. *Or Mac O'Dhuibhne, graceful form.*

Diarmad, or Dermot Mac O'Dhuibhne. This hero was celebrated for his extraordinary beauty, and the graces of his form:—but we find he was not less brave than beautiful.

5. *MacGarra, conquest's boast.*

Possibly this was the *Mac Garraidh Mac Mord*, king of Connaught, mentioned in the War-Ode to Oscar, at the battle of Gabhra. His having been, at that time, the enemy of the Fianna, would not be a reason sufficient to prevent the poet from making Oisín speak thus highly of him here; on the contrary, the Irish heroes were instructed, from their youth, to respect a brave enemy; and made it a point of honour to speak of them in honourable terms. It is very seldom that an instance to the contrary occurs, as the attentive reader will perceive, through the whole course of these poems.

6. *Or could Mac-Ronan now appear.*

Caoilte Mac Ronain; he is a very distinguished chief amongst the Fianna, and a favourite with all their poets.

7. *Oh my Oscar! Wert thou here.*

Oscar, the son of Oisín, who was killed at the battle of Gabhra.

8. *If Fergus lived, again to sing.*

Fergus, the brother of Oisín, and chief poet of the Fianna. See *Diss. on the War-Ode*.

9. *Or Daire, who sweetly touched the string.*

We find nothing particular related of this Daire, further than his skill in music. This enchanting science, as well as poetry, was cultivated by the chiefs of ancient Ireland.

10. *Did Hugh the little, live.*

Hugh, or Aodh Beag Mac-Fionn.

11. *Or Fallan's generous worth remain.*

We meet this hero again, in the poem of Magnus.

12. *Or Conan bald.*

For the character of Conan, see the notes on the preceding poem.

13. *Or Fionn's small dwarf, whose magic song
Oft lulled the ranks to rest.*

It is not easy to determine whether the poet here only means that this dwarf had a voice of that particular cadence, as naturally to incline his hearers to sleep; or whether he means to ascribe to him the actual powers of magic. Upon the subject of the dwarf, I have only conjecture to offer. In the learned and curious work of Mons. Mallet, we find that, amongst the nations of the North, the Laplanders were considered as dwarfs, on account of the comparative lowness of their stature; and also, that their extreme ingenuity in the mechanic arts, which a disposition of mind, naturally pacific, gave them leisure and inclination to pursue, had acquired them the reputation of being skilled in magic. Perhaps the little being here mentioned might have been one of those. Oisín, we see, piqued at the insinuation of St. Patrick, takes

pains to show him, that, from the first of the heroes, down to the last; even the very dwarf that belonged to Fionn, was dearer, and more acceptable to him than he was.

14. *For now no bards, from Oisín's hand,
The wanted gift receive.*

All Irish histories, chronicles and poems, concur in testimony of the high respect in which the office of the bard, and the favours of the Muse, were formerly held in this kingdom. Oisín, at once a hero and a bard, is supposed to have felt equally for both; as a bard, to have felt the dignity and importance of those talents, which had power to confer the immortality of fame, that, as a hero, he so ardently desired. We, therefore, are not to wonder, if we find him frequently recurring, with a pleased, yet melancholy retrospection, to those happy days, when he joined, to the luxury of bestowing, the glory or encouraging an art, of which he was himself a master.

15. *O Innisfail! thy Oisín goes
To guard thy ports no more.*

Dr. Hanmer, in his Chronicle, gives us a long list of the chieftains under the command of Fionn Mac Cumhal, who were particularly appointed to the care of the harbours of Ireland; at the end of which he adds, "*These were the chiefe commanders by direction from Fin M'Koyll, who tooke farther order that beacons should be set up in sundrie places of the land, where, in time of danger, they might have direction for reliefe, and to draw a head for their defence.*"

16. *To pay with death the foreign foes,
Who dare insult thy shore.*

We find Oisín, in this passage, does not appear, so old, or so infirm, as he is represented in many of the Fian Poems; on the contrary, he laments—not his inability—but the religious restraints which detain him from the field. Perhaps the poet here means to show the over-strained zeal of the early Christian missionaries, who, finding the Irish chiefs so passionately devoted to military glory; so haughty, high-spirited, and impatient of injury; thought it impossible ever to bow their minds to the doctrine of meekness, without carrying it absolutely to an extreme, that exceeded the reasonable bounds prescribed by its Divine Teacher. They were, however, successful:—the same enthusiasm that led our heroes to the field, soon after plunged them into cloisters. Still it was a sense of duty; the object only was changed; through an unhappy error, they thought themselves performing an acceptable service to heaven, by contradicting the very purposes for which heaven designed them; by refusing to fulfil the obligations of active life, and withdrawing alike from the spheres of domestic and public duty, to devote themselves to the austerities of secluded penitence, productive only of *individual*, instead of *general* advantage. Still, however, they were impelled by an ardour to perform, in its fullest extent, that service which they conceived to be their duty; and therefore, for the consequences of such a mistake, they were more to be pitied than condemned.

Of the same nature were the motives that influenced the hosts of Israel, (considering only the letter of the law,) to submit themselves tamely to the swords of their enemies, rather than defend their lives, at the hazard of offending heaven, by what, they conceived, would be a breach of the Sabbath day. But Mattathias, and his heroic sons, more enlightened—not less religious than their mistaken countrymen, stood forth, and said, "If we all do as our brethren have done, and fight not for our lives and our laws, against the heathen; they will now quickly root us out of the earth. Whoever shall come to make battle with us, on the Sabbath day, we will fight against him; neither will we die all, as did our brethren!"—And the consequence was, that

"The work prospered in their hands, and they recovered the law out of the hands of the Gentiles, and out of the hands of Kings, and suffered not sinners to triumph."
Macabees, b.1. Ch.2.

But the Irish, less instructed in the spirit of true religion than the sons of Israel had been, did not so soon perceive, and recover from their error; an error to which, Mr. O'Halloran thinks, we may in part attribute the success of Danish invasions, and of English arms, in Ireland; for, while such numbers of their princes and chiefs abandoned the government, and the defence of their country, for the barren duties of a cloister, the remaining patriots, who said, "Let us fight for our lives and our laws against the heathen," were not always sufficient to the task. Those of their princes and nobility, who were led away by a noble, but unhappy mistake, had they entertained the true sense of what Christian duty demanded, would have been the bravest defenders, the firmest friends of their country; but, deprived of them, she remained, for the most part, a prey to foreign invaders; or else, torn by the tumults of her own factious sons, too few of her nobler offspring remaining for her defence.

17. *Or on the chequered field of chess.*

Ficheall is the Irish name for Chess. "I have not been able to find the Irish names of the men of this game, but it was universally played by the ancient nobility of Ireland. Dr. Hyde says, the old Irish were so greatly addicted to chess, that, amongst them, the possession of good estates has been often decided by it: and, adds he, there are some estates, at this very time, the property whereof still depends upon the issue of a game at chess. For example, the heirs of two certain noble Irish families, whom we could name, (to say nothing of others,) hold their lands upon this tenure, viz, that one of them shall encounter the other at chess, in this manner; that whichever of them conquered, should seize and possess the estate of the other. Therefore," (says the doctor,) "I am told they manage the affair prudently among themselves; once a year they meet, by appointment, to play at chess; one of them makes a move, and the other says, I will consider how to answer you next year. This being done, a public notary commits to writing the situation of the game; by which method, a game that neither has won, has been, and will be confirmed for some hundreds of years.

"I find, in the old Brehon Laws, that one tax, levied by the Monarch of Ireland, on every province, was to be paid in chess-boards, and complete sets of men: and that every *bruigh*, or inn-holder of the states, was obliged to furnish travellers with salt provisions, lodging, and a chess-board, *gratis*." Vallancey's *Irish Grammar, Essay on the Celtic Lang.* p. 85.

18. *Or Sylvan sports.*

See O'Connor's *Dissertations*, p. 111, 3rd edit.

19. *From Lochlann's King of Ships, his bride,
His lovely Queen they bore,
Through whom unnumbered warriors died,
And bathed in blood our shore.*

A note for this passage was furnished from *Laoi Argeain Mhóir* (i.e. the Poem of Airgean the Great,) in the collection of J. C. Walker, Esq. the story of which is briefly this.

Two heroes, (Mac-Connacher and Ainle,) were forgotten by Fionn at his feast. They resented the neglect of their chief, deserted from his standard, and went over to that of his enemy, Airgean, King of Leinster.

The graceful beauty of Ainle's form, inspiring the young Queen of Lochlann with a guilty and fatal passion, she fled with him and his friend to Ireland, whither they were pursued by the furious King, who determined, if possible, to sacrifice all the Fianna, for the crime of a single hero. The poet expressly tells us, that Fionn would have compelled the guilty pair to make all the reparation which the nature of the case would admit of; and further, offered from himself such conditions of peace, as he thought might prevent the necessity of his fighting in so dishonourable a cause:—but his overtures were rejected with disdain, and he was constrained to the issue of a battle. The slaughter on each side was dreadful; the Irish, in the end, were victorious. Ainle himself was killed in the engagement; but the poet does not deign to take any further notice of the unhappy partner of his crimes.

20. *When Tailk's proud might
Invaded Erin's coast.*

Tailk or Tailc Mac Trein:—a poem on this subject is in the same collection with that of Airgean the Great; there is also another copy of it, entitled *Laoi Chnoic an Áir*, (i. e. the Poem of the Hill of Slaughter). It contains some beauties, but, upon the whole, is scarce worth translation. The story, however, is here, extracted, to gratify any curiosity that may be excited by the line to which this note refers.

A Grecian Princess, flies, in disgust, from the brave, but fierce and deformed Tailk Mac Trein, whom her father had compelled her to marry, and solicits the protection of the Fenian commander. He grants it, of course, but his generosity costs him dear. Tailk pursues his wife, and fights the Fianna, who refuse to give her up to him, After an incredible slaughter, he is at length subdued, and killed by Oscar, the grandson of Fionn.

The Princess beholds the havoc she has occasioned, and overcome by the emotions of grief, terror, and suspense, which she had suffered during the conflict, and shocked to see the numbers of her generous protectors, that had fallen in her defence, she sinks beneath the pressure of her feelings, and expires in the midst of her surviving deliverers.

21. *Where was thy God, when Magnus came?
See poem of Magnus the Great.*

22. *Allean, of dreadful fame.*

No connected, or probable account, has been learned of this hero, and his conquests.

23. *Drop we our speech on either side,
Thou bald and senseless fool!*

It must be owned, this railing is rather of the coarsest; but our poet seems more partial to his heroes than to his saints, or he would hardly have put this language into the mouth of the good bishop.

24. *In torments all thy race abide.*

In the *Agallamh Oisín agus Phadraig* ["Dialogue of Oisín and St. Patrick"] the Saint gives his reason for supposing what he here asserts.

*Because, conceived for nobler aims,
For views beyond this finite scene,
The Fenian chief confined his aims,
Nor broke the thralldom of his chain;*

*Because, while God's creation lay,
In boundless glory to his view,
He meanly sought the savage prey,
And man, more savage, to pursue:*

*For this, his wealth avails him not!
The man who Heaven's award disdains,
Shall find his last an awful lot,
Replete wit, never-ending pains.*

To these lines immediately follows a passage, that very much resembles this part of *The Chase*.

*Did Dermot of the dark-brown locks survive,
Did glorious Goll or Fallon now remain,
Or dreadful Oscar of the mighty arm;
No power of man or Deity should hold*

*Their much-loved monarch in disgraceful bands!
Did Morna's tribe or Boisgne's heroes breathe,
Thence would they bring their mighty Fionn, or rend
The infernal sceptre from its deathless lord!*

25. *When, were thy God himself confined, (and following stanzas.)*

What a beautiful idea of the character of Fionn, these three wild stanzas convey!

26. *Nor books, nor crosiers should be found,
Nor ever more a bell.*

"Small bells, (such, we mean, as were appended to the tunic of the Jewish high priest, and afterwards employed by the Greeks and Romans, for various religious purposes, but particularly to frighten ghosts and demons from their temples,) were undoubtedly introduced with Christianity into this kingdom; being then universally, as now, tingled occasionally at the altars of the Roman Catholics, by the officiating priest. Their use amongst the Christian clergy is supposed to be coeval with their religion; and the missionaries, who were sent to convert the pagan Irish, would not omit bringing with them an appendage of their profession which is still thought so necessary.

But the period at which large bells, for belfries, were first used here, is not so easy to determine. Primate Usher informs us, that bells were used in the churches of Ireland, in the latter end of the seventh century; but as he does not ascertain the size of the bells, nor mention belfries, we may conclude he only means the small bells alluded to above. Sir John Hawking, on the authority of Polydore Virgil, ascribes the above invention of such bells as are suspended in the towers, to Paulinus of Nola, about the year 400; but W. Strabo assures us, that large suspended bells were in his time (in the ninth century) but a late invention. Now, as the persecuted Christians, in the infancy of the church, dared not openly avow their profession, much less publicly summon a congregation by the sound of a bell, we are inclined to lean to Strabo's assurance; so that we cannot venture to give an higher antiquity to large suspended bells in this kingdom, than the calm which immediately succeeded the expulsion of the Danes; at which time, according to Walsh, the Christian clergy converted the round towers into steeple-houses or belfries; from which latter use of them (continues he) it is, that ever since, to this present time, they are called, in Irish, *Clogtheachs*; that is, belfries, or bell houses, *clog* and *clog* signifying a bell, and *teach*, a house, in that language." *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, p. 93.

Of the large suspended bell, Mr. Walker certainly supposes the poet to speak, when he says, that the mention of bells seems to bring the poem to more modern times. But this gentleman, not having the original of the passage now before us to consult, did not perfectly recollect the precise words that must determine the distinction. There is not the least mention of a steeple or belfry;—the words are simply these, *Nó clog na tráth ar do chill* (literally) "nor a bell of prayer-time in thy church"; *tráth* is in the genitive case plural, yet I conceive that it must mean a bell *at* prayer time, (*of* or *during* the time of prayer). The reader is, however, at liberty to decide.

27. *Almhain's stately hall.*

Almhain, or *Almhuin*, (pronounced Alwin,) the palace of Fionn Mac Cumhal, in the province of Leinster: it was built on the top of the hill, called, from it, The Hill of Allen, in the county of Kildare.

In the *Buile Oisín*, (i. e. *Rhapsody of Oisín*,) wherein he gives an account of the seven celebrated battalions of the Fianna, there is a passage, partly descriptive of the palace of *Almhain*, Its economy, feasts, &c

*In Fionn's fair halls at banquets have I been,
At banquets truly glorious to behold!
A thousand goblets graced the festive scene,
Each goblet twined with wreaths of rich wrought gold.*

*At Almhain, by the noble Fianna held,
Twelve matchless palaces, to troops assigned
Of Tages' race, the pomp and splendor swelled,
And spoke the greatness of the owner's mind.*

*Around twelve fires, in either palace placed,
Twelve hundred heroes shared the genial board;
Where hospitality the joy increased,
With all that wealth or plenty could afford.*

Many of our romances, and poems, give accounts of splendid entertainments at this palace of *Almhain*.

28. *The feast was for the Fianna spread.*

In this description of the feast at *Almhain*, the poet accords exactly with the accounts which our history and annals have given, of the manner in which the early Irish held their entertainments. See O'Connor on this subject. "Conformably," says he, "to the spirit of hospitality, their entertainments were frequent, and rational; seldom disorderly. Every subject of the *Fileacht* entered into their convivial associations; peace, and war; science, and law; government, and morals. These serious speculations gave way, in their turn, to sports and pastimes, wherein they sung the actions of their ancestors, and the exploits of their heroes. Nothing could animate their youth more. From these recitations they derived intrepidity of mind, and many noble feelings, which counteracted the treachery and malevolence to which our human nature is otherwise subject." *Dissertations on the Hist. of Ireland*, p. 110, 3d edit.

29. *The Fenian king arose*

Fionn was not a king, though, indeed, few kings were possessed of more authority and power. *Rígh na bhFian* (king of the Fianna,) means no more than general, or military sovereign over that formidable body.

30. *Sgeolan and Bran obeyed the sounds.*

Sgeolan, and Bran, were the two famed and favourite dogs of Fionn.

31. *Luno's blade.*

In the original, *Mac an Luin* (the son of Luno). This sword, tradition tells us, was made by a smith of Lochlann, named Luno, and therefore it was called after him, poetically, the Son of Luno. What makes this account the more probable is, that we do not find the swords of the Irish heroes distinguished by names, as amongst those of the northern nations, and also of ancient Britain.

Anecdotes have been sought for, in vain, of this famous Lun, or Luno; but, from the wonders recited of the product of his art, it seems probable, that he was one of those people, whom the Norwegians denominated dwarfs, and complimented with the reputation of Magic. See *Northern Antiquities*, vol. ii. p. 46.

"Give me out of the tomb," (says Hervor,) "the hardened sword, which the dwarfs made for Suafurlama." *Five Pieces of Run. Poetry*, p. 13.

32. *Swift on to steep Slieve Gullion's foot.*

Here the muse has led our poet and his hero a very long dance indeed; and so beguiled the way with the melody of her song, that he appears to have been quite insensible of the distance between Almhain in Leinster, and Slieve Gullion in Ulster, and in the county of Armagh.

33. *On her soft cheek, with tender bloom.*

The Irish poets, both ancient and modern, abound, and excel in descriptions of female beauty. The one before us, though exquisitely charming, is not singly so; for the collection of songs, contained in this volume, exhibit many instances of the same species of excellence; and many more are to be found in other songs and poems, in the Irish language.

34. *Gold gave its rich and radiant dye,
And in her tresses flowed.*

A learned friend remarked, on this passage, that the poet here drew from his store of Eastern imagery, for that golden hair was unknown in these cold climates. It is certain, that the mention of yellow, or golden hair, though it sometimes occurs, yet is not very common in the descriptions of our poets;—the fair wavying tresses are most general; sometimes we are told of hair like the raven's wing, and often of locks of shining brown, which, from the brightness ascribed along with the colour, we may conclude to have been auburn.

35. *And like a freezing star, her eye
With Heaven's own splendour glowed.*

For this description of eyes, the poet has indeed left our world—and every one in it—far behind him.

In one of Carolan's songs, composed for Miss Mary O'Neill, he has given the following beautiful simile, which, though indeed not equal to the above, is yet well entitled to preservation:— "Her eyes" (says he) "are, to her face, what a diamond is to a ring, throwing its beams around, and adorning the beauty of the setting."

36. *Is it the husband of thy youth.*

We cannot too much admire the elegance and delicacy of this address! Such tender refinement could not surely have existed amongst a nation of barbarians. The character of the Fenian commander appears uniformly the same in all the Irish poems; and whether our bards, when they gave it, drew a faithful picture, or not, it is still a proof, that they must have had some good and perfect models before them, to show what Nature ought to be; since, in their favourite character, we see all the mildness and tenderness of female disposition, united with the ardour of the warrior, the

firmness of the patriot, and the calmness of the philosopher. In the son of Cumhal we see every quality, that is either interesting, amiable, or great.

37. *Let me conjure thee, generous king!*

It has been already shown, that, amongst the ancient Irish, each knight was bound, by his military vows, to the protection and respectful service of the fair: this is expressly recorded by our history; and our poetry and romances throw further light on the subject. According to them, no danger or difficulty was to deter a hero from the assistance of a distressed female, and her request was to be a law.

In the romance of *Féis Tighe Canáin*, where the story of this poem is related, Fionn tells his chieftains, that he had a kind of instinctive horror at the thoughts of entering that lake; yet he instantly obeyed the injunction of the damsel, for (says he) it was a matter that no hero could refuse. Many similar instances of this respect and devotion to the fair occur in our old romances and poems.

38. *That form where strength and beauty met,
To conquer, or engage.*

Our Irish poets inform us, that Fionn was married extremely young; yet even so, he must have been advanced in life at this period, since we find his grandson Oscar introduced in the following pages of the poem: it is true, he is mentioned only as a boy; yet still, one would think his *grandfather* old enough to be grey, without the operation of sorcery, to make him so. At the very least, he must have been now, some years above fifty; yet he is represented as retaining all the bloom, as well as the strength and activity, of youth. But we may well overlook a few faults of inadvertence, in favour of the numerous beauties with which this poem abounds. Our magical bard conjures up such delightful enchantments, that our attention should be too much engrossed by the grace and grandeur of his images, to count the knots on his poetical wand.

39. *Till Caoilte, struck with sudden dread.*

We learn, from Irish romance, that the Fianna, and the chiefs of the Danaanian race, were enemies, (see *Féis Tighe Canáin*); and as these people were supposed to be skilful in magic, the heroes of Fionn were naturally alarmed for the safety of their general, when they missed him from the feast, and recollected the determined enmity and supernatural power of the Tuatha de Danaan. Caoilte, in the passage before us, seems to apprehend that Fionn was snatched away by enchantment from amongst them. For a particular account of these Tuatha de Danaan, the reader is referred to the ancient history of Ireland.

40. *Swift Caoilte.*

Caoilte was remarkable for his speed in running.

41. *Where conquest once our arms arrayed.*

The battle here alluded to, is described in a poem, entitled *Laoi an Duibh mac Dithribh*. The terrible Mac-Dirive, after an obstinate combat, is at last slain by the hand of Oscar.

42. *Long ere his hesitating tongue
The cruel truth could show.*

It is but proper to acquaint the reader, that, in this passage, the sense of the poem is a little extended, and brought nearer to that of the romance. In the poem, we are only told, that Fionn, when questioned by his chieftains, did not, at first, give a direct answer; but, after some time, imparted the secret to the ear of Caoilte. In the

romance, Fionn himself tells the story and says, that he felt it grievous to his heart to acquaint them, that he was the object of their search; nevertheless, when his faithful bands surrounded him, he at last informed them of his fatal adventure.

43. *Since Cumhal of the Hosts was slain
Upon the ensanguined field.*

Comhal, or Cumhal, the father of Fionn. He was killed in a battle against the tribe of Morna; we find, however, that this tribe were afterwards reconciled to the Fianna, and obedient to their chief, who treated them with the utmost kindness. This complaint of Conan's is therefore to be ascribed to his own perverse humour, and not to any injustice that he or his clan had met with from the Fenian general.

44. *Upreared his golden shield.*

Here we find mention of a golden shield; but it is not supposed that such were common in Ireland, because they do not often occur in our MSS, and very few of them have been found in our bogs. But we are not, from this, to conclude, that the metal itself was scarce in the kingdom. Cambrensis and Stanihurst bear testimony to the riches of our mines. Doctor Boat also, in his *Natural History*, mentions the gold and silver mines of Ireland; and Donatus, Bishop of Fesulae, a poet of the seventh century, in a beautiful description of our island, does not omit to celebrate the natural wealth of its soil.

The *Leabhar Leacan*, (or Book of Sligo,) informs us, that in the reign of Tighearnmas was first introduced the boiling and refining of gold; that the refiner's name was Inachadan, and he carried on the art at the east side of the Liffey. Besides the testimony of foreign writers, and our domestic annals, numbers of utensils, arms, collars, chains, &c. of pure gold, have been dug up in different parts of the kingdom. But it would be endless to multiply proofs upon this subject. If the reader wishes any further testimonies, he will find them at large in Mr. O'Halloraan's *Introduction to the History and Antiq. of Ireland*.

45. *Did not my soul too keenly share
In our great cause of woe,
On aught like thee to waste its care*

We are here, at once, let into the character of Conan, and see that contempt alone is the cause of the forbearance with which his insolence is suffered to pass.

46. *Cease thy vain bab'ling, senseless fool!
Bald boaster.*

We could wish that this dialogue were not so coarsely conducted; but the heroes of Homer are still less acquainted with good breeding, than those of our Irish bard; and Conan is only the Thersites of Oisín. In justice, however, to the Fenian chiefs, it should be observed, that it is the insolent folly of Conan which provokes abusive language, because they will not raise their arm against an idiot. To an enemy, they are never abusive; but, on the contrary, polite to a degree that might afford improved example, even to modern refinement. See *Magnus*.

47. *Cease thou, vain youth*

Conan, afraid to reply to Caoilte, yet ventures to discharge his spleen upon "Oisín's beardless son."

48. *What does he do, but daily dine,
Upon his mangled thumb.*

This strange passage is explained by some lines in the poem of *Duibh mac*

Dithribh, where Fionn is reproached with deriving all his courage from his fore-knowledge of events, and chewing on his thumb for prophetic information. The reader will easily perceive the source of this ridiculous mistake of the wonder-loving multitude; a habit taken up, when deep in thought, was construed into divination; and we may conclude how great that wisdom, and that heroism, must have been, which was supposed no other way to be accounted for, than by gifting the possessor with inspiration.

In the romance of *Féis Tighe Canáin*, among other curious particulars, Fionn is said to have derived a portion of his knowledge from the waters of a magical fountain, in the possession of the Tuatha de Danaan; a single draught of which was sold for three hundred ounces of gold.

49. *Oisín, this silken son of thine,
Who thus in words excels,
Will learn of thee the psalming whine,
And bear white books and bells.*

From this passage, it appears, that Oisín was supposed to have been won over, at least in part, by some of the missionaries who preceded the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland. Here also we seem to have proof, that the bells, mentioned in the course of the poem, were not, nor could have been, the large suspended ones; but only the smaller ones, that were borne by the priests, and tingled at the altars, in the very first ages of Christianity. Conan could not possibly mean any other than these, when he says that Oscar would learn in time to bear or carry them; that is, leaving the profession of arms, to become a priest, by which he plainly intends to reproach him with cowardice, as desirous to excel in words alone.

50. *What cursed Tuathan's direful charm.*

In the original, *Tuatha dé* (i.e. Tuatha-de-danaan.) Most of the Irish romances are filled with Danaanian enchantments; as wild as the wildest of Ariosto's fictions, and not at all behind them in beauty.

51. *Gullion's fair daughter, (Fionn replied,)
The treacherous snare designed.*

This apparent malice, and ingratitude, of the enchantress, is fully accounted for in the romance. Fionn had ever been the servant and protector, and, of course, the favourite of the fair: he is scarce ever mentioned, without some epithet, expressive of amiable attraction, such as "the majestic—the graceful—the courteous—the generous—the gentle—the smiling—the blooming—son of Cumhal." He surpassed his contemporaries as much in the manly beauty, and majestic graces of his countenance and form, as he did in the superior strength of his arm, and the extraordinary endowments of his mind.

Miluachra, and Áine, the two fair daughters of Gullion Cualgne, of the Danaanian race, saw, and fell in love with him. Miluachra was jealous of her sister's charms; and hearing her, one day, take an oath, that she would never marry any man whose hair was grey, she determined, if possible, to make this rash vow a bar to her union with Fionn. She assembled her friends of the Tuatha-de-Danaan; and, by the power of their enchantments, they called forth a magical lake, on the side of Slieve Gullion, which had the property of rendering any person grey-headed, who should enter the waters thereof. This done, she assumed the form of a beautiful doe, and appeared to Fionn, as already related: then followed the chase; but the romance gives only three days and nights to the destruction of the enchantress's cave; the poem gives eight. Also, in the romance, the magical cup, which restored our hero to his former

shape, endowed him, at the same time, with added wisdom, and knowledge. His hair, however, remained grey; but the enchantress, after acknowledging, in much confusion and terror, the reason of the trick she had played him, offered to restore that also: this offer, we are told, he declined, choosing to continue grey; but the reason of his refusal does not appear.

*52. But Gullion dearly shall abide
Her dark and treacherous art*

Her name, as we have seen, was Miluachra, though she is here called Gullion, as being daughter to the Enchantress Gullion.

*53. Then our stout shields with thongs we bound,
Our hapless King to bear.*

This passage seems to throw some light on the size of the Irish shield. It is spoken of in the plural number here, by which it should seem, that it must have been the target; for, otherwise, one alone would have been sufficient to have borne Fionn from the field.

MOIRA BORB: A POEM

Advertisement.

The original of this poem is in the hands of Maurice Gorman: there is also another copy in Mr. Walker's collection, but not altogether so perfect as the one from which this translation has been made. Neither of these copies are dated, nor can we discover the author. Like most of the Fenian poems, it is ascribed to Oisín; but, though it may, possibly, have originated with him, it has certainly assumed, since that period, a different form from any that he could have given it. The poetry, indeed, breathes all the spirit of the Fenian bard; but the language is evidently not earlier than that of the middle ages.

The Poem

A tale of old,—of Fenian deeds I sing:
Of Erin's mighty hosts, the mighty King!
Great Cumhal's son the lofty strain shall swell,
And on his fame the light of song shall dwell.

Oft have I seen his arm destruction wield;
Oft, with its deadly prowess, sweep the field!
Then did the world his matchless deeds proclaim,
And my ear drank the music of his fame.

Once, while the careless day to sport we gave,
Where fierce Mac-Bovar rolls his headlong wave,^{<1>}
With deafning clamour pours upon the plain,
Foams o'er his echoing banks, and seeks the main.

Careless we ranged along the sounding shore,
And heard the tumbling of the torrent's roar;
Thin was our host, no thought of danger nigh,
When the near ocean caught our roving eye.

A white-sailed boat, that swiftly sought the shore,
On its light plank, a lovely female bore;
To meet our host her rapid course was bent,
And much we questioned on this strange event.

Fifty brave chiefs, around their braver King.—
Ah, why to mind, their deeds, their glories bring!
Since anguish must on bleeding memory wait,
Comparing former fame with present fate.

Alas! with them is quenched the hero's flame,
And glory, since, is but an empty name!
Oh, after them, 'tis Misery's dire decree
The chiefs of these degenerate days to see.

Oh, lost companions! Once your mighty sway
Made the proud princes of the earth obey;
Your conquering powers through every region led,
And wide around victorious triumphs spread!

But to my tale.—Our wondering chiefs arose,
To see the bark its beauteous freight disclose:
Swift glanced its course through the divided wave,
And the near stream a ready harbour gave.

As morn from ocean lifts her lovey light,
Fresh from the wave, with gentle splendours bright;
So rose the maid, as she approached the shore,
And her light bark to land its burden bore.

Decked by soft Love with sweet attractive grace,
And all the charms of mind-illumined face;
Before our host the beauteous stranger bowed,
And, thrown to earth, her eyes their glories shroud.

Her soft salute returned, with courteous air,
Fionn, by the hand of snow, conducts the fair.
Upon his left, the valiant Goll was placed,
And on his right, her seat the stranger graced.

And, oh, to tell the charms her form arrayed!
The winning sweetness that her face displayed!
On her alone we could or think, or gaze,
And our rapt souls were lost in sweet amaze!

"Soft Mariner!" (the son of Cumhal cried,)
"What chance has torn thee from protection's side?
Why comest thou here, and from what happy earth?
And whose the noble race that gave thee birth?"

"Truth, O great chief! thy artless story frames:
A mighty King my filial duty claims.<2>
But princely birth no safety could bestow;
And, royal as I am, I fly from woe.

"Long have I looked that mighty arm to see,
Which is alone of force to set me free:
To Erin's far famed chief for aid I fly,
And on that aid my trembling hopes rely."

"Say, wherefore, loveliest! art thou thus distressed?
Whom dost thou fly—by whom art thou oppressed?
Why dost thou seek me, o'er the rolling sea,
And from what peril shall I set thee free?"

"And art thou, then, that generous son of fame,
Whose aid the wretched, and the helpless claim?
O then, to me that needful aid extend!
And, oh, thy strength to guard my weakness lend!"

With soothing speech, the pitying King replied,
"Fear not, sweet maid! Thy cause to me confide.
Speak but thy sorrows! Whom dost thou accuse?
Who persecutes thee, fair one?—who pursues?"

"O! I am followed o'er the rolling wave!
O! mighty Fionn! Thy trembling suppliant save!
The son of Sora's King with wrath pursues,<3>
The chief of Spears, whose arm the host subdues!

"Dark Moira Borb is his tremendous name,
And wide o'er earth extends his dreadful fame!
From him I fly, with these unhappy charms,
To shun the horror of his hateful arms!

"To one delay his sullen soul agreed,
Nor can he from his promise now recede;
He will not force me to become his bride,
Until thy power shall in my cause be tried."

Then spoke my Oscar, Erin's lovely boast,
Pride of her fame, and glory of her host!
With generous zeal his youthful bosom glowed;
His fervent speech with rapid ardour flowed.

"Fear not, (he cried) no power shall force thee hence;
My arm, my life, O maid! is thy defence!
No hateful union shall thy vows compel,
Nor shalt thou with the dreadful Sora dwell!"

Then, by his side, the son of Morna rose;
Each champion equal to an host of foes!
Proudly they strode, exulting in their might,
The fierce, triumphant Deities of fight!

Before the host they stood, in arms arrayed,
To guard, from her approaching foe, the maid;
For now, swift riding on the subject wave,
A wondrous chief to sight his terrors gave!

In the same path the princess took, he came,
And more than human seemed his monstrous frame;
A magic steed its giant burden bore,
And swiftly gained upon the trembling shore!

Fierce did he seem, as one in fight renowned;
Dark on his head a gloomy helmet frowned:
Embossed with art, he held a mighty shield,
And well his arm its ponderous orb could wield!

Two spears of victory, on its front engraved,
Stood threatening, as if every foe they braved!
Never our eyes had such a sight beheld,
Nor ever chief so dreadfully excelled!

His heavy sword, of more than monstrous size,
Next struck with wonder our admiring eyes;
When, bending forward, from his mighty thigh
He drew, and waved its massy weight on high!

Of princely sway the cloudy champion seemed,
And, terror from his eye imperial streamed!
A soul of fire was in his features seen,
In his proud port, and his impetuous mien!

His wondrous steed was like the torrent's force;
White as its foam, and, rapid as its course!
Proud, the defier of our host he bore,
And sprung with fury to the hostile shore.

A sight like this had never met our eyes,
Or struck our senses with a like surprize;
To see a steed thus coursing on the wave;
And his fierce rider thus the ocean brave!

My King, whose arm would every peril dare,
Then calm demanded of the trembling fair,
"Is this the chief of whom thy terror spoke,
Against whose power thou didst our aid invoke?"

"O that is he! that is my deadly foe!
Too well, alas! his dreadful face I know!
O Cumhal's generous son! I grieve for thee,
Against thy host that fatal arm to see!

"He comes! he comes to tear his victim hence!
No power, alas, can now be my defence!
No force, no courage can that sword abide,
And vainly will your generous aid be tried!"

While thus to Cumhal's noble son she spoke,
Fierce through the host, the foreign champion broke!
Glowing with rage, in conscious might arrayed,
Forward he rushed, and seized the trembling maid!

Swift flew the spear of Morna's wrathful son,
And to the foe unerring passage won:
Through his pierced shield the aim its fury guides,
Rends its proud bosses, and its orb divides.

Impatient Oscar glowed with ardent fire
With raging scorn, and with indignant ire;
And, darting fate from his impetuous hand,
He stretched the dying courser on the strand!

Unhorsed, and furious for his wounded steed,
And breathing tenfold vengeance for the deed;
With wrath augmented the fierce champion burned,
And mad with rage, on his assailants tuned.

Dauntless he stood, with haughty ire Inflamed,
And loud defiance to our host proclaimed;
Against us all his single arm he raised,
While in his hand the dreadful falchion blazed!

Reliques of Irish Poetry

Enraged, our hosts the proud defiance hear,
And rush to vengeance with a swift career.
Fionn and myself alone our arms withhold,
And wait to see the strange event unfold.

When lo! amazement to our wondering eyes;
In vain each spear with rapid fury flies!
In vain with might, the nearer swords assail,
No spears can wound, no weapons can prevail.

Those chiefs, who every foe till then excelled,
Foiled by his force, his single arm repelled.
Low on the blood-stained field with shame they lay,
Bound by his hand, and victims of his sway!

Great Flan Mac-Morna fell beneath his sword
By valour, friendship, and by song deplored!
Of all the champions who his arm sustained,
Not one unwounded on the field remained.

Had not our chiefs been all well armed for fight,
They all had sunk beneath his matchless might!
Or had each, singly, met his dreadful force,
Each, in his turn, had fall'n a mangled corse!

Now Goll's brave bosom burns with frantic ire,
And terror flashes from his eyes of fire!
Rending in wrath, he springs upon the foe!
High waves his sword, and fierce descends its blow!

Dire as when fighting elements engage,
Such is the war the dreadful champions wage!
Whoever had that fatal field beheld,
He would have thought all human force excelled.

Loud was the clash of arms that streamed with gore;
And deep the wounds each dauntless bosom bore!
Broke are their spears, and rent each massy shield,
And steel, and blood bestrew the deathful field.

Never again shall two such chiefs contend,
Nor ever courage, as did theirs, transcend!
So great the havoc of each deadly blade!
So great the force each valiant arm displayed!

At length they slacked the fury of the fight,
And vanquished Sora owned superior might:
No more he could the sword of Goll sustain,
But gashed with wounds, he sunk upon the plain.

Woe was the day in which that strife arose,
And dyed with blood the harbour of his foes!
Woe to the champions of that lovely dame,
Woe to the land to which her beauty came!

The valiant Sora by the stream we laid,
And while his last and narrow house we made,
We on each finger placed a glitt'ring ring,
To grace the foe, in honour of our King.<5>

Thus fell the foreign champion on our coast,
And gave a dear-bought conquest to our host.
The royal maid our courtesy embraced,
And a whole year the Fenian palace graced.

Six following months, beneath the leech's hand,
The wounds of Goll our constant care demand:
The valiant Goll, unvanquished in the fight,
Goll of the weapons of resistless might.

With Fionn, the chief of princely cheer, he lay,
Whose friendly 'tendance eased the tedious day,
Fionn, who was ever to the brave a friend,
Fionn, who the weak would evermore defend!<6>

But why of heroes should I now relate?
Changed is my form, and changed is my estate!
These altered looks, with age and sorrow pale,
Should warn to cease from the heroic tale!

££

NOTES ON THE POEM OF MOIRA BORB

1. *Where fierce Mac-Bovar rolls his headlong wave.*

The words of the original are *Eas ruadh mac bobhair na mhoill*, literally, the fiercely rushing cataract, deafening son of the leap! This is a very beautiful fall of the river Erne, at Ballyshannon, and the principal salmon leap in Ireland. The scenery is extremely picturesque; a bold coast of perpendicular rocks is covered to the very edge with the richest verdure, and projects, in unequal promontories, as it opens to the sea. This salmon leap is let at £400 a year.

2. *A mighty King my filial duty claims.*

This passage is not translated literally, as it was difficult to know what turn to give it: the words in Irish are *Is mé inghean an righ fo thuinn* "I am the daughter of the King under Waves:" or it may be rendered, King of Waves, or King of *Tonn*), (in the genitive) *Tuinn*). Literally, a *wave*; but it may also mean some country, anciently called by that name; or possibly it may be a metaphorical phrase, to imply either an island, or some of the low countries.

3. *The son of Sora's King with wrath pursues.*

Tradition informs us, that *Moira*, or (as some write it) *Boiry Borb*, was a Lusitanian Prince, of great fame and prowess, but cruel, and extremely fierce, as the word *Borb* (i.e. fierce) implies. This admitted, it follows, of course, that Sora (in the original, Sorcha) must have been, anciently, the Irish name for Portugal.

4. *Woe to the champions of that lovely dame, Woe to the land to which her beauty came.*

It is probable, that this passage alludes to some subsequent consequences of the death of Moira Borb.

5. *We on each finger placed a glittering ring,
To grace the foe, in honour of our King.*

It has not been found that any particular custom of antiquity is here alluded to: the passage is translated literally, and it appears that, by placing rings on the fingers of Moira Borb, they meant to show the generosity of their chief, in honouring a gallant foe.

6. *With Fionn, the chief of princely cheer, he lay,
Whose friendly 'tendance eased the tedious day,
Fionn, who was ever to the brave a friend,
Fionn, who the weak would evermore defend.*

In the *Buile Oisín* (Rhapsody of Oisín) we find the following beautiful character, and personal description, of this celebrated hero.

*Superior to all warriors, in war,
'Midst stars of glory Fionn appeared a star:
King of mild majesty and numerous bards,
His deeds of kindness brought their own rewards.
His heart the seat of courage and of love,
His mind was fraught with wisdom from above.
Keen to discern the future from the past,
O Fionn, for ever shall thy glories last.—
Bright his blue rolling eyes, and hair of gold,
His cheeks the graces of the rose unfold;
Each female heart received the potent shock,
Of him whose breast was as the chalky rock:
Fame thus to thee her brightest page affords,—
Mild son of Morna; King of glittering swords!*

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE TO THE WAR ODE.

The military Odes of the ancient Celtae have been noticed by numberless historians; nothing amongst those people was left unsung: Poetry was their darling science, and they introduced it into every scene, and suited it to every occasion. One of the duties of the bard was, to attend his chief to battle, and there exert his poetic powers, according to the fluctuations of victory, and the fortune of the fight. This fact is well attested by ancient Greek and Roman writers; also, Du Cange, Mezeray, and many other antiquaries and historians affirm, that this custom continued amongst the Gauls, many centuries after their dereliction by the Romans. Even at the battle of Hastings, the troops of Normandy were accompanied by a bard, animating them to conquest with warlike odes. The great number of Troubadours retained by the French noblesse, in the different invasions of the Holy Land, prove how well this custom was supported by civilized nations of the middle ages.

But it will, no doubt, appear singular, that, while France and Germany suffered no ruin or subversion of their states, from that epoch, yet so little care has been taken, by their antiquaries, for the preservation of ancient documents, that it is affirmed, there is not one of these Odes now extant amongst them; while Ireland, harassed by war and rapine; and her records plundered by foreign invaders, and envious policy,—yet still has preserved a number of these original productions, which throw many rays of light on the obscurest periods of Celtic antiquity.

But the war ode was not peculiar to the Celtae alone; Scandinavia, too, sent her scalds to battle, and her chiefs were animated by their military songs; although indeed many centuries later than the period in which we find our bards possessed of this office in Ireland. "Hacon, Earl of Norway," (says Mons. Mallet) "had five celebrated poets along with him in that famous battle of which I have been speaking, when the warriors of Joms-bourg were defeated; and history records that they sung each an Ode, to animate the soldiers, before they engaged."<1>

We see here a remarkable difference between the Scandinavian and Celtic poet, in the execution of this military duty: the ode of the scald was composed for the purpose, and sung before the engagement: while the Irish bard, glowing with the joint enthusiasm of the poet, and the warrior, frequently rushed amidst the ranks, and following his chief through all the fury of the fight, continued, to the last, those sublime and elevating strains, which, inspired by the sight of heroic valour, and called forth by, and suited to the instant occasion, wrought up courage to a pitch of frenzy, and taught the warrior to triumph even in the pangs of death. But it was only when victory was doubtful, and occasion required the bards to exert all their powers, that we find them thus rushing through the carnage of the field. At other times "marching at the head of the armies, arrayed in white flowing robes, harps glittering in their hands, and their persons surrounded with *orfidigh*, or instrumental musicians; while the battle raged, they stood apart, and watched in security (for their persons were held sacred) every action of the chief, in order to glean subjects for their lays.<2>"

Indeed, the enthusiastic starts of passion; the broken, unconnected, and irregular wildness of those Odes which have escaped the wreck of ancient literature in this kingdom, sufficiently and incontestibly point out their true originality to every *candid* reader. It need not here be objected, that the character in which we find the copies now extant of these Odes, is different from that which was in use among the

pagan Irish, and that the language of them, also, is too intelligible to be referred to so remote an era. With the beauties of these singular compositions, every Irish reader, of every age, must have been eager to acquaint himself; and when acquainted with them, to communicate to others the knowledge, and the pleasure they afforded him: of course, when a word became too obsolete to be generally understood, it was changed for one more modern; and, for the same reason, when the ancient character was exploded, every ensuing copy of these Odes was written in the character of the times. Indeed there are still a sufficient number of obsolete words among them, to make the language extremely difficult; but, I conceive that it is in the structure of the compositions, and the spirit which they breathe, rather than in a few unintelligible epithets, that we are to look for the marks of their antiquity.

The copies from which the two following Odes are translated, I procured from Maurice Gorman; there is also a copy of them in the collection of Mr. O'Halloran of Limerick, and another, as I am informed, in the College collection. An accomplished proficient in the learning and antiquities of this country, whose name (had I permission) I should be proud to reveal, made the following elegant, and spirited remarks, on a literal translation of the first of these Odes, upon which I had requested his judgment.

"It is" (says he) "in my opinion, a very fine specimen of that kind of poetry, and carries genuine originality on the face of it. It seems not only to have been composed on the occasion, but as if it was actually sung by the bard during the heat of the battle; which supposition is quite consonant with the accounts we have of the ancient Celtic warriors, and the office of their bards. The extreme simplicity of it is no small part of its merit, and has more in it of the true sublime, than all the flowers and images with which a modern poet would have embellished it. Imagination may follow it through all the changes that may be supposed to have attended an obstinate engagement, in which the hero was exerting his valour to the utmost; with his bard standing close at his back, exhorting him to persevere, and giving, as it were, fresh energy and effect to every stroke of his sword."

It may appear strange to see a bard rushing, fearless and unhurt, through the midst of contending warriors; his hand encumbered with the harp, and unprovided with any arms for either defence or attack: but the Character of the *File* was held so sacred amongst the ancient Celts, that they wanted no other defence, and were so protected and revered by foes, as well as friends, that even "the very whirl and rage of fight" respected the person of the bard.

Irish history, indeed, affords one, and but one, instance of a sort of sacrilege offered to the life of a bard; the circumstances, however, which accompany the fact, as well as the manner in which it is told, present us with the strongest idea of the horror that so unusual a crime then excited. The *Leabhar Leacain* (or Book of Sligo) has thus preserved the relation: Fierce wars were carried on, about the middle of the fourth century, between Eochaidh, Monarch of Ireland, and Eana, the King of Leinster. Cetmathach, the Monarch's laureate, had satirised so severely the enemy of his King, as to provoke the bitterest resentment of Eana, who vowed unsparing revenge. In the battle of Cruachan, the Monarch was defeated; and Cetmathach, pursued by the furious King of Leinster, fled for safety amidst the troops of the victor, who, though the enemies of Eochaidh, would have protected his bard: but the brutal Eana was not to be appeased, and the life of the laureate fell a sacrifice to his art. Eana, for this atrocious deed, was ever after branded with the opprobrious name of

Ceann-salach, (foul, or dishonourable head.) It has descended down, through his immediate posterity, to the present day; numbers of his race, of the name of *Cin* or *Kinsella*, now existing in Ireland.

Of the first of the following Odes, Oscar, the son of Oisín, is the hero, but we are not told who the bard was that composed it. We have, however, sufficient reason to conclude, that it was sung by Fergus, the uncle of Oscar; first, because he was the appointed *ard-file* of the Fianna; and also because that, in an ancient poem on the battle of Gabhra, he is introduced as exhorting the troops, on that occasion, to the fight, surrounded by his *orfidigh*, or band of musicians.

*Bhí Feargus File
Agus orfideach na bhflatha,
Dar mbrosdadh 'san nionghuin,
Dol dionsoigh an chatha*

[Fergus the bard was there
And the prince's musicians,
To encourage them to charge into battle.]

Mr. Walker, in his *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, takes particular notice of Fergus. "Oisín" (says he) "was not Fionn's chief bard, or *ollamh-re-dán*. This honourable station was filled by Fergus *Fibheoil*, (of the sweet lips) another son of the great Fenian commander; a bard on whom succeeding poets have bestowed almost as many epithets, as Homer has given to his Jupiter. In several poems, still extant, he is called Fergus *Fir-ghlic*, (the truly ingenious;) *Fathach*, (superior in knowledge;) *Focal-ghear*, (skilled in the choice of words) &c. &c. So persuasive was his eloquence, that, united with his rank, it acquired him an almost universal ascendancy.

"But it was in the field of battle that Fergus' eloquence proved of real utility. In a fine heroic poem^{<3>} called the *Cath Fionn-Tragha* (The Battle of Ventry,) Fionn is often represented as calling on Fergus, to animate the drooping valour of his officers, which the bard never fails to do, effectually. In this battle, Oisín was beginning to yield in single combat; which being observed by Fergus, he addressed some encouraging strains to him, in a loud voice: these were heard by Oisín, and his foe fell beneath his sword.^{<4>}

"Several admirable poems, attributed to Fergus, are still extant; *Dargo*,^{<5>} a poem, written on occasion of a foreign prince of that name invading Ireland. Dargo encountered the Fianna, and was slain by Goll, the son of Morna. *Cath Gabhra* (the battle of Gabhra.) This battle was fought by the Fianna against Cairbre, the monarch of Ireland, whose aim in provoking it, was to suppress the formidable power of that legion: Cairbre's life fell a sacrifice to this bold attempt.

"These poems abound with all the imagery, fire, and glowing description of the ancient Gaelic, and justify the praises bestowed on Fergus. Each poem concludes with Fergus's attestation of his being the author. Besides these, there are, *A Panegyric on Goll, the son of Morna*,^{<6>} and another on Oscar^{<7>} In the latter, the poet has interwoven an animating harangue to the hero, who is the subject of it, in the battle of Gabhra."

In most of the Fenian poems that I have seen, Fergus is honourably noticed, both for his poetical powers, and the peculiar sweetness of his temper and disposition: thus in *The Chase*,

Reliques of Irish Poetry

Did Fergus live, again to sing,
As erst, the Fianna's fame!

Also in *Magnus*,

Mild Fergus then, his errand done,
Returned with wonted grace;
His mind, like the unchanging sun,
Still beaming in his face."

The Annals of Innisfallen, and other ancient records and poems, inform us, that the battle of Gabhra was fought in the year of our Lord 296. The cause of this battle (as well as I can collect from various accounts) was pretty nearly as follows:— The celebrated body of the Fianna had grown to a formidable degree of power. Conscious of the defence they afforded their country, and the glory they reflected upon it, they became overweening and insolent, esteeming too highly of their merits, and too meanly of their rewards; and this the more, as they perceived the Monarch disposed to slight their services, and envy their fame. It would be tedious here to relate the various causes assigned by different writers for the discontents which occasioned this battle: historians, in general, lay the chief blame upon the Fianna; and the poets, taking part with their favourite heroes, cast the whole odium upon Cairbre, then Monarch of Ireland. The fault most likely was mutual, and both parties severely suffered for it. Cairbre himself was killed in the action, and a dreadful slaughter ensued among his troops; but those of the Fianna were almost totally destroyed; for, relying upon that valour which they fondly deemed invincible, they rushed into the field against odds, that madness alone would have encountered. In an ancient poem upon this subject, Oisín, relating the events of the battle to St. Patrick, tells him, that "few in number were the Fianna, on that fatal day, opposed to the united forces of the kingdom, headed by their Monarch! Fionn and his heroes were not there to assist them; they were absent on a Roman expedition." Oscar, the grandson of Fionn, commanded the little body that remained, and led them on to the attack; fired with the hope of increasing glory, and wrought up to a frenzy of valour, by the animated exhortations of his bard, he performed prodigies, he slew numbers, and Cairbre himself at length fell by his hand. Victory then seemed to declare for the Fianna, till Oscar, covered with wounds, sunk upon the field. He died; with him died the hopes of his adherents. And epic story gives no further account of the few who survived the field.

Several poems have been composed upon the subject of this battle. I have never yet seen that one which is said to have been written by Fergus; but I have now before me two that bear the name of Oisín, and are possessed of considerable merit: I would gladly, with the following Ode, have given a translation of one of the many poems which this celebrated battle gave rise to; but as I am told there are more perfect copies extant, than those in my possession, I am unwilling to give an inferior one to the public.

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NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

1. *North Antiq.* vol. i. p. 386. See Torf. Bartholin, p. 172, who produces other instances to the same purpose; particularly that of Olave, king of Norway, who placed three of his scalds about him to be eyewitnesses of his exploits: these bards composed, each of them, a song upon the spot, which Bartholin has printed, accompanied with a

Latin version.

Other songs of the same kind may be found in the same author.

Here is one instance wherein we find a Scandinavian war ode composed (as it appears) either during, or after the engagement; but their established custom was, to sing the ode (as is related above) before the battle joined.

2. Walker's *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, p. 10.

3. This composition is not written in verse, but it does indeed abound with all the ornaments of poetry.

4. O'Halloran's *Hist. Irel.* Vol. i. p. 275.

5. A copy of this poem is now in my possession, and it glows with all the fire of genius; but at the same time is debased by such absurd impossibilities, that, as I could not venture to omit any part of the piece, I did not think it would answer for translation. From the character given of this poem, I am tempted to suppose that my copy is a corrupt and bad one; perhaps a future day may enable me to procure a better.

6. See the second War Ode in this collection.

7. This I suppose is the same with the original of the following Ode.

8. Probably this extreme gentleness of Fergus' temper, was the reason why he was chosen *Ard-File*, or chief poet to the Fianna, though his brother Oisín was so eminently distinguished for his poetical talents. Oisín, most likely, would not have accepted of the laureatship: his high and martial spirit would not be confined to the duties of that station, as they would often have necessarily withheld him from mixing in the combat, and taking a warrior's share in the victory. The character of Fergus was much more adapted than that of Oisín, to fill the place he held, even supposing the poetic powers of Oisín superior to those of his brother.—Oisín, like the Caractatus of the inimitable Mason, felt too much of

—— the hot tide
That flushes crimson on the conscious cheek
Of him who burns for glory!"

And he would never have borne to hold the harp, in battle, while able to wield a sword.

9. *The Book of Howth* affirms, that they were *all* destroyed, Oisín excepted; and that he lived till the arrival of St. Patrick, to whom he related the exploits of the Fianna.

WAR ODE TO OSCAR.
THE SON OF OISÍN, IN THE FRONT OF THE BATTLE OF
GABHRA

RISE, might of Erin! rise!<1>
O! Oscar, of the generous soul!
Now, on the foe's astonished eyes,
Let thy proud ensigns wave dismay!
Now let the thunder of thy battle roll,
And bear the palm of strength and victory away!

Son of the sire, whose stroke is fate,<2>
Be thou in might supreme!
Let conquest on thy arm await,
In each conflicting hour!
Slight let the force of adverse numbers seem,
Till, o'er their prostrate ranks, thy shouting squadrons pour!

O hear the voice of lofty song!
Obey the bard!
Stop—stop M'Garaidh! check his pride,<3>
And rush resistless on each regal foe!
Thin their proud ranks, and give the smoking tide
Of hostile blood to flow!

Mark where Mac-Cormac pours along!—<4>
Rush on—retard
His haughty progress!—let thy might
Rise, in the deathful fight,
O'er thy prime foe supreme,
And let the stream
Of valour flow,
Until thy brandished sword
Shall humble every haughty foe,
And justice be restored.<5>

Son of the King of spotless fame,
Whose actions fill the world!<6>
Like his, thy story and thy name
Shall fire heroic song,
And, with the prowess of this day, the lofty strain prolong!
Shall tell how oft, in Gabhra's plain,
Thy dreadful spear was hurled:
How high it heaped the field with slain,
How wide its carnage spread,
Till gorged upon the human feast, the gluttoned ravens fed.<7>

Resistless as the spirit of the, night,
In storms and terrors dressed,

Withering the force of every hostile breast,
Rush on the ranks of fight!
Youth of fierce deeds, and noble soul!
Rend—scatter wide the foe!
Swift forward rush, and lay the waving pride
Of you high ensigns low!
Thine be the battle! Thine the sway!
On—on to Cairbre hew thy conquering way,
And let thy deathful arm dash safety from his side!

As the proud wave, on whose broad back
The storm its burden heaves,<8>
Drives on the scattered wreck
Its ruin leaves;
So let thy sweeping progress roll,
Fierce, resistless, rapid, strong,
Pour, like the billow of the flood, o'erwhelming might along!

From king to king, let death thy steps await,<9>
Thou messenger of fate,
Whose awful mandate thou art chosen to bear:
Take no vain truce, no respite yield,
Till thine be the contested field;
O thou, of championed fame the royal heir!
Pierce the proud squadrons of the foe,
And o'er their slaughtered heaps triumphant rise!
Oh, in fierce charms, and lovely might arrayed!
Bright, in the front of battle, wave thy blade!
Oh, let thy fury rise upon my voice!
Rush on, and glorying in thy strength rejoice!
Mark where yon bloody ensign flies!
Rush!—seize it!—lay its haughty triumphs low!<10>

Wide around thy carnage spread!
Heavy be the heaps of dead!
Roll on thy rapid might,
Thou roaring stream of prowess in the fight!
What though Fionn be distant far,
Art thou not *thyself* a war?<11>
Victory shall be all thy own,
And this day's glory thine, and thine alone!
Be thou the foremost of thy race in fame!
So shall the bard exalt thy deathless name!
So shall thy sword, supreme o'er numbers, rise,
And vanquished Tamor's groans ascend the skies!<12>

Though unequal be the fight,
Though unnumbered be the foe,<13>
No thought on fear, or on defeat bestow,
For conquest waits to crown thy cause,
and thy successful might!
Rush, therefore, on, amid the battle's rage,

Where fierce contending kings engage,
And powerless lay thy proud opponents low!

O lovely warrior! Form of grace,
Be not dismayed!<14>
Friend of the bards! Think on thy valiant race!
O thou whom none in vain implore,
Whose soul by fear was never swayed,
Now let the battle round thy ensigns roar!

Wide the vengeful ruin spread!
Heap the groaning field with dead!
Furious be thy grinding sword,
Death with every stroke descend!
Thou to whose fame earth can no match afford;
That fame which shall thro' time, as thro' the world, extend!

Shower thy might upon the foe!
Lay their pride, in Gabhra, low!
Thine be the sway of this contested field!
To thee for aid the Fianna fly;<15>
On that brave arm thy country's hopes rely,
From every foe thy native land to shield!

Aspect of beauty! pride of praise!
Summit of heroic fame!
O theme of Erin! youth of matchless deeds!
Think on thy wrongs! now, now let vengeance raise
Thy valiant arm! And let destruction flame,
Till low beneath thy sword each chief of Ulster lies!
O prince of numerous hosts, and bounding steeds!
Raise thy red shield, with tenfold force endued!
Forsake not the famed path thy fathers have pursued!<16>
But let, with theirs, thy equal honours rise!

Hark!—Anguish groans!—the battle bleeds
Before thy spear!—its flight is death!—
Now, o'er the heath,
The foe recedes!
And wide the hostile crimson flows!
See how it dyes thy deathful blade!
See, in dismay, each routed squadron flies!
Now!—now thy havoc thins the ranks of fight,
And scatters o'er the field thy foes!
O still be thy increasing force displayed!
Slack not the noble ardour of thy might!
Pursue—pursue with death their flight!
Rise, arm of Erin!—Rise!

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NOTES ON THE WAR ODE TO OSCAR.

1. *Rise, might of Erin, rise!*

Eirighe! literally, *arise!*—It means here, *rouse thyself! exert all thy powers!*

2. *Son of the sire, whose stroke is fate*

Oisín, the father of Oscar, was as much celebrated for his valour, as for his poetical talents.

3. *Stop—stop M'Garaidh.*

This Son of Garaidh was then King of Connaught, and he led a chosen band to the battle of Gabhra.

4. *Mark where Mac-Cormac pours along!*

Cairbre, Monarch of Ireland; he was son to Cormac, the preceding monarch, and it was in his quarrel that the allied Princes were assembled, in this day's battle, against the little band of the Fianna. He was also nearly related to the chiefs of the party he opposed, his sister having been the wife of Fionn Mac-Cumhal.

5. *Shall humble every haughty foe,
And justice be restored.*

Injustice was the complaint, and the cause of quarrel, assigned both by the King's forces, and the Fianna: *The Book of Howth* has preserved a speech of Oscar's on this occasion; probably just as authentic as most other speeches of the kind, that history gravely tells us have been spoken at such times. It sets forth the gross injustice and ingratitude with which they had been treated by the monarch; and that they only fought to maintain those privileges which they had honourably won, and which were granted to their ancestors by those faithless Princes, now in arms against them. That they and their predecessors had been the guardians of the nation, protecting its harbours, and repelling its invaders; and also increasing its glory by the splendour of foreign conquests, and the rich trophies of foreign tributes to its power; but that now, after so many battles fought, and so many honours and advantages derived to the monarch by their valour, he wished to acquit himself of the obligation, by putting his benefactors to the sword, or banishing them for ever from the land.

6. *Son of the King of spotless fame,
Whose actions fill the world!*

It is uncertain, here, *what* king the poet means, whether the father, or the grandfather of his hero; either of them might have been called *King* by the bard, as the word *Righ* is frequently made use for any great commander, or military sovereign; and Oscar might have been styled son to either, because Mac (son) signifies also grandson, and often only a descendant.

7. *Shall tell how oft, in Gabhra's plain
Thy dreadful spear was hurled:
How high it heaped the field with slain,
how wide its carnage spread,*

Till gorged upon the human feast, the gluttoned ravens fed.

The poets tell us of an incredible slaughter, made in this battle, by the sword of Oscar: the brave and fierce Mac-Garaidh, King of Connaught, of the tribe of Monti, and Cairbre, Monarch of Ireland, besides numbers of inferior chieftains, fell by his single arm.

8. *As the proud wave, on whose broad back
The storm its burden heaves.*

It is impossible that the utmost stretch of human imagination and genius could start an image of greater sublimity than this! Had Fergus never given any further proof of his talents than what is exhibited in the ode now before us, this stanza alone had been sufficient to have rendered his name immortal!

9. *From king to king, let death thy steps await.*

The monarch, and the provincial kings, who were united against the Fianna.

10. *Mark where yon bloody ensign flies!
Rush!—seize it!—lay its haughty triumphs low!*

The taking of the enemy's standard was, we find, an object of great importance; for we see the bard repeatedly point it out in the battle, and urge his hero to the capture of it. The striking of a standard among the Irish troops, was, in general; a token of defeat. See O'Halloran: "The duty of the hereditary standard-bearer was, to preserve the royal banner; to be amongst the foremost of the troops in action, and in the rear on a retreat; for the troops had ever their eye on the standard, and when the prince was killed (for their princes seldom survived a defeat) the standard was struck, which was the signal for a retreat. Thus, had Oscar been able to seize upon the enemy's banner, they might have mistaken it disappearing for the usual signal, and so been thrown into confusion.

11. *What though Fionn be distant far,
Art not thou thyself a war?*

Fionn, at the time of this battle, was absent on a Roman expedition, and Cairbre took advantage of this circumstance, to hasten the issue of the contest. A beautiful and most affecting poem (ascribed to Oisín) on this subject, informs us, that Fionn, with his troops, returned on the eve of the battle, and that he arrived in just time enough to take a last adieu of his dying grandson. Their meeting is described, and is deeply pathetic. The poet also adds, that "Fionn never after was known to smile: peace, after that, had no sweets, nor war any triumphs, that could restore joy to his breast, or raise one wish for ambition or for glory, even though the empire of Heaven itself were to be won by his arm, or were offered to his acceptance!"

12. *And vanguarded Tensor's groans ascend the skies!*

Tamor, or Teamor, the royal seat of the Monarch of Ireland "Its chief court" (says O'Connor) "was three hundred feet in length, thirty in height, and fifty in breadth. It had access by fourteen doors, which opened on their several apartments, fitted up for the kings and deputies of each province: the royal seat was erected in the middle of the house, where the monarch sat in state, with his *asionn*, or imperial cap, on his head. The kings of the two Munsters took their seats on his left; those of Ulster, on his right; the king of Leinster, in his front; and the king of Connaught, together with the *Ollamhain* ["Learned Counsellors"]; behind the throne. The particular reasons for such a disposition are not set down in any MSS. come to our hands.

"This high court of convention was surrounded by four other large houses, fitted up for the lodging and accommodation of the several provincial kings and deputies, during the session; close to these were other houses; one for state prisoners, another for *files*, and another for the princesses, and the women who attended at court.

"Teamor was the royal seat of the kings of Ireland, and the principal court of legislation, from the days of Ollamh Fodla, down to the reign of Dermot Mac Cervaille; so that the *Feis* ["festival"] of Teamor continued, from time to time, through

a series of more than eleven hundred years."—*Dissertations on the Hist. of Ireland*, p. 117, 3rd edit.

The fear of extending this note to too great a length, has obliged me, though reluctantly, to give only extracts from Mr. O'Connor's description. For a more enlarged account of this celebrated place, see *Collectanea*, vol. i.

13. *Though unequal be the fight,
Though unnumbered be the foe.*

The Fianna were greatly out-numbered in this battle. In another poem on the subject, attributed to Oisín, and addressed to St. Patrick, we find this passage. There was Cairbre Liffecar, at the head of Erin's mighty hosts, marching against our forces, to the field of Gabhra, the battle of fatal strokes! There was also Mac Garaidh, and a thousand champions, assembled against the powers of my son:—nine battalions also from Ulster, and the Munster troops, against our Leinster legion; besides the king of Connaught, and his valiant bands, who joined with the monarch against us, in that day's engagement. Unfair and unequal was that division of our forces, for small was the band of the Fianna."

14. *O lovely warrior! Form of grace,
Be not dismayed!*

Here it appears that Oscar begins for a moment to yield; but quickly after, animated and renovated by the exhortations of his bard, we find him again dealing death around.

15. *To thee for aid the Fianna fly.*

The Irish, in general, were frequently called *Fenians*, or *Phenians*, from their great ancestor Phenius Farsa, or, perhaps, in allusion to their Phoenician descent. But the Leinster legions proudly arrogated that name entirely to themselves, and called their celebrated body, exclusively, *Fianna*, or *Fianna Eireann*.

16. *Forsake not the famed path thy fathers have pursued!*

All of the tribe of Boisgne were particularly famed for prowess, and celebrated by our ancient poets.

ODE TO GAUL, THE SON OF MORNA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

To throw light on the subject of the following ode, I have endeavoured, in vain, to procure a copy of the legend of *Bruighean Beag na hAlmhuine*, ["The Smaller Meeting at Almhain"] mentioned in Mr. Walker's *Irish Bards*; in which, he says, is related "the celebrated contention for precedence, between Fionn and Goll, near Fionn's palace at Almhain. The attending bards," (continues he,) "observing the engagement to grow very sharp, were apprehensive of the consequences, and determined, if possible, to cause a cessation of hostilities. To effect this, they shook *The Chain of Silence*, and flung themselves among the ranks, extolling the sweets of peace, and the achievements of the combatants' ancestors. Immediately both parties, laying down their arms, listened, with mute attention, to the harmonious lays of their bards, and in the end rewarded them with precious gifts." <1>

I regret much that I have never seen this legend, and therefore can only conjecture, that the ode before us was composed, or rather recited, extempore, upon the same occasion. There is frequent mention made, in our romances and poems, of a memorable contest between the rival tribes of Morna and Boisgne, of which Goll and Fionn were the leaders; and that, by the mediation of the bards, it was finally concluded in peace: but I have never seen any particular account of the dispute, or description of the combat: nor been able to obtain any further information upon the subject, than the little I have here given to the public.

ODE

High-Minded Goll, whose daring soul
Stoops not to our chief's control! <2>
Champion of the navy's pride!
Mighty ruler of the tide!
Rider of the stormy wave,
Hostile nations to enslave! <3>

Shield of freedom's glorious boast!
Head of her unconquered host!
Ardent son of Morna's might!
Terror of the fields of fight!
Long renowned and dreadful name!
Hero of auspicious fame!
Champion, in our cause to arm!
Tongue, with eloquence to charm!
With depth of sense, and reach of manly thought!
With every grace, and every beauty fraught!

Girt with heroic might,
When glory, and thy country call to arms,
Thou goest to mingle in the loud alarms,
And lead the rage of fight!
Thine, hero! thine the princely sway
Of each conflicting hour;

Thine every bright endowment to display,
The smile of beauty, and the arm of power!
Science, beneath our hero's shade,
Exults, in all her patron's gifts arrayed:
Her chief, the soul of every fighting field!
The arm, — the heart, alike unknown to yield!

Hear, O Fionn! thy people's voice!
Trembling on our hills we plead;<4>
O let our fears to peace incline thy choice!
Divide the spoil, and give the hero's meed<5>
For bright and various is his wide renown,
And war and science weave his glorious crown!

Did all the hosts of all the earth unite,
From pole to pole, from wave to wave,
Exulting in their might:
His is that monarchy of sou!
To fit him for the wide control,
The empire of the brave!

Friend of learning! Mighty name!
Havoc of hosts, and pride of fame!
Fierce as the foaming strength of ocean's rage,
When nature's powers in strife engage,
So does his dreadful progress roll,
And such the force that lifts his soul!

Fear him, chief of Erin's might!
And his foe no longer be;
Sun of honour's sacred light,
Rending storm of death is he!

Fionn of the flowing locks,<6>O hear my voice!
No more with Goll contend!
Be peace, henceforth, thy happy choice,
And gain a valiant friend!

Secure of victory, to the field
His conquering standard goes;
'Tis his the powers of fight to wield,
And woe awaits his foes!

Not to mean insidious art
Does the great name of Goll its terrors owe;<7>
But from a brave undaunted heart
His glories flow!

Stature sublime, and awful mien!<8>
Arm of strength, by valour steeled!
Sword of fate, in battle keen,
Sweeping o'er the deadly field!

Fionn of the dark-brown hair, O hear my voice!
No more with Goll contend!

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Be peace sincere henceforth thy choice,
And gain a valiant friend!

In peace, though unexhausted from his breast
Each gentle virtue flows,
In war, no force his fury can arrest,
And hopeless are his foes.

Leader of the shock of arms,
Loudest in the loud alarms!
Friend of princes, princely friend,
First in bounty to transcend
Patron of the schools' increase! <9>
Sword of war, and shield of peace!

Glory of the fields of fame!
Pride of hosts! Illustrious name!
Strength of power! triumphant might!
Firm maintainer of the fight!
Fierce in the conflicting hour;
Bulwark of the royal power!

O generous charm of all-accomplished love!
Locks of bright redundant shade!
Breast where strength and beauty strove!
White as the hue the chalky cliffs displayed!<10>
To thee glad Erin should her homage pay-
And joy to own thy glorious sway!

Spirit resolute to dare!
Aspect sweet beyond compare,
Bright with inspiring soul! With blooming beauty fair!
Warrior of majestic charms!
High in fame and great in arms!
Well thy daring soul may tower,
Nothing is above thy power!

Hear, O Fionn! My ardent zeal,
While his glories I reveal!
Fierce as ocean's angry wave,<11>
When conflicting tempests rave!
As still, with the encreasing storm,
Increasing ruin clothes his dreadful form,
Such is the chief, o'erwhelming in his force,
Unconquered in his swift, resistless course!

Though in the smiles of blooming grace arrayed,
And bright in beauty's every charm;
Yet think not, therefore, that his soul will bend,
Nor with the chief contend;
For well he knows to wield the glittering blade,
And fatal is his arm!

Bounty in his bosom dwells;
High his soul of courage swells!

Fierce the dreadful war to wage,
Mix in the whirl of fight, and guide the battle's rage!
Wide, wide around triumphant ruin wield,
Roar through the ranks of death, and thunder o'er the field!

Many a chief of mighty sway
Fights beneath his high command;
Marshals his troops in bright array,
And spreads his banners o'er the land.

Champion of unerring aim!
Chosen of Kings, triumphant name!
Bounty's hand, and Wisdom's head,
Valiant arm, and lion soul,
O'er red heaps of slaughtered dead,
Thundering on to Glory's goal!

Pride of Fenian fame, and arms!
Mildness of majestic charms!<12>
Swiftness of the battle's rage!
Theme of the heroic page!

Firm in purpose! Fierce in fight!
Arm of slaughter! Soul of might!
Glory's light! Illustrious name!
Splendour of the paths of fame!
Born bright precedent to yield,
And sweep with death the hostile field!

Leader of sylvan sports: the hound, the horn,
The early melodies of morn!
Love of the fair, and favourite of the muse,<13>
In peace, each peaceful science to diffuse:
Prince of the noble deeds! Accomplished name!
Increasing bounty! Comprehensive fame!

Ardent, bold, unconquered Knight!
Breaker of the bulwark's might!
Chief of war's resistless blade,
With spears of wrath, and arms of death arrayed!
Heroic Goll! Beneath thy princely sway,
The earth might bend, and all her host obey!

Hear, O Goll! The poet's voice!
O be peace thy generous choice!
Yield thee to the bard's desire!
Calm the terrors of thine ire!
Cease we here our mutual strife;
And peaceful be our future life!

GAUL.

I yield, O Fergus! To thy mild desire;
Thy words, O bard! Are sweet;
Thy wish I freely meet;

And bid my wrath expire.
No more to discontent a prey,
I give to peace the future day:
To thee my soul I bend,
O guileless friend!<14>
The accents of whose glowing lip well know that soul to sway.

BARD.

O swift in honour's course! thou generous name!
Illustrious chief, of never-dying fame!

££

NOTES ON THE WAR ODE TO GAUL.

1. *Hist. Mem. Irish Bards*, p. 44. The legend here alluded to is not in the possession of Mr. Walker; if it was, his politeness and public spirit would not have suffered him to refuse it.

2. *High-minded Goll, whose daring soul
Stoops not to our chief's control.*

Fionn Mac-Cumhal, then general of the Irish militia.

3. *Champion of the navy's pride!*

Mighty ruler of the tide!

Rider of the stormy wave,

Hostile nations to enslave!

"Besides their standing armies, we find the Irish kept up a considerable naval force, whereby, from time to time, they poured troops into Britain and Gaul, which countries they long kept under contribution. To this, however, many objections have been made; as if a people, who invaded Ireland in thirty large ships, could ever be condemned to make use of naevogs, and currachs!—Their migrations from Egypt to Greece, and from thence to Spain, have also been doubted, from the supposed difficulty of procuring shipping: whilst at the same period of time no objections have been made to the accounts of the Phoenicians, the Tyrians, and, after them, the Greeks, having very considerable fleets, and making very distant settlements." O'Hall. *Introd. to the Hist. and Antiq. of Ireland*, p. 425.

The same learned author proceeds to bring forward such proofs of the naval power of our early ancestors, as must do away every doubt, in minds of any reason or candour; but a quotation of them at large would exceed the limits of a note; my readers are therefore referred to the valuable work front which the above is taken. In many parts of Colonel Vallancey's inestimable *Collectanea*, they may also find proofs of the knowledge of the early Irish in naval affairs;—indeed, the astonishing number of names (no less than between forty and fifty) for a ship, in the Irish language, appears to have given ground for concluding, that there must have been some degree of proportionable variety in their structure.

4. *Hear, O Fionn! thy people's voice!*

Trembling on our hills we plead.

This alludes to a custom which prevailed, amongst the early Irish, of holding all their public meetings, and frequently their feasts, on the tops of lofty eminences. In the few prefatory lines, annexed to this ode, I have hazarded a conjecture, that it was one of the extemporaneous compositions, so celebrated in the romance of *Bruighean*

Beag na hAlmhuine, yet this passage seems an objection, unless we suppose, that an entertainment, or a peaceable meeting, ended in a battle, (which indeed might have been the case) for the mention of "hills" here, implies peace, and the quotation from the romance expressly tells us, that the ode was sung *at the combat*.

5. *Divide the spoil, and give the hero's meed!*

Possibly it might have been about the division Of the booty, gained in some British, or perhaps continental expedition, that the tribes of Merni and Boisgne were at variance; at least it appears by this passage, that a part of their discontents arose from some such occasion.

6. *Fionn of the flowing locks.*

The natural and beautiful ornament of hair was much cherished and esteemed amongst the ancient Irish. I know not whence the idea of their matted locks (so often mentioned by English chroniclers) had its rise:—certain it is, that we meet with no such expression, in any of our Irish annals, legends, or poems:—on the contrary, the epithets "flowing—curling—waving locks," perpetually occur, and are apparently esteemed as essential to the beauty of the warrior, as to that of the fair.

7. *Not to mean insidious art,*

Does the great name of Goll its terrors owe.

"What added lustre to the native valour, was, the extreme openness, candour, and simplicity of this people (the Irish); not even to gratify that insatiable thirst for power, the source of such devastations, do we often read of indirect or dishonourable means used. Heralds were sent to announce fair, open war, and the place, time and action were previously settled. If any unforeseen accident disappointed either party, as to the number of troops, &c. notice was sent to his opponent, and a further day was appointed, and generally granted." O'Hall. *Int. to the Hist. and Antiq. of Ireland*, p. 223.

Indeed, for a spirit of honour, and a natural rectitude of mind, the Irish were remarked, even by the writers of a nation, once their bitter enemies. Their love of justice, and attachment to the laws, was thus acknowledged by Baron Finglas, in the days of Henry the Eighth. "The laws and statutes made by the Irish, on their hills, they keep firm and stable, without breaking them for any favour or reward. Baron Finglas's *Breviate of Ireland*. Sir John Davies too, (Attorney General in the reign of James the First) acknowledges, that there is no nation under the sun that love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish; or will rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it be against themselves. Davies' *Hist. of Ireland*. Also Cooke, treating of our laws, says, "For I have been informed by many of them that have had judicial places there, *and partly of mine own knowledge*, that there is no nation of the Christian world, that are greater lovers of justice than they are; which virtue must of necessity be accompanied by many others." Cooke's *Institutes*, chap. 76.

8. *Stature sublime, and awful mien.*

Amongst our early ancestors, not only personal strength, and courage, but also beauty, — a graceful figure, an elegant address, and majestic stature, were requisite in the candidates for knighthood. See O'Halloran, Keating.

9. *Patron of the schools' increase.*

To be esteemed the patrons of science, was (next to military renown,) the chief object of ambition, with the princes, and chieftains of the ancient Irish.

10. *White as the hue the chalky cliffs displayed!*

"The breast like the chalky cliff." — "The hero with the breast of snow" — "The side, white as the foam of the falling stream," — frequently occur in our Irish poets' descriptions of their youthful warriors. The ideas which these passages convey, are rather inconsistent with the disgusting ones that must be conceived of the early Irish, by those who give credit to the accounts of writers who tell us, they wore shirts dyed in saffron, for the convenience of hiding the dirt, and further add, that they never pulled them off until fairly worn out. — In *this* case, whatever nature might have done in the blanching of their skins, habit must have counteracted all her good intentions. Whence then did the bard derive his idea? So false a compliment, one would think, must rather have drawn resentment upon him than thanks, by reminding his slovenly heroes what filthy creatures they were. But indeed the assertion seems too absurd for argument, and is most worthily answered by a smile. The fact is, that the ancient Irish were so remarkably cleanly, as never to rest from fatigue, or sit down to meat, after exercise, until they had first refreshed and cleansed themselves by ablutions. See Keating, Warner, &c.

11. *Fierce as ocean's angry wave,*

Here we find a repetition of the same image that occurs a few stanzas before: the language is indeed a little varied, yet still the image is the same. I have already apologized for this frequent repetition, and entreat my readers to recollect what has been said upon the subject. But an extemporaneous composition, like this, ought to be exempt from that severity of criticism which may with justice be exercised on the production of study, and the labours of time.

12. *Mildness of majestic charms!*

"The knowledge of arms was but a *part* of the education of the Celtic warrior. In Ireland, they were well informed in history, poetry, and the polite arts; they were sworn to be the protectors of the fair, and the avengers of their wrongs; and *to be polite in words and address, even to their greatest enemies.*" O'Halloran.

13. *Love of the fair, and favourite of the muse,*

Irish history informs us, that those of their monarchs or chiefs who, besides the accustomed patronage of science and song, were themselves possessed of the gifts of the muse, obtained, on that account, from their *files*, and from their countrymen in general, a distinguished portion of honour, respect and celebrity.

14. *To thee my soul I bend,
O guileless friend!*

A character *gan fheall*, (without guile or deceit,) was esteemed the highest that could be given, amongst the ancient Irish: and the favourite panegyric of a bard, to his favourite hero, would be, that *he had a heart incapable of guile.*

ODE TO A SHIP.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following descriptive ode was written by a gentleman of the name of Fitzgerald, in the reign of Elizabeth, as appears from passages in some other pieces, composed by the same author. The subject of it, we see, a voyage to Spain; but the idea of thus celebrating the subject, was probably suggested by the third *Ode* of Horace: for though the Irish poet can by no means be said to have copied the Roman one, yet he seems to have, in some measure, adopted his design.

I should be accused of treason to the majesty of Horace, did I say that he is surpassed by our Irish bard upon this subject:—I shall not, therefore, risk the censure, but my readers are at liberty to do it, if they please.

For the original of the following Ode, I am indebted to Dr. O'Flanagan, of Trinity College. There is also another copy of it in Mr. O'Halloran's collection.

ODE, BY FITZGERALD, Written on setting out on a voyage to Spain.

Bless my good ship, protecting power of grace!
And o'er the winds, the waves, the destined coast,
Breathe benign spirit!—Let thy radiant host
Spread their angelic shields!
Before us, the bright bulwark let them place,
And fly beside us, through their azure fields!

O calm the voice of winter's storm!
Rule the wrath of angry seas!
The fury of the rending blast appease,
Nor let its rage fair ocean's face deform!
O check the biting wind of spring,
And, from before our course,
Arrest the fury of its wing,
And terrors of its force!
So may we safely pass the dangerous cape,
And from the perils of the deep escape!

I grieve to leave the splendid seats
Of Teamor's ancient fame!
Mansion of heroes, now farewell!
Adieu, ye sweet retreats,
Where the famed hunters of your ancient vale,
Who swelled the high heroic tale,
Were wont of old to dwell!
And you, bright tribes of sunny streams, adieu!
While my sad feet their mournful path pursue,
Ah, well their lingering steps my grieving soul proclaim!

Receive me now, my ship!—Hoist now thy sails,
To catch the favouring gales.

O Heaven! Before thine awful throne I bend!
O let thy power thy servants now protect!
Increase of knowledge and of wisdom lend;
Our course, through every peril to direct;
To steer us safe through ocean's rage,
Where angry storms their dreadful strife maintain;
O may thy power their wrath assuage!
May smiling suns, and gentle breezes reign!

Stout is my well-built ship, the storm to brave,
Majestic in its might,
Her bulk, tremendous on the wave,
Erects its stately height!
From her strong bottom, tall in air
Her branching masts aspiring rise;
Aloft their cords, and curling heads they bear,
And give their sheeted ensigns to the skies;
While her proud bulk frowns awful on the main,
And seems the fortress of the liquid plain!

Dreadful in the shock of fight,
She goes—she cleaves the storm!
Where ruin wears its most tremendous form
She sails, exulting in her might:
On the fierce necks of foaming billows rides,
And through the roar
Of angry ocean, to the destined shore
Her course triumphant guides;
As though beneath her frown the winds were dead,
And each blue valley was their silent bed!

Through all the perils of the main
She knows her dauntless progress to maintain
Through quicksands, flats, and breaking waves,
Her dangerous path she dares explore;
Wrecks, storms, and calms, alike she braves,
And gains, with scarce a breeze, the wished-for shore!
Or in the hour of war,
Fierce on she bounds, in conscious might,
To meet the promised fight!
While, distant far,
The fleets of wondering nations gaze,
And view her course with emulous amaze,
As like some championed son of fame,
She rushes to the shock of arms,
And joys to mingle in the loud alarms,
Impelled by rage, and fired with glory's flame.

Sailing with pomp upon the watery plain,
Like some huge monster of the main,
My ship her speckled bosom laves,
And high in air her curling ensign waves;

Her stately sides, with polished beauty gay,
And gunnel, bright with gold's effulgent ray.

As the fierce griffin's dreadful flight
Her monstrous bulk appears,
While o'er the seas her towering height,
And her wide wings, tremendous shade! she rears.
Or, as a champion, thirsting after fame,—
The strife of swords,—the deathless name,—
So does she seem, and such her rapid course!
Such is the rending of her force;
When her sharp keel, where dreadful splendours play,
Cuts through the foaming main its liquid way.
Like the red bolt of Heaven, she shoots along,
Dire as its flight, and as its fury strong!

God of the winds! O hear my prayer!
Safe passage now bestow!
Soft, o'er the slumbering deep, may fair
And prosperous breezes flow!
O'er the rough rock, and swelling wave,
Do thou our progress guide!
Do thou from angry ocean save,
And o'er its rage preside.

Speed my good ship, along the rolling sea,
O Heaven! and smiling skies, and favouring, gales decree!
Speed the high-masted ship of dauntless force,
Swift in her glittering flight, and sounding course!
Stately moving on the main,
Forest of the azure plain!
Faithful to confided trust,
To her promised glory just;
Swift from afar,
In peril's fearful hour,
Mighty in force, and bounteous in her power,
She comes, kind aid she lends,
She frees her supplicating friends,
And fear before her flies, and dangers cease!

Hear, blest Heaven! my ardent pray'r!
My ship—my crew—O take us to thy care!
O may no peril bar our way!
Fair blow the gales of each propitious day!
Soft swell the floods, and gently roll the tides,
While from Dunboy, along the smiling main
We sail, until the destined coast we gain,
And safe in port our gallant vessel rides!

ELEGIES.

Transcriber's Note: In the eighteenth Century the word *Elegy* was used for many other poems as well as laments for the dead.

ELEGY TO THE DAUGHTER OF OWEN.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Of the Irish *marbhna* or funeral elegy, I have been able to procure but few good originals; however, there are, doubtless, many of them still extant; as also, many other beautiful compositions of our ancient countrymen, which I have never seen.

The Irish language, perhaps beyond all others, is peculiarly suited to every subject of elegy; and, accordingly, we find it to excel in plaintive and sentimental poetry. The love elegies of the Irish are exquisitely pathetic, and breathe an artless tenderness, that is infinitely more affecting than all the laboured pomp of declamatory woe.

The public are here presented with a few specimens of both kinds. To the following, on the *Daughter of Owen*, the foremost place is assigned, because (though without a date) it bears the appearance of belonging to an earlier period than any other of the elegies contained in this volume. The original of it is in the hands of Mr. O'Flanagan, who has in vain endeavoured to procure some anecdotes of the author, and of the fair subject: that it was written by a poet of the name of O'Geran, is all that can be collected from enquiry.

In the Irish, it is one of the most beautiful compositions I have ever seen; it is, of all my originals, the one I most wished to give in its expressions, as well as its thoughts, to the English reader; but in this, notwithstanding all my efforts, I am conscious that I have failed.

Either I am very unhappy in my choice of words, or it is next to impossible to convey the spirit of this poem into a liberal translation; I tried, to the utmost of my power, but, to my extreme regret, I found myself unequal to the task, though I chose an irregular measure, that I might be at liberty to adhere closely to the expressions of my original, which are comprehensive, and striking, beyond the power of any one to conceive, who is unacquainted with the genius of the Irish language. In some passages, a single word conveys the meaning and force of a sentence; it was, therefore, impossible to translate it without periphrasis, and, of course, many of its native graces are lost: I shall be most happy to see some abler pen restore them, as I really lament sincerely my inability to do all the justice I wished, to that tender simplicity, and those beautiful expressions, which I read with so much delight.

Determined, however, to give the poem, in the best manner I could, to the public, I have conveyed its thoughts into the following version; and, for those passages wherein the language is thought to be too diffuse, I rely on the candour of my readers to accept of this apology.

In the, original there are some repetitions, and also a few entire lines, which are not given in the English version. I apprehended it might, otherwise, be too long, and have therefore omitted what I thought could best be spared.

ELEGY

Daughter of Owen! Behold my grief!
Look soft pity's dear relief!
Oh! Let the beams of those life-giving eyes
Bid my fainting heart arise,

And, from the now opening grave,
Thy faithful lover save!

Snatch from death his dire decree!
What is impossible to thee?
Star of my life's soul-cheering light!
Beam of mildness, soft as bright!
Do not, like others of thy sex,
Delight the wounded heart to vex!

But hear, O hear thy lover's sighs
And with true pity, hither turn thine eyes!
still, though wasted with despair,
And pale with pining care,
Still, O soft maid! this form may meet thy sights
No object yet of horror, or affright.

Long unregarded have I sighed,
Love's soft return denied!
No mutual heart, no faithful fair,
No sympathy to soothe my care!
O thou, to every bosom dear!
Universal charmer!—Hear!

No more sweet pity's gentle power withstand!
Reach the dear softness of thy hand!
O let it be the beauteous pledge of peace,
To bless my love, and bid my sorrows cease!

Haste, haste!—No more the kind relief delay!
Come, speak, and look, and smile my woes away!
O haste, e'er pity be too late!
Haste, and intercept my fate!
Or soon behold life, love, and sorrow end,
And see the to an early tomb descend
For, ah, what medicine can my cure impart,
Or what physician heal a broken heart?

'Tis thine alone the sovereign balm to give,
Bind the soul's wound, and bid the dying live!
'Tis thine, of right, my anguish to assuage,
If love can move, or gratitude engage!
For thee alone, all others I forsake!
For thee alone, my cares, my wishes wake,
O locks of Beauty's bright redundant flow,
Where waving softness, curling fragrance grow!

Thine is the sway of soul-subduing charms,
That every breast of all defence disarms!
With thee my will, enamoured, hugs its chain,
And Love's dear ardours own thy potent reign!
Take then the heart my constant passion gave
Cherish its faith, and from its anguish save!

Take the poor trembler to thy gentle breast,
And hush its fears, and soothe its cares to rest!

For all I have, in timid silence borne,
For all the pangs that have this bosom torn,
Speak now the word, and heal my pain,
Nor be my sufferings vain!
For now, on life itself their anguish preys,
And heavy on my heart the burden weighs!

O first, and, fairest of thy sex!
Thou whose bright form the sun of beauty decks!
Once more let Love that gentle bosom sway,
O give the dear enchantment way!
Raise,—fondly raise those snowy arms,
Thou branch of blooming charms!
Again for me thy fragrance breathe,
And thy fair tendrils round me wreath!

Again be soft affection's power displayed,
While sweetly wand'ring in the secret shade:
Reach forth thy lip,—the honeyed kiss bestow!
Reach forth thy lip, where balmy odours grow!
Thy lip, whose sounds such rapture can impart,
Whose words of sweetness sink into the heart!

Again, at gentle Love's command,
Reach forth thy snowy hand!
Soft into mine its whiteness steal,
And its dear pressure let me feel!
Unveil the bashful radiance of thine eyes,
(Bright trembling gems!) and let me see them rise.
Lift the fair lids where their soft glories roll,
And send their secret glances to my soul!

O' what delight, thus hand in hand to rove!
To breathe fond vows of mutual love!
To see thee sweet affection's balm impart,
And smile to health my almost broken heart!
Ah! let me give the dear idea scope!
Ah! check not yet the fondly-trembling hope!—
Spent is the rock by which my life was fed,
And spun by anguish to a sightless thread!
A little more,—and all in death will end,
And fruitless pity o'er my grave will bend!

When I am dead, shun thou my cruel fate,
Lest equal harms on equal perils wait.
Hear my last words, their fond request declare.
For even in death, thy safety is my care!
No more, O maid! thy polished glass invite,
To give that fatal beauty to thy sight!

Enough one life its dangers to enthrall!
Enough that I its hapless victim fall!

O thou, more bright, more cheering to our eyes,
Than the young beams that warm the dawning skies!
Hast thou not heard the weeping muse relate
The mournful tale of young Narcissus' fate?—
How, as the bards of ancient days have sung,
While fondly o'er the glassy stream he hung,
Enamoured he his lovely form surveyed,
And died, at length, the victim of a shade.

Sweet! do not thou a like misfortune prove!
O be not such thy fate, nor such thy love!
Let peril rather warn, and wisdom guide,
And from thyself thy own attractions hide!
No more on that bewitching beauty gaze,
Nor trust thy sight to meet its dazzling blaze!

Hide, hide that breast so snowy fair!
Hide the bright tresses of thy hair!
And oh! those eyes of radiant ruin hide!
What heart their killing lustre can abide
Slow where their soft and tender glances roll,
They steal its peace from the unwary soul!

Hide the twin berries of thy lip's perfume,
Their breathing fragrance, and their deepening bloom,
And those fair cheeks, that glow like radiant morn,
When Sol's bright rays his blushing east adorn!
No more to thy incautious sight displayed,
Be that dear form, in tender grace arrayed!
The rosy finger's tapering charms;
The slender hand, the snowy arms;
The little foot, so soft and fair;
The timid step, the modest air;
No more their graces let thine eye pursue,
But hide, O hide the peril from thy view!

This done,—in safety may'st thou rest,
And peace possess thy breast.
For who can with thy charms compare,
And who but thee is worth a care?—
O! from thyself thine eyes, thy heart protect,
And none beside, thy quiet can affect.

For thee, while all the youths of Erin sigh,
And, struck beneath thine eye-beam, die;
Still peace within thy bosom reigns,
Unfelt by thee their pains!
O graceful meekness! ever new delight!
Sweet bashful charm of captivated sight!

Charlotte Brooke

Why, while my heart, (fond subject!) blessed thy sway,
Why did'st thou steal its vital soul away?
Ah! with the theft the life of life is fled,
And leaves me almost numbered with the dead!

While thus, in vain, my anguish I bewail,
Thy peace no fears assail;
None in my hapless cause will move;
Each partial heart is fettered to thy love!
Thou whose fair hand bids the soft harp complain,
Flies o'er the string, and wakes the tender strain,
Wilt thou not some—some kind return impart,
For my lost quiet, and my plundered heart?

O thou dear angel-smiling face!
Fair form of fascinating grace!
Bright as the gentle moon's soft splendours rise,
To light her steps of beauty through the skies!
O turn!—On me those tender glances roll,
And dart their cheering lustre on my soul!
Be dear compassion in their beams expressed,
And heal with love the sorrows of my breast!

ELEGY TO A FAITHLESS LOVER

ADVERTISEMENT.

The original of the following pathetic little elegy, was taken down from the dictation of a young woman, in the county of Mayo, by Mr. O'Flanagan, who was struck with the tender and beautiful simplicity which it breathes. No account can be obtained, either of the writer, or of the period in which it was written.

This elegy was translated long since, without any view to publication; and the language is, therefore, rather more diffuse, than that of my other translations.

ELEGY.

Ah that he could but still deceive,
And I still think him true!
Still fondly, as at first, believe,
And each dear scene renew!

Again, in the sequestered vale,
Hear love's sweet accents flow,
And quite forget the tender tale,
That filled my heart with woe!

See this dear trifle,—(kept to prove
How I the giver prize;)
More precious to my faithful love,
Than all thy sex's sighs!

What tears for thee in secret flow,
Sweet victor of the green!—
For maiden pride would veil my woe,
And seek to weep unseen.

Return ye days to love consigned
Fond confidence, and joy!
The crowded fair, where tokens kind
The lover's cares employ!

Return once more, mine eyes to bless,
Thou flower of Erin's youth!
Return sweet proofs of tenderness,
And vows of endless truth!

And Hymen at Love's altar stand,
To sanctify the shrine,
Join the fond heart, and plighted hand,
And make thee firmly mine,

Ere envious ocean snatch thee hence,
And—Oh!—to distance bear
My love!—my comfort!—my defence!—
And leave me—to despair!

Yes,—yes, my only love thou art!
Whoe'er it may displease,
I will avow my captive heart,
And speak its master's praise!

Ah, wert thou here, to grace my side
With dear, protecting love!
Envy might rage, and spite deride,
And friends in vain reprove!

May pangs unnumbered pierce the breast
That cruel envy arms,
That joys in, constancy distressed,
And sports with its alarms!

Bright star of love-attracting light!
For thee these terrors sway:
Grief steeps in tears the sleepless night,
And clouds the joyless day!

Ah God! Ah how, when thou art gone,
Shall comfort reach my heart!
Thy dwelling, and thy fate unknown,
Or where thy steps depart!

My father grieving at my choice!
My mother drowned in woe!
While friends upbraid, and foes rejoice
To see my sorrows flow!

And thou, with all thy manly charms,
From this sad bosom torn!
Thy soothing voice,—thy sheltering arms,
Far—far to distance borne!

Alas!—my dim and sleepless eyes
The clouds of death obscure!
And nature, in exhausted sighs,
No longer can endure!

I can no more!—sad world farewell!
And thou, dear youth! Adieu!
Dear, though forsworn!—yet, cruell! Tell
Why falsehood dwells with you?

ELEGY BY EAMONN A'CHNOIC

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following elegy was written, nearly a century ago, by a very celebrated personage, of the name of Edmond Ryan, concerning whom many stories are still circulated, but no connected account has been obtained, further than that he commanded a company of those unhappy free-booters, called rapparees, who, after the defeat of the Boyne, were obliged to abandon their dwellings and possessions, "hoping" (says Mr. O'Halloran) "for safety within the precincts of the Irish quarters; but they were too numerous to be employed in the army, and their miseries often obliged them to prey alike upon friend and foe: at length some of the most daring of them formed themselves into independent companies, whose subsistence chiefly arose from depredations committed on the enemy.

"It was not choice, but necessity, that drove them to this extreme; I have heard ancient people, who were witnesses to the calamities of those days, affirm, that they remembered vast numbers of these poor Ulster Irish, men, women and children, to have no other beds but the ridges of potato-gardens, and little other covering than the canopy of heaven; they dispersed themselves over the counties of Limerick, Clare and Kerry; and the hardness of the times at length shut up all bowels of humanity, so that most of them perished by the sword, cold, or famine!"<1>

From passages in this elegy, we may infer, that, to the misfortunes of its author alone, the desertion of his mistress was owing; but I have not been able to discover the name of this fair inconstant.

After the translation was made from the copy first obtained of this pathetic little poem, a friend transmitted to me the following stanzas, as a part of the original Elegy. They appeared well entitled to preservation and are here given to the public, who may admit or reject them at pleasure.

Mac dainra deirge an rgeal,
Ar meara faoi an t-^{leabha}neim
Ar maidin a gur me a t-^{leabha}ru moidge
Ir gur fearb zac en labhar leir keim
Ar cupraig no ar taeb moimte
Do mhead mo cheac, r-^{leabha}muigead mo head
Ar gur dfaigead me gan en head
Yma ta rin a teact a-^{leabha}kuact andeig anteair
Ar n-un-fearc mo beannaict keim leat.

Ah! What woes are mine to bear,
Life's fair morn with clouds o'ercasting!
Doomed the victim of despair!
Youth's gay bloom, pale sorrow blasting!

Sad the bird that sings alone,
Flies to wilds, unseen to languish,
Pours, unheard, the ceaseless moan,
And wastes, on desert air, its anguish!

Mine, O hapless bird! Thy fate!—
The plundered nest,—the lonely sorrow!—
The lost—loved—harmonious mate!—
The wailing night,—the cheerless morrow!

O thou dear hoard of treasured love!
Though these fond arms should ne'er possess thee,
Still—still my heart its faith shall prove,
And its last sighs shall breathe to bless thee!

I am told there are several beautiful elegiac songs still extant, composed by Edmond Ryan, or Edmond of the Hill, (*Eamonn A'Chnoic*), as he is called, from his roving life, but the following is the only one of them that I have ever met with. The air to which it is sung "dies in every note," and the poem, though usually styled a song, I have here classed under the title of elegy, because it seemed more properly to belong to that species of composition.

ELEGY.

Bright her locks of beauty grew,
Curling fair, and sweetly flowing;
And her eyes of smiling blue,
Oh how soft! how heavenly glowing!

Ah! Poor plundered heart of pain!
When wilt thou have end of mourning
This long, long year, I look in vain
To see my only hope returning.

Oh! Would thy promise faithful prove,
And to my fond, fond bosom give thee;
Lightly then my steps would move,
Joyful should my arms receive thee!

Then, once more, at early morn,
Hand in hand we should be straying,
Where the dew-drop decks the thorn,
With its pearls the woods arraying.

Cold and scornful as thou art,
Love's fond vows and faith belying,
Shame for thee now rends my heart,
My pale cheek with blushes dying!

Why art thou false to me and love?
(While health and joy with thee are vanished)

Is it because forlorn I rove,
Without a crime, unjustly banished?

Safe thy charms with me should rest,
Hither did thy pity send thee,
Pure the love that fills my breast,
From itself it would defend thee.

'Tis thy Edmond calls thee love,
Come, O come and heal his anguish!
Driven from his home, behold him rove,
Condemned in exile here to languish!

O thou dear cause of all my pains!
With thy charms each heart subduing,
Come,—on Munster's lovely plains,
Hear again fond passion suing.

Music, mirth and sports, are here,
Cheerful friends the hours beguiling;
Oh wouldst thou, my love! appear,
To joy my bosom reconciling!

Sweet would seem the holly's shade,
Bright the clustering berries glowing!
And, in scented bloom arrayed,
Apple-blossoms round us blowing.

Cresses waving in the stream,
Flowers its gentle banks perfuming;
Sweet the verdant paths would seem,
All in rich luxuriance blooming.

O bright in every grace of youth!
Gentle charmer!—lovely wonder!
Break not fond vows and tender truth!
O rend not ties so dear asunder!

For thee all dangers would I brave,
Life with joy, with pride exposing;
Breast for thee the stormy wave,
Winds and tides in vain opposing.

O might I call thee now my own!
No added rapture joy could borrow:
'Twould be, like heaven, when life is flown,
To cheer the soul and heal its sorrow.

See thy falsehood, cruel maid!
See my cheek no longer glowing!
Strength departed, health decayed;
Life in tears of sorrow flowing!

Why do I thus my anguish tell?—
Why pride in woe, and boast of ruin?—

O lost treasure!—fare thee well!—
Loved to madness—to undoing.

Yet, O hear me fondly swear
Though thy heart to me is frozen,
Thou alone, of thousands fair,
Thou alone should'st be my chosen.

Every scene with thee would please!
Every care and fear would fly me!
Wintry storms, and raging seas,
Would lose their gloom, if thou wert nigh me!

Speak in time, while yet I live!
Leave not faithful love to languish!
O soft breath to pity give,
Ere my heart quite break with anguish.

Pale, distracted, wild I rove,
No soothing voice my woes allaying;
Sad and devious, through each grove,
My lone steps are weary straying.

O sickness, past all medicine's art!
O sorrow, every grief exceeding!
O wound that, in my breaking heart,
Cureless, deep, to death art bleeding!

Such, O Love! thy cruel power,
Fond excess and fatal ruin!
Such—O Beauty's fairest flower!
Such thy charms, and my undoing!

How the swan adorns that neck,
There her down and whiteness growing;
How its snow those tresses deck,
Bright in fair luxuriance flowing.

Mine, of right, are all those charms!
Cease with coldness then to grieve me!
Take—O take me to thy arms,
Or those of death will soon receive me.

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NOTES TO THE ELEGY BY EAMONN A'CHNOIC

1. O'Halloran's *Int. to the Hist. and Ant. of Ireland*, p. 382. EAMONN A'CHNOIC

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN BURKE CARRENTRYLE, ESQ.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following funeral elegy was composed by Cormac Common, "who" (says Mr. Walker) "was born in May, 1703, at Woodstock, near Ballindangan, in the county of Mayo. His parents were poor, and honest; remarkable for nothing but the innocence, and simplicity of their lives.

"Before he had completed the first year of his life, the smallpox deprived him of his sight. This circumstance, together with the indigence of his parents, prevented him from receiving any of the advantages of education; but, though he could not read himself, he could converse with those who had read; therefore, if he wants learning, he is not without knowledge.

"Showing an early fondness for music, a neighbouring gentleman determined to have him taught to play on the harp: a professor of that instrument was accordingly provided, and Cormac received a few lessons which he practised *con amore*; but his patron dying suddenly, the harp dropped from his hand, and was never after taken up—It is probable he could not afford to string it.

"But poetry was the muse of whom he was most enamoured. This made him listen eagerly to the Irish songs, and metrical tales, which he heard sung and recited around the 'crackling faggots' of his father, and his neighbours. These, by frequent recitation, became strongly impressed, upon his, memory. His mind being thus stored, and having no other avocation, he commenced a *Man of Talk*, or a *Tale Teller*. 'He left no calling, for the idle trade,' as our English Montaigne observes of Pope.

"He was now employed in relating legendary tales, and reciting genealogies at rural wakes, or in the hospitable halls of country squires. Endowed with a sweet voice, and a good ear, his narrations were generally graced with the charms of melody; (I say were *generally* graced, because at his age, 'nature sinks in years,' and we speak of the man, with respect to his powers, as if actually a tenant of the grave.) He did not, like the Tale Teller mentioned by Sir William Temple, chant his tales in an uninterrupted even tone; the monotony of his modulation was frequently broken by cadences, introduced with taste, at the close of each stanza. In rehearsing any of Oisín's poems (says Mr. Ousley) he chants them pretty much in the manner of Cathedral Service.

"But it was in singing some of our native airs that Cormac displayed the powers of his voice; on this occasion his auditors were always enraptured. I have been assured that no singer ever did Carolan's airs, or Oisín's celebrated Hunting Song, more justice than Cormac.

"Cormac's musical powers were not confined to his voice; he composed a few airs, one of which is extremely sweet. It is to be feared that those musical effusions will die with their author.

"But it was in poetry Cormac delighted to exercise his genius; he has composed several songs and elegies that have met with applause. As his muse was generally awakened by the call of gratitude, his poetical productions are mostly panegyrical, or elegiac; they extol the living, or lament the dead. Sometimes he indulged in satire, but not often, though richly endued with that dangerous gift.

"Cormac was twice married, but is now a widower. By both his wives he had several children; he now resides at Sorrelltown, near Dunmore, in the county of Galway, with one of his daughters, who is happily married. Though his utterance is materially injured by dental losses, and though his voice is impaired by age, yet he continues to practise his profession: so seldom are we sensible of our imperfections. It is probable that where he was once admired, he is now only endured. One of his grandsons leads him about to the houses of the neighbouring gentry, who give him money, diet, and sometimes clothes. His apparel is commonly decent, and comfortable, but he is not rich, nor does he seem solicitous about wealth: his person is large and muscular, and his moral character is unstained."

THE ODE.

Yes, Erin, for her Burke, <2> a wreath shall twine,
And Britain own the honours of his name!
O hence with tasteless joy!—with mirth and wine!
All thoughts, but those of woe, I now disclaim!

Ye sons of science!—see your friend depart!
Ye sons of song!—your patron is no more!
Ye widowed virtues! (cherished in his heart,
And wedded to his soul) your loss deplore!

Grief sheds its gloom on every noble breast,
And streaming tears his worth,—his death proclaim,
Generous and brave, with every virtue blest!
Flower of the tribes of honourable fame!

Alas! To the cold grave he now is borne!
No more to wake the huntsman to the chase;
No more, with early sports, to rouse the morn,
Or lead the sprightly courser to the race.

The learned, and eloquent in honour's cause!
Of soul enlightened, end of fame unstained!
The friend of justice,—to expound our laws,
Or yield the palm; by song or science gained!

O death!—since thou hast laid our glory low;
Since our loved Burke, alas! is now no more;
What bliss can now each rising morn bestow;
The race, the chase, and every joy is o'er!

O grave!—thy debt, thy cruel debt is paid!
No more on earth shall his fair virtues bloom!
Death! thou hast hewn the branch of grateful shade,
And laid its fragrant honours in the tomb!

Sublime his soul!—yet gentle was his heart.;
His rural sports, his gay convivial hour
Avowed each elegant, each social art;
Each manly grace, and each attractive power.

Friend of the friendless, patron of distress;
Ah, none, like him, the poor man's cause would plead!

Reliques of Irish Poetry

With sweet persuasion to ensure success,
Or soothe his sorrows, o; supply his need!

O tomb that shroudest his beloved remains!
O death, that did'st our dearest hope destroy!
Thy dreary confine all our bliss contains,
And thy cold gates are closed upon our joy!

Who, now, will to the race the courser train?
Who gain, for Connaught, the disputed prize?
From rival provinces the palm obtain?—
Alas! with him our fame, our triumph dies!

Our light is quenched, our glory passed away,
Our Burke snatched from us, never to return,
Whose name bright honour's fairest gifts array,
And science hangs her wreath upon his urn.

Eternal pleasures filled his social hall,
And sweetest music charmed, with magic sound;
Science and song obeyed his friendly call,
And varied joys still danced their endless round!

But now, alas! nor sport, nor muse is there!
No echoes now the sprightly notes await;
But wailing sounds of sorrow and despair,
That mourn the stroke of unrelenting fate!

He is for ever gone!—Weep, wretched eyes!
Flow! flow my tears!—my heart with anguish bleed!
In the cold grave the stately hunter lies,
Chief in the manage of the bounding steed!

O bitter Woe!—O sorrow uncontrolled!
O death remorseless that has sealed his doom!
Thy plains, O Munster!—all our glory hold,
And fame lies buried with him, in the tomb!

Thy rival, thou (Sir Edward) wilt not mourn:<3>
His death, to thee, shall now the plate resign;
His laurel, else, thou never should'st have worn,
Nor had the prize of manly sports been thine.

See Munster pour her horsemen from their plains,
To the loved dead the last sad rites to pay;
Nor Thomond one inhabitant contains,
To guard her treasures on this fatal day!

Respectful sorrow guides their solemn pace,
(Their steeds in mourning, slow procession led:)<4>
Till in the tomb their much-loved Burke they place,
And o'er his earth their copious anguish shed.

The seventeen hundred six and fortieth year,
Of him who died a sinful world to save,

Death came, our Burke from our fond arms to tear,
And lay, with him, our pleasures in the grave!

How oft his loss pale memory shall regret!
How oft our tears shall flow, our sighs ascend!
The social band, where mirth convivial met,
Now meet to mourn for their departed friend!

No more the melody of hounds he leads!,
No more morn echoes to their cheerful cries!
A gloomy stillness through the land succeeds,
For low in earth the soul of pleasure lies!

To the dear spot my frequent steps I'll bend,
Which all my joy,—which all my woe contains;
My tears shall, each returning month, descend,
To bathe the earth that holds his loved remains!

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NOTES TO THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN BURKE CARRENTRYLE, ESQ.

1. I have never been so fortunate as to meet with any of Cormac's compositions, except the following elegy.
2. "This gentleman" (says Mr. Walker) "was pre-eminent in his day, as a sportsman, and in his private character there were many amiable traits."—*Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, App. p. 58.
3. *Thy rival, thou (Sir Edward) wilt not mourn.*
Sir Edward O'Brien, father to the present Sir Lucius.
4. *Their steeds in mourning, slow procession led.*
In the original,—they came leading their steeds,—or more literally, the horsemen came, but not mounted on their steeds.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF CAROLAN.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following is the elegy mentioned in Mr. Walker's *Life of Carolan*, composed on the death of that bard, by his friend M'Cabe.<1>

M'Cabe was rather of a humorous, than a sentimental turn; he was a wit, but not a poet. It was therefore his grief, and not his muse, that inspired him, on the present occasion.

The circumstances which gave rise to this elegy, are striking, and extremely affecting. M'Cabe had been an unusual length of time without seeing his friend, and went to pay him a visit. As he approached near the end of his journey, in passing by a church-yard, he was met by a peasant, of whom he inquired for Carolan. The peasant pointed to his grave, and wept.

M'Cabe, shocked and astonished, was for some time unable to speak; his frame shook, his knees trembled, he had just power to totter to the grave of his friend, and then sunk to the ground. A flood of tears, at last, came to his relief; and, still further to disburden his mind, he vented its anguish in the following lines. In the original, they are simple and unadorned, but pathetic to a great degree; and this is a species of beauty, in composition, extremely difficult to transfuse into any other language. I do not pretend, in this, to have entirely succeeded, but I hope the effort will not be unacceptable;—much of the simplicity is unavoidably lost;—the pathos which remains, may, perhaps, in some measure, atone for it.

THE ELEGY

I came, with friendship's face, to glad my heart.
But sad, and sorrowful my steps depart!
In my friend's stead—a spot of earth was shown,
And on his grave my woe-struck eyes were thrown!
No more to their distracted sight remained,
But the cold clay that all they loved contained:
And there his last and narrow bed was made,
And the drear tomb-stone for its covering laid!
Alas!—for this my aged heart is wrung!
Grief chokes my voice, and trembles on my tongue.
Lonely and desolate, I mourn the dead,
The friend with whom my every comfort fled!
There is no anguish can with this compare!
No pains, diseases, suffering, or despair,
Like that I feel, while such a loss I mourn,
My heart's companion from its fondness torn!
Oh insupportable, distracting grief!
Woe, that through life, can never hope relief!
Sweet-singing<2> harp!—thy melody is o'er!
Sweet friendship's voice!—I hear thy sound no more!
My bliss,—my wealth of<2> poetry is fled.
And every joy, with him I loved, is dead!

Alas! what wonder, (while my heart drops blood
Upon the woes that drain its vital flood,
If maddening grief no longer can be borne,
And frenzy fill the breast, with anguish torn.

££

**NOTES ON THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF
CAROLAN.**

1. Vide *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, Append. p. 97.
2. Both of these expressions are exactly literal—*Mo Cheol-Chruit mhilis!*—*Mo Shaibhreas Dáin!*

THOUGHTS ON IRISH SONG.

It is scarcely possible that any language can be more adapted to lyric poetry than the Irish. The poetry of many of our songs is indeed already music, without the aid of a tune; so great is the smoothness and harmony of its cadences. Nor is this to be wondered at, when we consider the advantage the Irish has, in this particular, beyond every other language, of flowing off, in vowels, upon the ear.

I will just instance the two following lines:

*Sa chúil áluinn deas, na bhfáinigibh cheart,
Is breádh iad, 'sas glas do fhuile!<1>*

Here, out of fifty-four letters, but twenty-two are pronounced as consonants, (the rest being rendered quiescent by their aspirates) whereas, in English, and I believe in most other languages, the Italian excepted, at least two-thirds of poetry as well as prose, is necessarily composed of consonants: the Irish being singular in the happy art of cutting off, by aspirates, every sound that could injure the melody of its cadence; at the same time that it preserves its radicals, and, of course, secures etymology.

But it is not in sound alone that this language is so peculiarly adapted to the species of composition now under consideration; it is also possessed of a refined delicacy of descriptive power and an exquisitely tender simplicity of expression; two or three little artless words, or perhaps only a single epithet, will sometimes convey such an image of sentiment, or of suffering, to the mind, that one lays down the book, to look at the *picture*. But the beauty of many of these passages is considerably impaired by translation; indeed, so sensible was I of this, that it influenced me to give up, in despair, many a sweet stanza to which found myself quite unequal. I wished, among others, to have translated the following lines of a favourite song; but it presented ideas, of which my pen could draw no resemblance that pleased me:

*A cheann dubh dilis dilis dilis!
Cuir do cheann dilis thoram anall!
A bhéilin meala, a bhfuil baladh na thyme air,
Is duine gan chroidhe nach tabhradh duit gradh!<2>*

I need not give any comment upon these lines; the English reader would not understand it, and the Irish reader could not want it; for it is impossible to peruse them without being sensible of their beauty.

There are many Irish songs; now in common use, that contain, in scattered passages, the most exquisite thoughts, though on the whole too unequal for translation. This, I suppose, is chiefly occasioned by the ignorance, or inattention of those who learn them, and from whom alone they are to be procured. They are remembered and sung by the village maid, perhaps merely for the sake of the tunes that accompany them; of course, if recollection fails, it is made up with invention; any words, in this case, will serve, if they answer to the air of the song; and thus, often, not words alone, but entire lines, are substituted, so totally unlike the rest of the composition, that it is easy to see whence the difference proceeds. Sometimes too, if a line or a stanza be wanting to a silly song, the first of any other one that occurs, is pressed into the service; and by this means, among a heap of lyric nonsense, one often finds a thought that would do honour to the finest composition.

In these incongruous poems, where a line seems to plead for its rescue, it would be a pity to refuse it. Among many others, the following is an image rich in beauty: a forsaken maid compares her heart to a burning coal, bruised black; thus retaining the heat that consumed, while it loses the light that had cheered it. In another song, a lover, tenderly reproaching his mistress, asks her, Why she keeps the morning so long within doors? and bids her come out, and bring him the day. The second of the two following stanzas struck me, as being so particularly beautiful, that I was tempted to translate them both for its sake.

*'Sí bláth geal na sméir;
Is bláth dearg na subhcraebh;
'Sí planda bhearr meinn mhaith
Le hamharc asúl*

*'Sí mo chuisle 'sí mo rún í
'Sí blaith na nubhall cúmhra;
Is samhradh ansa bhfhuaacht
Eidir nodhluigh agus cairg.*

Translation.

As the sweet blackberry's modest bloom
Fair flowering, greets the sight;
Or strawberries, in their rich perfume,
Fragrance and bloom unite:
So this fair plant of tender youth,
In outward charms can vie,
And, from within, the soul of truth
Soft beaming, fills her eye.

Pulse of my heart!—dear source of care,
Stolen sighs, and love-breathed vows!
Sweeter than when, through scented air,
Gay bloom the apple boughs!
With thee no days can winter seem,
Nor frost, nor blast can chill;
Thou the soft breeze, the cheering beam
That keeps it summer still!

The air of these stanzas is exquisitely charming. But the beauties of the music of this country are, at present, almost as little known as those of its poetry. And yet there is no other music in the world so calculated to make its way directly to the heart: it is the voice of nature and sentiment, and every fibre of the feeling breast is in, unison with it.

But I beg pardon for this digression;—music is not the subject now under consideration.

I regret much that I have not been able to diversify this collection with some pieces of a sprightlier strain; but I have sought in vain for songs of wit and humour, that were worthy of the public eye.

It has been often observed that a strain of tender pensiveness is discernible throughout, in most of the music of this nation: a circumstance which has been variously accounted for; and the same remarks, and the same reasons hold good in regard to its poetry.

"We see" (says Mr. Walker) "that music maintained its ground in this country, even after the invasion of the English, but its style suffered a change; for the sprightly Phrygian gave place to the grave Doric, or soft Lydian measure. Such was the nice sensibility of the bards, such was their tender affection for their country, that the subjection to which the kingdom was reduced, affected them with the heaviest sadness. Sinking beneath this weight of sympathetic sorrow, they became a prey to melancholy: hence the plaintiveness of their music; for the ideas that arise in the mind are always congenial to, and receive a tincture from, the influencing passion. Another cause might have concurred with the one just mentioned, in promoting a change in the style of our music: the bards, often driven, together with their patrons, by the sword of oppression, from the busy haunts of men, were obliged to lie concealed in marshes, in gloomy forests, amongst rugged mountains, and in glens and valleys resounding with the noise of falling waters, or filled with portentous echoes. Such scenes as these, by throwing a settled gloom over the fancy, must have considerably increased their melancholy; so that when they attempted to sing, it is not to be wondered at that their voices, thus weakened by struggling against heavy mental depression, should rise rather by minor thirds, which consist but of four semitones, than by major thirds, which consist of five. Now, almost all the airs of this period are found to be set in the minor third, and to be of the sage and solemn nature of the music which Milton requires in his *Il Penseroso*."<3>

To illustrate his position, Mr. Walker introduces the following anecdote:

"About the year 1730, one Maguire, a vintner, resided near Charing-Cross, London. His house was much frequented, and his uncommon skill in playing on the harp, was an additional incentive: even the Duke of Newcastle, and several of the ministry, sometimes condescended to visit it. He was one night called upon to play some Irish tunes; he did so; they were plaintive and solemn. His guests demanded the reason, and he told them, that the native composers were too distressed at the situation of their country, and her gallant sons, to be able to compose otherwise. But, added he, take off the restraints under which they labour, and you will not have reason to complain of the plaintiveness of their notes.

"Offence was taken at these warm effusions; his house became gradually neglected, and he died, soon after, of a broken heart. An. Irish harper, who was a contemporary of Maguire, and, like him, felt for the sufferings of his country, had this distich engraven on his harp:

*Cur Lyra funestas edit percussa sonores?
Sicut amissum sors diadema gemit!*<4>

"But perhaps the melancholy spirit which breathes through the Irish music and poetry may be attributed to another cause; a cause which operated anterior and subsequent to the invasion of the English: we mean the remarkable susceptibility of the Irish of the passion of love; a passion, which the munificent establishments of the bards left them at liberty freely to indulge. While the mind is enduring the torments of hope, fear, or despair, its effusions cannot be gay. The greater number of the productions of those amorous poets, Tibullus, Catullus Petrarch, and Hammond,<5> are elegiac. The anonymous traveller, whom we have already had occasion to mention, after speaking of the amorous disposition of the Irish, pursues the subject, in his account of their poetry." "The subject of these (their songs) is always love, and they seem to understand poetry to be designed for no other purpose than to stir up that passion in the mind.<6>

I have never read the Travels here cited, but it should seem that their author intended not to extend his remarks beyond that species of poetry which may be classed under the title of *Songs*. So far his observations are perfectly just; but the heroic poetry of our countrymen was designed for the noblest purposes;—love indeed was still its object,—but it was the sublime love of country that those compositions inspired.

Besides the reasons and remarks I have quoted, and which are, of themselves, amply sufficient to account for the almost total absence of, humorous poetry in our language, there are still further reasons, which appear to me to deserve attention, and which I therefore beg leave to lay before the reader.

I am not sufficiently conversant in the state of the ancient music of this country, to say what that might once have been, or what degree of change it might have suffered; but it does not appear to me that the ancient poetry of Ireland was ever composed in a very lively strain. I by no means would assert that this is *certainly* the case; for, as yet, I am but young in researches: I only conceive a probability of its being so, from my never having met with an instance to the contrary.

Love and war were the two favourite objects of passion and pursuit, with our ancient countrymen, and of course, became the constant inspirers of their muse. In love, they appear to have been always too much in earnest to trifle with their attachments;—and "the strife of swords"—"the field of death"—presented no subject to sport with. To them, also, both art and nature came arrayed in simple dignity; and afforded not that variety of circumstance, and appearance, so calculated to call forth fancy, and diversify ideas.

This seems to me to be one cause, why scarcely anything but plaintive tenderness, or epic majesty, is to be found in the compositions of our bards; another reason still occurs, which I will give to the reader's indulgence.

The true poet is ever an enthusiast in his art, and enthusiasm is seldom witty. The French abound in works of wit and humour;—the English are more in earnest, and therefore fall short of the vivacity of the Gallic muse, but infinitely excel her in all that tends to constitute the vital spirit of poetry. In Ireland, this fascinating art was still more universally in practice, and still more enthusiastically admired. The Muse was here the goddess of unbounded idolatry, and her worship was the business of life. Our Irish bards, in the fine frenzy of exalted thought, were lost to that play of fancy, which only sports with freedom when it is not interrupted by the heart, or awed to silence by the sublime conceptions of the soul.

Fancy is, in general, the vehicle of wit; imagination that of genius. The happiest thoughts may flow in the most harmonious, and highly adapted measure, without one spark of poetic fire. At least one half of those who bear the title of *English Poets*, are merely men of wit and rhyme; and I believe it will be acknowledged that those amongst them who possessed the sublimest genius, descended but seldom to sport with it. Young, Rowe, Thomson, Gray, &c. are instances of this. It is by no means supposed necessary for a poet to be always pensive, philosophical or sublime; he may sport with Fancy,—he may laugh with Humour, he may be gay in every company,—except that of the Muse: in her awful presence, her true adorer is too much possessed by his passion to be gay; he may be approved,—happy,—eloquent,—but hardly witty.

Perhaps there are few subjects that afford a more copious field for observation than that of Irish song, but the limits of my work confine me to a narrow compass, and will not allow these few remarks to assume the title of *Essay*. The subject of song, in general, has been already so well, and copiously treated of by the pens of Aikin, and Ritson, that it has nothing in store for me; but that of Irish song seemed to demand some notice, and had never before received it.

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The two first of the following songs are the compositions of Turlough O'Carolan, a man much and deservedly celebrated for his poetical talents, as well as for the incomparable sweetness of all his musical pieces.

As his life has been already given to the public by Mr. Walker, in his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, I have nothing left to say upon the subject however: for the benefit of such of my readers as have not yet had the pleasure of perusing that learned and elegant work, I will insert a few extracts from it, to gratify immediate curiosity; and the public will doubtless be better pleased to see them in Mr. Walker's words than in mine.

"Carolan was born in the year 1670, in the village of Nobber, in the county of Westmeath, on the lands of Carolanstown, which were wrested from his ancestors by the family of the Nugents, on their arrival in this kingdom, in the reign of Henry the Second. His father was a poor farmer, the humble proprietor of a few acres, which yielded him a scanty subsistence; of his mother I have not been able to collect any particulars.

He must have been deprived of sight at a very early period of his life, for he remembered no impression of colours. Thus was 'knowledge at one entrance quite shut out,' before he had taken even a cursory view of the creation. From this misfortune, however, he felt no uneasiness; he used merrily to say, 'my eyes are transplanted into my ears.'

"His musical genius was soon discovered, and his friends determined to cultivate it; about the age of twelve, a proper master was engaged to instruct him in the practice of the harp; but though fond of that instrument, he never struck it with a master's hand. Genius and diligence are seldom united; and it is practice alone that can perfect us in any art. Yet his harp was rarely unstrung; but, in general, he only used it to assist him in composition; his fingers wandered among the strings, in quest of the sweets of melody.

"At what period of his life Carolan commenced itinerant musician is not known, nor is it confidently told whether, like Arnauld Daniell '*Il n'eut abord d'autre Apollon que le besoin;*'^{<7>} or whether his fondness for music induced him to betake himself to that profession. Dr. Campbell, indeed seems to attribute his choice to an early disappointment in love;^{<8>} but we will leave those points unsettled and follow our bard in his peregrinations.

"Wherever he goes, the gates of the nobility and gentry are thrown open to him, like the Demodocus in Homer, he is received with respect, and a distinguished place assigned him at the table. Near him is seated his harper, ready to accompany his voice, and supply his want of skill in practical music. 'Carolan' (says Mr. Ritson^{<9>}) 'seems, from the description we have of him; to be a genuine representative of the ancient bards.'

"It was during his peregrinations, that Carolan composed all those airs that are still the delight of his countrymen. He thought the tribute of a song due to every house where he was entertained; and he never failed to pay it; choosing for his subject, either the head of the family, or one of the loveliest of its branches."

The biographer of our bard, after informing us of many curious and interesting particulars, for which (fearing to exceed the limits of my work) I must refer my readers to the book from which these extracts are taken, proceeds to acquaint us, that in the year 1733 he lost a beloved, and tenderly lamented wife; and he subjoins a beautiful monody, composed by the mourning bard on the occasion: he also adds, that Carolan did not long survive her.—"He died in the month of March, 1738, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and was interred in the parish church of Kilonan, in the diocese of Ardagh; but 'not a stone tells where he lies!' His grave indeed is still known to his few surviving friends, and the neighbouring hinds; and his skull is distinguished from all the other skulls, which are promiscuously scattered about the church-yard, by a perforation in the forehead, through which a small piece of ribband is drawn.

"Though Carolan died universally lamented, he would have died unsung, had not the humble muse of McCabe poured a few elegiac strains over his cold remains. This faithful friend composed a short elegy on his death, which is evidently the effusion of unfeigned grief, unadorned with meretricious ornaments, it is the picture of a mind torn with anguish. [see above]"

Mr. Walker here subjoins a character of our bard, from the elegant pen of Mr. O'Conor.

"Very few have I ever known who had a more vigorous mind, but a mind undisciplined, through the defect, or rather the absence of cultivation. Absolutely the child of nature, he was governed by the indulgencies, and at times, by the caprices of that mother. His imagination, ever on the wing, was eccentric in its poetic flight; yet, as far as that faculty can be employed in the harmonic art, it was steady and collected. In the variety of his musical numbers, he knew how to make a selection, and was seldom content with mediocrity. So happy, so elevated was he, in some of his compositions, that he excited the wonder, and obtained the approbation, of a great master, who never saw him; I mean Geminiani.

"He outstripped his predecessors in the three species of composition used among the Irish; but he never omitted giving due praise to several of his countrymen, who excelled before him in his art. The Italian compositions he preferred to all others: Vivaldi charmed him; and with Corelli he was enraptured. He spoke elegantly in his maternal language, but had advanced in years before he learned English; he delivered himself but indifferently in that language, and yet he did not like to be corrected in his solecisms. It need not be concealed, that he indulged in the use of spirituous liquors: this habit, he thought, or affected to think, added strength to the flights of his genius; but, in justice, it must be observed that he seldom was surprised by intoxication.

"Constitutionally pious, he never omitted daily prayer, and fondly imagined himself inspired, when he composed some pieces of church music. This idea contributed to his devotion, and thanksgiving; and, in this respect, his enthusiasm was harmless, and perhaps useful. Gay by nature, and cheerful from habit, he was a pleasing member of society; and his talents, and his morality, procured him esteem and friends everywhere."

Besides the two following songs, there are more of the compositions of Carolan possessed of considerable merit; but as it was not in my power to give them all a place in my collection, I have selected, for translation, two that appeared to be the best amongst them; which, together with some other songs of modern date, I give, to show of what the native genius and language of this country, even now, are capable; labouring, as they do, under every disadvantage.

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NOTES TO THOUGHTS ON IRISH SONG

1. *Sa chúil áluinn deas, na bhfáinigibh cheart,
Is breádh iad, 'sas glas do shúile!*

"Your beautiful green eyes, set in the background of your lovely face" [TN]

2. *A cheann dubh dílis dílis dílis!
Cuir do cheann dílis thoram anall!
A bhéilin meala, a bhfuil baladh na thyme air,
Is duine gan chroidhe nach tabhradh duit gradh!*

"O Blackhaired one, lovely, lovely, lovely! Your lovely head overcomes me!
O honeyed mouth, scented with thyme, Only someone with no heart would not love you! [TN]

3. *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, p. 12.

4. *Cur Lyra funestas edit percussa sonores?
Sicut amissum sors diadema gemit!*

"Why does the harp, when plucked, produce such mournful sounds, like mourning for a lost jewel!" [TN]

5. James Hammond (22 May 1710 – 7 June 1742) was an English poet and politician. [TN]

6. *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, p. 125.

7. *Il n'eut abord d'autre Apollon que le besoin*: "He had no divine inspiration, but only necessity." [TN]

8. *Phil. Survey of South of Ireland*.

9. *Hist. Essay on National Song*.

SONG FOR GRACEY NUGENT BY CARLOLAN.

Of Gracey's charms enraptured will I sing!
Fragrant and fair, as blossoms of the spring;
To her sweet manners, and accomplished mind,
Each rival Fair the palm of Love resigned.

How blessed her sweet society to share!<1>
To mark the ringlets of her flowing hair;
Her gentle accents,—her complacent mien!
Supreme in charms, she looks,—she reigns a queen!

That alabaster form—that graceful neck,
How do the cygnet's down and whiteness deck!—
How does that aspect shame the cheer of day,
When summer suns their brightest beams display.

Blessed is the youth whom favouring fates ordain
The treasure of her love, and charms to gain!
The fragrant branch, with curling tendrils bound,
With breathing odours—blooming beauty crown!.

Sweet is the cheer her sprightly wit supplies!
Bright is the sparkling azure of her eyes!
Soft o'er her neck her lovely tresses flow!
Warm in her praise the tongues of rapture glow!

Hers is the voice—tuned by harmonious Love,
Soft as the songs that warble through the grove!
Oh! Sweeter joys her converse can impart!
Sweet to the sense, and grateful to the heart!

Gay pleasures dance where'er her footsteps bend;
And smiles and rapture round the fair attend:
Wit forms her speech, and Wisdom fills her mind,
And *sight* and *soul* in her their object find.

Her pearly teeth, in beauteous order placed;
Her neck with bright, and curling tresses graced:
But ah, so fair!—in wit and charms supreme,
Unequal song must quit its darling theme.

Here break I off;—let sparkling goblets flow,
And my full heart its cordial wishes show:
To her dear health this friendly draught I pour,
Long be her life, and blest its every hour!

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NOTES TO THE SONG FOR GRACEY NUGENT.

"The fair subject of this song was sister to the late John Nugent, Esq. of Castle-Nugent, Coolamber. She lived with her sister, Mrs. Conmee, near Ballynagar,

in the county of Roscommon, at the time she inspired our bard." *Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards. Append.* p. 78.

1. "How blest her sweet society to share!
To mark the ringlets of her flowing hair."

Hair is a favourite object with all the Irish poets, and endless is the variety of their description:—"Soft misty curls."—"Thick branching tresses of bright redundance."—"Locks of fair waving beauty."—"Tresses flowing on the wind like the bright waving flame of an inverted torch." They even affect to inspire it with expression:—as "Locks of gentle lustre."—"Tresses of tender beauty."—"The maid with the mildly flowing hair," &c. &c.

A friend to whom I showed this song, observed, that I had omitted a very lively thought in the conclusion, which they had seen in Mr. Walker's *Memoirs*. As that version has been much read and admired, it may perhaps be necessary, to vindicate my fidelity, as a translator, that I should here give a literal translation of the song, to show that the thoughts have suffered very little, either of increase or diminution from the poetry.

"I will sing with rapture of the blossom of whiteness! Gracey, the young and beautiful woman, who bore away the palm of excellence in sweet manners and accomplishments, from all the fair-ones of the provinces.

"Whoever enjoys her constant society, no apprehension of any ill can assail him.—The Queen of soft and winning mind and manners, with her fair branching tresses flowing in ringlets.

"Her side like alabaster, and her neck like the swan, and her countenance like the sun in summer. How blest is it for him who is promised, as riches, to be united to her, the branch of fair curling tendrils.

"Sweet and pleasant is your lovely conversation!—bright and sparkling your blue eyes!—and every day do I hear all tongues declare your praises, and how gracefully your bright tresses wave down your neck!

"I say to the Maid of youthful mildness, that her voice and her converse are sweeter than the songs of the birds! There is no delight or charm that imagination can conceive but what is found ever attendant on Gracey.

"Her teeth arranged in beautiful order, and her locks flowing in soft waving curls! But though it delights me to sing of thy charms, I must quit my theme!—With a sincere heart I fill to thy health!"

The reader will easily perceive, that in this literal translation I have not sought for elegance of expression, my only object being to put it in his power to judge how closely my version has adhered to my original.

SONG FOR MABEL KELLY BY CAROLAN.

The youth whom favouring Heaven's decree
To join his fate, my fair! with thee;
And see that lovely head of thine
With fondness on his arm recline:

No thought but joy can fill his mind,
Nor any care can entrance find,
Nor sickness hurt, nor terror shake,—
And Death will spare him, for thy sake

For the bright flowing of thy hair,
That decks a face so heavenly fair;
And a fair form, to match that face,
The rival of the Cygnet's grace.

When with calm dignity she moves,
Where the clear stream her hue improves;
Where she her snowy bosom laves,
And floats, majestic, on the waves.

Grace gave thy form, in beauty gay,
And ranged thy teeth in bright array;
All tongues with joy thy praises tell,
And love delights with thee to dwell.

To thee harmonious powers belong,
That add to verse the charms of song;
Soft melody to numbers join,
And make the poet half divine.

As when the softly blushing rose
Close by some neighbouring lily grows;
Such is the glow thy cheeks diffuse,
And such their bright and blended hues!

The timid lustre of thine eye
With Nature's purest tints can vie;^{<1>}
With the sweet bluebell's azure gem,
That droops upon its modest stem!

The poets of Ierne's plains
To thee devote their choicest strains;
And oft their harps for thee are strung,
And oft thy matchless charms are sung

Thy voice, that binds the listening soul—
That can the wildest rage control;
Bid the fierce crane its powers obey,
And charm him from his finny prey.

Nor doubt I of its wondrous art;
Nor hear with unimpassioned heart;

Thy health, thy beauties,—ever dear!
Oft crown my glass with sweetest cheer!

Since the famed fair of ancient days,
Whom bards and worlds conspired to praise,
Not one like thee has since appeared,
Like thee, to every heart endeared:

How blest the bard, O lovely maid!
To find thee in thy charms arrayed!—
Thy pearly teeth,—thy flowing hair,—
Thy neck, beyond the cygnet; fair!—

As when the simple birds, at night,
Fly round the torch's fatal light,—
Wild, and with ecstasy elate,
Unconscious of approaching fate.

So the soft splendours of thy face,
And thy fair form's enchanting grace,
Allure to death unwary Love,
And thousands the bright ruin prove!

Even he whose hapless eyes no ray
Admit from Beauty's cheering day;
Yet, though he cannot see the light,
He feels it warm, and knows it bright.<2>

In beauty, talents, taste refined;
And all the graces of the mind,
In all unmatched thy charms remain,
Nor meet a rival on the plain.

Thy slender foot,—thine azure eye,—
Thy smiling lip, of scarlet dye,—
Thy tapering hand, so soft and fair,—
The bright redundance of thy hair!—

O blest be the auspicious day
That gave them to thy poet's lay!
O'er rival bards to lift his name,<3>
Inspire his verse, and swell his fame!

££

NOTES TO THE SONG FOR MABEL KELLY

1. *The timid lustre of thine eye*
With Nature's purest tints can vie.

It is generally believed that Carolan, (as his biographer tells us) "remembered no impressio of colours."—But I cannot acquiesce in this opinion: I think it must have been formed without sufficient grounds, for how was it possible that his description could be thus glowing, without he retained the clearest recollection, and the most animated ideas, of every beauty that sight can convey to the mind?

2. *Even he whose hapless eyes no ray
Admit from Beauty's cheering day;
Yet, though he cannot see the light,
He feels it warm, and knows it bright.*

Every reader of taste or feeling must surely be struck with the beauty of this passage. Can anything be more elegant, or more pathetic, than the manner in which Carolan alludes to his want of sight!—but, indeed, his little pieces abound in all the riches of natural genius.

3. *O'er rival Bards to lift his name,
Inspire his verse, and swell his fame!*

How modestly the poet here introduces a prophecy of his future reputation for genius!

SONG BY PATRICK LINDEN.

O fairer than the mountain snow,
When o'er it north's pure breezes blow!
In all its dazzling lustre dressed,
But purer, softer is thy breast

Colla the Great, whose ample sway
Beheld two kingdoms homage pay,
Now gives the happy bard to see
Thy branch adorn the royal tree!

No foreign graft's inferior shoot
Has dared insult the mighty root!
Pure from its stem thy bloom ascends,
And from its height in fragrance bends!

Hadst thou been present, on the day
When beauty bore the prize away,
Thy charms had won the royal swain;
And Venus' self had sued in vain!

With softened fire, imperial blood
Pours through thy frame its generous flood;
Rich in thy azure veins it flows,
Bright in thy blushing cheek it glows!

That blood whence noble Savage sprung,
And he whose deeds the bards have sung,
Great Conall-Cearnach, conquering name!
The champion of heroic fame!

Fair offspring of the royal race!
Mild fragrance! Fascinating grace!
Whose touch with magic can inspire
The tender harp's melodious wire!

See how the swan presumptuous strives,
Where glowing Majesty revives,
With proud contention, to bespeak
The soft dominion of that cheek!

Beneath it, sure, with subtle heed,
Some rose by stealth its leaf conveyed;
To shed its bright and beautiful dye,
And still the varying bloom supply.

The tresses of thy silken hair
As curling mists are soft and fair,
Bright waving o'er thy graceful neck,
Its pure and tender snow to deck!

But Oh! to speak the rapture found
In thy dear voice's magic sound!

Its powers could death itself control,
And call back the expiring soul!

The tide that filled the veins of Kings,
From whom thy noble lineage springs;
The royal blood of Colla, see
Renewed, O charming maid! in thee.

Nor in thy bosom slacks its pace,
Nor fades it in thy lovely face;
But there with soft enchantment glows,
And like the blossom's tint it shows.

How does thy needle's art portray
Each pictured form, in bright array!
With Nature's self maintaining strife,
It gives its own creation life!

O perfect, all-accomplished maid!
In beauty's every charm arrayed:
Thee ever shall my numbers hail,
Fair lily of the royal vale!

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NOTES TO SONG BY PATRICK LINDEN.

1. Colla was monarch of Ireland in the beginning of the fourth century. By the second kingdom, we must suppose the poet means the Dal-Riadas of Scotland.

THE MAID OF THE VALLEY.

Have you not seen the charmer of the vale?
Nor heard her praise, in Love's fond accents dressed?
Nor how that Love has turned my youth so pale!—
Nor how those graces rob my soul of rest!—

That softest cheek, where dimpling cherubs play!
That bashful eye, whose beams dissolve the heart!—
Ah, gaze no more, fond wretch!—no longer stay!—
'Tis death!—but ah, tis worse than death to part!

My blessings round the happy mansion wait,
That guards that form, in tender beauty dressed!
Those lips, of truth and smiles the rosy seat!
Those matchless charms, by every bard confessed!

That slender brow!—that hand so dazzling fair,
No silk its hue or softness can express!
No feathered songsters can their down compare
With half the beauty those dear hands possess!

Love in thy every feature couched a dart!
O'er thy fair face, and bosom's white he played;
Love in thy golden tresses chained my heart,
And heaven's own smile thy 'witching face arrayed!

Not Deirdre's charms that on each bosom stole,<1>
And led the champions of our isle away;
Nor she whose eyes threw fetters o'er the soul,
The famed Blanaide like thee the heart could sway!<2>

Of beauty's garden, oh thou fairest flower!
Accept my vows, and truth for treasure take!
Oh deign to share with me Love's blissful power,
Nor constant faith, for fleeting wealth, forsake!

My muse her harp shall at thy bidding bring,
And roll th' heroic tide of verse along;
And Fenian chiefs, and arms shall wake the string,
And Love and War divide the lofty song;

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NOTES TO THE MAID OF THE VALLEY.

1. *Not Deirdre's charms that on each bosom stole,
And led the champions of our isle away.*

See notes to the poem of Conloch.

2. *Nor she whose eyes threw fetters o'er the soul,
The famed Blanaide like thee the heart could sway?*

As the story to which this passage alludes is striking to a great degree, and related in a few words, I will quote it at large for the reader.

"Feircheirtne was *Ollamh File* to Conrigh, a celebrated chieftain, who lived in splendour on the banks of the Fionn-Glaise, in the county of Kerry. This warrior was married to Blanaide, a lady of transcendant beauty, who had been the meed of his prowess in single combat with Congculionne, a knight of the Red Branch. But the lady was secretly attached to the knight; and in an accidental interview which she had with him, offered to follow his fortunes, if he would, at a certain time, and on receiving a certain signal (both of which she mentioned) storm the castle, and put her husband, and his attendants, to the sword. Congculionne promised to follow her directions, and did so, inundating the castle with the blood of its inhabitants. Feircheirtne, however, escaped the slaughter, and pursued, at a distance, Blanaide and her paramour, to the court of Conor Mac-Nessa, determined to sacrifice his perfidious mistress to the manes of his patron.

"When the bard arrived at Emania, he found Conor, and his court, together with the amorous fugitives, walking on the top of a rock, called *Rinchin Beara*, enjoying the extensive prospect which it commanded. Blanaide, happening to detach herself from the rest of the company, stood, wrapped in deep meditation, on that part of the cliff which overhung a deep precipice. The bard, stepping up to her, began an adulatory conversation; then suddenly springing forward, he seized her in his arms, and throwing himself, with her, headlong down the precipice, both were dashed to pieces." *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*, p. 32. See also Keating.

MAON: AN IRISH TALE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The story of the following Tale is to be found in the ancient history of Ireland, and is related by Keating, O'Halloran, Warner, &c.<1>

DEDICATION

TO MR. AND MR

Charlotte Brooke

, TRANT,
THI

Reliques of Irish Poetry

TALE

I

Charlotte Brooke

RESPECTFULLY ADDRE

Reliques of Irish Poetry

Charlotte Brooke

ED,
BY THEIR OBLIGED,
AND MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,
CHARLOTTE BROOKE.

INTRODUCTION

Accomplished pair! These simple lays,
With favour's eye peruse;
And take from me, in artless phrase;
The message of the Muse.

A Muse, who ne'er, on Pindus' mount,
Trode inspiration's ground;
Nor drank sweet frenzy from the fount,
Where raptures breathe around:

But a bright Power, whom Nature forms,
And Nature's scenes inspire;
Who mounts the winds, and rides the storms,
And glows with heaven's own fire!

Who trained, of old, our sires to fame,
And led them to the field;
Taught them to glow with Freedom's flame,
And Freedom's arms to wield.

With the wild war-song fired the soul,
And sped the daring blow!—
Or, bowed to Pity's soft control,
Wept o'er a dying foe.

Or searched all Nature's treasures round,
To deck a favourite fair;
Or tuned to love a tender sound,
And sang a faithful pair.

This power, while late my couch I pressed,
To mental sight appeared;
To my charmed soul sweet words addressed,
By waking Fancy heard.

Shrined in the form of reverend age,
The friendly vision came;
Robed as of old, a bardic Sage,
And took Craftin 's name.<2>

"O thou," (he cried) "whose timid mind
Its purpose would delay!
Half shrinking from it,—yet inclined,—
Half daring, to essay.

"Let not the frown of critic wrath,
Or smile of critic scorn,

Affright thee from the splendid path,
Fame and the Muse adorn.

"The critic storm, that proudly rends
The oaks of Learning's hill,
Will pass thy shrub, that lowly bends,
Nor deign its growth to kill.

"Shine, while thou can'st, pale trembling beam,
Ere suns eclipse thy ray;
Thy little star awhile may gleam,
'Till Phoebus brings the day.

"For oft the Muse, a gentle guest,
Dwells in a female form;
And patriot fire, a female breast,
May sure unquestioned warm.

"No more thy glorious task refuse,
Nor shrink from fancied harms,
But, to the eye of Britain's Muse,
Present a sister's charms.

"Thee hath the sweet enchantress taught
The accents of her tongue;
Poured on thine ear her lofty thought,
Celestial as she sung.

"Now let her see thy grateful heart
With fond ambition burn,
Proud if thou can'st, at least in part,
Her benefits return.

"Long, her neglected harp unstrung,
With glooms encircled round;
Long o'er its silent form, she hung,
Nor gave her soul to sound.

"Roused from her trance, again to reign,
And re-assert her fame,
She comes, and deigns thy humble strain
The herald of her claim.

"Swells not thy soul with noble pride,
This honour to embrace,
Which partial fates for thee decide,
With such distinguished grace?—

"Coward!—from the bright path assigned,
Thy feet had turned away,
From the bright prize thine eye declined,
Too weak for Glory's ray:

"Did not a steadier soul exhort,
A steadier counsel guide,

With zeal thy timid mind support,
And its vain terrors chide.

"I know the pair by Genius loved,
By every Muse inspired,
Who thy unpractised strains approved,
And thy ambition fired!

"To *them* the Muse of ancient days
Avows the tribute due;
To *them* her grateful thanks she pays,
And—coward!—not to you.

"What should she do her love to show?—
From all her ample store,
What favours can her hand bestow
That were not theirs before?

"Yes, she can add those generous joys,
That sympathy of hearts,
Which kindred sentiment employs,
And worth to worth imparts.

"Go then to thy accomplished friends;
The Muse commands thee go;
Bear them the grateful gift she sends,
'Tis all she can bestow.

"Bear them the pride of ancient days;
Truth, science, virtue, fame;
The lover's faith, the poet's praise,
The patriotic flame!

All in the royal pair confessed,
Whose tale the bard pursues;
Like them, united, graced and blessed
By Virtue, and the Muse."

THE TALE.

Bowed to dark Cobthach's fierce command,
When struggling Erin groaned;
And, crushed beneath his bloody hand,
Her slaughtered sons bemoaned;

Of all whose honest pity dared
One tear humane to shed;
My life alone the savage spared,
Nor touched the sacred head.

Protected by the Muse's power,
And the bard's hallowed name,
I 'scaped the death-devoted hour,
The hour of blood and shame!

When Nature pleaded, Pity wept,
And Conscience cried in vain;

Reliques of Irish Poetry

When all the powers of vengeance slept
Upon a monarch slain.

Shocked History, from the dreadful day,
Recoiled with horror pale,
And, shrinking from the dire display,
Left half untold the tale!

But I, sad witness of the scene!
Can well its woes attest;
When the dark blade, with murder keen,
Spared not a brother's breast.<4>

When Nature, prescient as my soul,
With earthquakes rocked the ground;
Air bade its deepest thunders roll,
And lightnings flashed around!

While, on each blasting beam, their forms,
(The sons of death) were reared;
And, louder than the mingling storms,
The shrieks of ghosts were heard!

Till, oh! dark, cheerless, slow, and late,
The burdened morn arose;
When forth, to meet impending fate,
Alone the monarch goes.

In vain some guard do I conjure;
No heed will he bestow:
I follow to the fatal door,—
I hear the deadly blow!—

Hold, villain, hold!—but shortening breath
Arrests my feeble cries:
And seals awhile, in transient death,
My light-detesting eyes.

Yet soon, to further horrors doomed,
I raised my sickening head;
And Life her languid powers resume,—
To see Life's comfort fled.

The groans of Death around me rise,
Scarce yet distinctly heard!
While Fate, to my unclosing eyes,
In bloody pomp appeared!

As when the Spirit of the Deep,
His dreadful course maintains;
While his loosed winds o'er Ocean sweep,
And gloomy horror reigns!

Satiate with groans, and fierce with blood,
The dark malignant power

Rides, in grim triumph, o'er the flood,
And rules the deathful hour!

So the dire Cobthach, drunk with gore,
And glorying to destroy,
Aloft victorious horrors bore,
And smiled with hideous joy.

Close by the murdered Monarch's side,
The earth brave Ollioll pressed;^{<5>}
A dagger, bathed in life's warm tide,
Yet quivering in his breast.

Clasped round the dying Prince's neck,
His little Maon lay;^{<6>}
While the third dagger rose to strike
Its unresisting prey.

Roused at that sight; to madness stung,
I rushed amid the foe;
And, o'er the trembling victim flung,
I met the destined blow.

O happy wound! close to my breast,
(Though streaming from the knife)
My precious charge, thus saved,
I pressed, and guarded him with life.

Shocked at the sacrilegious stroke,
The arm of death recoiled;
While from the crowd the passions broke
That in their bosoms boiled.

The royal blood, that round them streamed,
They could with calmness view;
But, for the bard, their frenzy deemed,
The fiercest vengeance due!

A thousand swords to guard me rose,
Amid the conflict's roar;
While safe, from his surrounding foes,
My trembling charge I bore.

Long while he seemed, with life alone,
To 'scape that fatal day;
For Reason, from his little throne,
In terror fled away.

While thus bereft of sense he grew,
No fears the court invade,
And safe in the usurper's view,
The beauteous maniac played.

Reason, at length, a second dawn,
With cheering lustre, shed;

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And, from the tyrant's power withdrawn,
To Munster's King we fled.

There, long concealed from every foe,
Beneath the royal care,
I saw my lovely scion grow,
And shoot its branch in air.

Oh, while I viewed his blooming face,
And watched his opening mind
While, in a form of matchless grace,
I saw each virtue shrined:

With more than a parental pride,
My throbbing heart o'erflowed;
And each fond thought, to hope allied,
With sweet prediction glowed!

One daughter, bright in beauty's dawn,
The royal cares beguiled;
All sportive as the gladsome fawn,
And as the moon-beam mild.

Like the first infants of the spring,
Sweet opening to the view;
Fanned by the breezes tender wing,
And fresh with morning dew.

Such were fair Moriat's growing charms.
So bright her dawning sky;
And beauty, young, with early harms,
Was cradled in her eye.

By ties of sweet attraction drawn,
And paired by infant love,
Oft, lightly sporting o'er the lawn,
The royal children rove;

Together chase the gilded fly,
Or pluck the blooming flower;
Or boughs, with busy hands, supply,
To weave the little bower,

But now, as years and stature grow,
Maturer sports arise;
Now Maon bends the strongest bow,
And Moriat gives the prize.

Light dance the happy hours along,
To love's enchanting lay;
And pleasure tunes the sweetest song!
And every scene is gay.

But soon each beauteous vision flies
That blissful fancy forms;

As the soft smile of azure skies
Is chased by chiding storms.

Again fate lours, and dangers frown—
The bloody Cobthach hears—
Once more the dagger threatens to drown
In Maon's blood his fears.

And must we fly?—must Maon's heart
Its Moriat then forego?—
Must he with every comfort part,
To shun his cruel foe?—

He must; there are no other means
Of life or safety nigh;
Our only hope on Gallia leans,
And thither must he fly.

What tears!—what anguish!—what despair!—
At length he bade adieu:
Ah when again his faithful fair,
His native land to view?—

"Yes, soon again!" (he proudly cries;)
"In vengeance too arrayed!
On this right arm my hope relies,
And Gallia's friendly aid."

But Maon knew not yet, how near,
How tenderly allied,
To his own blood;—how very dear
The victims that had died.

First, his weak health, and tender years.,
Bade the dire truth conceal,
Which after, (though from different fears,)
We did not dare reveal.

For when, as strength and knowledge grew,
He heard the tale unfold;
But half its horrors given to view,
And half his wrongs untold:-

When, but as kindred to his sire,
The Monarch's death he heard;
Then, in his soul's quick mounting fire,
His royal race appeared.

Indignant passions filled his eye,
And from his accents broke;
While the pale lip, and bursting sigh,
His burdened soul bespoke.

In vain, his fury to assuage,
I every art bestowed;

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Still, with the rash resolves of rage,
His restless bosom glowed,
In such a cause, his arm alone
Of ample force he deems;
And, to pluck murder from its throne,
A slight adventure seems.

His youth, his rashness I bewailed,—
I trembled to behold;
And fear, and pitying love prevailed
To leave dire truths utold.

To Gallia now fate called—still, stil!
His birth we dared not show;
We dreaded lest some fatal ill
Should from his knowledge flow.

Youth's headlong passions moved our fears
The secret to secure,
Till practised thought, and manlier years,
His mind and arm mature.

When, from his weeping Moriat torn,
He bade the last adieu;
When from her sight—her palace borne,
He ceased its walls to view;

Then fresh distractions filled his breast,
The fears of anxious love;
Ah!—by some happier youth addressed—
Should Moriat faithless prove!

He stopped—his frame with anguish shook;
With groans his bosom rose;
The wildness of his air and look
My soul with terror froze.

"Dear guardian of my orphan state!"
(At length he faltering cried)
Thee too—thee too his cruel fate
From Maon must divide!

"To tend thy lovelier pupil's youth,
Do thou behind remain;
Remind her of her Maon's truth,
His constancy, his pain.

"Thou who hast formed my Moriat's heart,
With sweet and happy skill;
Obedient to thy gentle art,
And fashioned to thy will:

"O still that heart, those wishes guide
Beneath soft Love's control;

Whate'er in absence may betide,
To shake me from her soul.

"Should ever, from that beauteous breast,
Its fond impression stray;
Should aught e'er chase the tender guest,
With thoughtless mirth away;

"Then let thy sweet and melting hand
On the soft harp complain,
More skilful than the magic wand,
Awake the powerful strain.

"To call, like spirits from their sphere,
Each trembling passion round,
Its spellful potency to hear,
And sigh to every sound!

"The mournful sweetness soon will bring
To mind her Maon's woe;
And memory, o'er the tender string,
In faithful tears will flow.

"Alas, thine eye rejects my prayer!
O yet, let pity sway!
Or see vain life no more my care,
Or now consent to stay!"

Distracted,—shocked at his command;
In vain all arts I tried,
His cruel purpose to withstand,
And with him still abide:

In vain all arguments addressed,
In vain did I implore;
He wept—he strained me to his breast,—
But left me on the shore.

Sad, devious, careless of their course,
My lonely steps returned,
While sorrow drained its weeping source,
And age's anguish mourned.

Bereft of him for whom alone
Life deigned to keep a care,
For him I heaved the ceaseless groan,
And breathed the ceaseless prayer.

I only lived at his request,—
His bidding to obey;
And cheer his Moriat's faithful breast,
To wasting grief a prey.

From her fair eye to wipe the tear,
Her guardian and her guide:

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Dear to my heart! but doubly dear,
As Maon's destined bride.

O, absence! tedious thy delay,
And sad thy hours appear;
While numbering sighs recount each day
That fills the long, long year.

Yet not devoid of hope we grieved,
For oft glad tidings came;
Oft our reviving souls received
The news of Maon's fame.

The prince of Gallia's fertile land,
To Erin's throne allied,
Graced his young kinsman with command,
And placed him near his side.

Together o'er the martial field
They chase the routed foe;
Together war's fierce terrors wield,
And strike the glorious blow!

At length, to him the sole command
Of Gallia's armies fell,
For now, his trained and valiant band
Well knew her foes to quell.

The terror of the Gallic arms
To east—to west he spread,
And, safe returned from fierce alarms,
His conquering powers he led.

All tongues his prowess now attest;
Exulting Moriat hears;
The sounds bring rapture to her breast,
And music to her ears.

"Now, now," (she cried) "what hinders now
The work his virtue planned?
What hinders to perform his vow,
And free his captive land!"

"Ah Moriat! bright in every charm
That Nature's power could give!
Ah, haste thy tender breast to arm,
Hear the dire news—and live!"

"Prepare thy Maon to disown;
Thy thoughts from love divide;
The daughter of the Gallic throne
Is destined for his bride."

Ah sounds of death!—she faints, she falls!
Down sinks the beauteous head.—

At length our care to life recalls,
But peace, alas! is fled.

"Where now is Virtue?—where is Love?
O Faith! O Pity!—where?
Can Maon cruel,—perjured prove,
And false as fondly swear?

"Ah no, ah no!—it cannot be!—
Too well that heart I know!—
Alas!—now, now the cause I see
Whence all, my sorrows flow!

"Fly, fly Craftiné!—to thy Lord
My soul's entreaty bear!
And O! may Heaven calm seas afford,
And swiftest winds prepare!

"Tell him, it is my true request,
It is my firm command,
That Love, a fond imprudent guest,
No more restrain his hand.

"Tell him, he freely may espouse
My happy rival's charms;
Tell him, I give him back his vows,
I yield him to her arms.

"So may the strength of Gallia's throne
Attend a filial prayer,
And force our tyrant to atone
For all the wrongs we bear.

"Alas! I fear it will not be!—
Too faithful is his heart!
From vows so deep,—from Love and me
He never will depart.

"Even now, perhaps, his softening soul
The fond ideas move,
And yield it to the sweet control
Of—ah, too mighty Love!

"Friends, kindred, country, honour, fame,
And vengeance are forgot;
And, with a fond, ill-omened flame,
His sighing soul is fraught.

"O haste thee then, ere yet too late,
To shield thy pupil's fame;
To snatch it from impending fate,
And from impending shame!

"Tell him his country claims him now.—
To her his heart he owes;

And shall a love-breathed wish, or vow,
That glorious claim oppose?—

"Tell him to act the patriot part
That Erin's woes demand;
Tell him, would he secure my heart,
He must resign my hand.—

"Haste, haste thee hence!—tell him—yet stay!—
O Heaven! my heart inspire!
O what—what further shall I say,
His soul with fame to fire?—

"Soft—soft—'tis mine!—O happy hour!
It cannot fail to move!
O blest be Erin's guardian power!
And blest be patriot love!"

While thus the sweet enthusiast speaks,
She seems o'er earth to rise;
Sublime emotions flush her cheeks,
And fill her radiant eyes!

In her soft hand the style she takes,<7>
And the beech tablet holds;
And there the soul of glory wakes,
And all her heart unfolds.

"'Tis done!—now haste thee hence," (she cried)
With this to Gallia fly;—
And O! let all thy power be tried,
To gain him to comply!

"O fire his soul with glory's flame!
O send me from his heart!
Before his country, and his fame,
Let blushing love depart!—

"For me,—on duty I rely,
My firm support to prove;
And Erin shall the room supply
Of Maon and of love."

"Blest be thy soul, O peerless maid!
Bright sun of virtue's heaven!
For O! to thee, her light, her aid,
And all her powers are given!"

I went:—I bounded o'er the wave,
To Gallia's verdant shore;
The winds a swift conveyance gave,
And soon to harbour bore.

And soon, at Gallia's splendid court,
I lowly bent the knee,

While fondest hopes my heart transport;
Again my Prince to see.

My hopes were just.—Sublime he came,
Arrayed in glory's charms!,
I panted to unfold my name,
To rush into his arms!—

It must not be;—a close disguise
My face and form conceals;
No token, to my Maon's eyes,
As yet, his bard reveals.

Patient, as Moriat bade, I wait,
Collecting all my power,
Till, to the busy forms of state,
Succeeds the festive hour.

The feast is o'er:—the lightened board
With sparkling shells is crowned;
And numbers next their aid afford,
And give new soul to sound.

Then, then my harp I trembling take,
And touch its lofty string,
While Moriat's lines its powers awake,
And, as she bade I sing.

"Maon! Bright and deathless name!
Heir of Glory!—son of fame!
Hear, O hear the Muse's strain!
Hear the mourning bard complain!—
Hear him, while his anguish flows
O'er thy bleeding country's woes.
Hear, by him, her Genius speak!
Hear her, aid and pity seek!

"Maon, (she cries) behold my ruined land!
The prostrate wall,—the blood-stained field:—
Behold my slaughtered sons, and captive sires,
Thy vengeance imprecate, thy aid demand!
(From reeking swords and raging fires,
No arm but thine to shield.)
Come see what yet remains to tell
Of horrors that befell
Come see where death, in bloody pomp arrayed,
Triumphed o'er thy slaughtered race!
Where murder showed his daring face,
And shook his deadly blade.

"Hark!—Hark!—That deep-drawn sigh!—
Hark!—from the tomb my slaughtered princes cry!
Still attention! hold thy breath!—,
Listen to the words of death!—
Start not Maon!—arm thy breast!

Hear thy royal birth confessed.
Hear the shade of Laoghaire tell
All the woes his house befell.

"Son of my son!" (he cries,) "O Maon! Hear!—
Yes, yes,—our child thou art!
Well may the unexpected tale
Thus turn thy beauty pale!
Yet cheer, my son, thy fainting heart,
And silent, give thine ear.

"Son of Ollioll's love art thou,
Offspring of his early vow.
One dreadful morn our fall beheld,
One dagger drank our kindred blood;
One mingling tide the slaughter swelled,
And murder bathed amid the royal flood.

"Again,—again they rise to sight!—
The horrors of that fatal day!—
Encircling peril! Wild affright!
Groans of death, and deep dismay!

"See Erin's dying princes press the ground!
See gasping patriots bleed around!
See thy grandsire's closing eye!
Hear his last expiring sigh!
Hear thy murdered sire, in death,
Bless thee with his latest breath!

"Tears!—shall tears for blood be paid?—
Vengeance hopes for manly aid!
There—to yon tomb direct thine eyes!—
See the shade of Ollioll rise!
Hark!—he groans!—his airy side
Still shows the wound of death!
Still, from his bosom, flows the crimson tide,
As when he first resigned his guiltless breath!

"Maon!" (he cries,) "O hear thy sire!
See, from the tomb, his mangled form arise!
Vengeance—vengeance to inspire,
It meets thine aching eyes!

"Speak I to an infant's ears,
With shuddering blood and flowing tears?
Rouse thee!—rouse thy daring soul!
Start at once for glory's goal!

"Rush on Murder's blood-stained throne!
Tear from his brow my crown!
Pluck, pluck the fierce barbarian down!
And be triumphant vengeance all thy own!"

Ha!—I behold thy sparkling eyes!
Erin!—'tis done!—thy Tyrant dies!
Thy Maon comes to free his groaning land!
To do the work his early virtue planned.
He comes, the heir of Laoghair's splendid crown!
He comes, the heir of Ollioll's bright renown!
He comes, the arm of Gallia's host;
Valour's fierce and lovely boast!
Gallia's grateful debt is paid;
See, she gives her generous aid!
Her warriors round their hero press;
They rush, his wrongs, his country to redress.

But, ah! What star of beauty's sky
Beams wonder on my dazzled eye?
What form of light is here?
And wherefore falls that softly trembling tear!—
Fair vision! do thy sorrows flow,
To balm a stranger's woe!—

Those dear drops that Pity brings,
How bright, how beauteous they appear!
The radiance of each tender tear.
Might gem the diadems of kings!

Ah, 'tis Gallia's royal fair!—
Her sole and lovely heir!—
O Nature! See thy power confessed!
See that dear, that beauteous breast
Beat with thy mystic throb!
Hear the big sob
Heave the soft heart, and shake the tender frame!

O bright abode of Pity's power!
Sweet altar of her trembling flame!
Well (fairest!) in this fateful hour,
Well may thy tears thy kindred race proclaim!
Well may'st thou weep for Erin's woes,
Since, in thy veins, the blood of Laoghair flows!

Monarch of the Gallic throne,
List to my voice!—
A union that might make the world thy own,
Now courts thy choice.

See the bright daughter of thy love!
Yet unmated is thy dove.
Can that soft hand a sceptre wield?—
Can that fair breast a nation shield?—

No,—but with our prince allied,
Erin's loved and lovely bride,
Then, our joint empire, how might it extend!
And wide our glittering standards be unfurled!

To our united power the earth might bend,
And our high sceptre, then, should sway, a world!

Thus, delegated, while I spoke,
My mandate to obey;
Swift on my words the Princess broke,
And rapt my powers away.

"Never will I consent (she cried)
To wear thy country's crown;
Nor ever be thy Maon's bride,
Though splendid his renown!

"Yet think not, bard, my senseless breast
Quite dead to Glory's flame;
Think not I slight a prince, confessed
The favourite son of fame.

"Once, bard,—I do not blush to own,
Though Gallia's royal heir,
I would have given the world's high throne,
A cot with him to share.

"But, when I heard the tender tales
His gentle accents told;
How sweet a rose the royal vales
Of Fearmorka hold;<8>

"I shrunk from the ungenerous thought
That might their loves destroy;
And, in his dearer peace, I sought
To find reflected joy.

"Nor now could worlds my heart persuade
To be thy Maon's bride,
Or, from his blest Momonian maid,
His faithful vows divide.

"But who art thou, whose wishes tower
Wide empire, thus, to wield;
Who, to Ambition's haughty power,
Would Love a victim yield?"—

"O maid of Heaven!"—I could no more,
For tears my words arrest;
And joy the garb of sorrow wore,
Big heaving in my breast.

With rapture mute, the close disguise
Quick from my limbs I threw;
And straight, to Maon's wondering eyes,
Craftiné stood to view.

Forward, with lightning's speed, he sprung,
And caught me to his heart;

While eager round my neck he clung,
As if no more to part.

Then sudden, starting from my breast,
His eye my form surveyed;
Its searching beams his doubts expressed,
And struggling soul displayed.

"And is it then Craftiné speaks?"
(At length he faltering cries;)
"Is it that honoured sage who seeks
His pupil to misguide?"

"Can then Craftiné bid me fly
From Virtue's firm control;
And bid the breath of fame supply
Her empire in my soul!"

"Does the sage guide of Maon's youth
Now teach the traitor's art;—
Teach, with the smiles of seeming truth?
To veil a venal heart?"

"One lovely maid of heavenly charms,
Betrothed, and won, to leave;
And, wedded to another's arms,
Her generous soul deceive!"

"A double traitor shall I prove,
And stain with guilt my name!—
Lost both to honour, and to love,
To virtue, and to shame!—"

"No, royal Aidé, formed to bless!
Thou would'st disdain the art;
And charms like thine should sure possess
An undivided heart.

"Sweet maid! with each endowment blest
That favouring Heaven could give,
O! Ever in my grateful breast,
Shall thy dear image live!"

"But further, by a form so bright,
Had my fond soul been won;
Won by thy charms, thou lovely light
Of Virtue's sacred sun!"

"To thee had changing passion strayed
From vows of earlier youth;
Thy bright example, glorious maid!
Had shamed me into truth.

"Yet think me not, though true to love,
So dead to virtuous fame,

To prize a selfish joy above
The patriot's hallowed flame.

"O Erin! that I hold thee dear,
This arm shall soon attest;
For now revenge—revenge draws near,—
In death and terrors dressed!

"And, O revered and royal shades!
Ye dwellers of my soul!
Whose memory this sad heart pervades,
With limitless control!

"Bend from your clouds each radiant face,
While, firm as fate's decrees,
I swear, the manes of my race,
With vengeance to appease:

"But Moriat!—never from my breast
Shall thy mild virtues part!
There ever shalt thou reign, confessed
The sovereign of my heart!

"Say bard, who thus thy soul has swayed?
Who could thy sense misguide,
To bid me leave my lovely maid,
And seek another bride?"

"No art, O Maon, swayed my breast,
But Power the mandate gave;;
Denied 'my age its needful rest,
And sped me o'er the wave."

"What haughty power could thus assume
An empire o'er my soul?—
O'er Love and Virtue thus presume
To arrogate control?

"A power, to whom thy humble vow
Ere long shall be addressed
A power to whom thy soul shall bow,
And stoop its lofty crest."

"Ha! tell me then,—who, who shall dare
To dictate to my heart?
To bid it from its wish forbear,
And from its love depart?—

"Earnest, O Prince! was my command,
And urgent was my speed;
A mandate from my Moriat's hand
This fruitless voyage decreed."

"Moriat!—away—it cannot be!
Shame on thy cruel art!—

Hence, hence away, while yet thou'rt free,
And with thy tale depart."

"Unjustly, Prince, am I disgraced,
And guiltless do I stand;
Behold the characters she traced;
Behold her well known hand."

"Ha!—blindness to my tortured sight!
O hope! Behold thy grave!—
O death to every fond delight
That Love to promise gave!

"Say, bard, while sense yet lives to hear,
Whence came this cruel change?
O what, from vows so fond, so dear,
Could such a soul estrange?"

"What happy rival, in her heart,
Now holds her Maon's place,
Who thus, with such successful art,
His image could efface?"

"Mistaken Prince! No second flame
Thy Moriat's heart can prove;
And it is only Maon's *fame*
Can rival Maon's *love*."

"O haste," (she cried) "haste to thy Lord,
My soul's entreaty bear!
And O may Heaven calm seas afford,
And swiftest winds prepare!"

"Tell him his country claims him now,
To her his heart he owes;
And shall a love-breathed wish or vow
That glorious claim oppose."

"Tell him to act the patriot part
That Erin's woes demand;
Tell him, would he secure my heart,
He must resign my hand."

"For me, on duty I rely
My firm support to prove,
And Erin shall the room supply
Of Maon and of Love."

"Tell him he freely may espouse
My happy rival's charms;
Tell him I give him back his vows,
I yield him to her arms."

"So may the strength of Gallia's throne,
Attend a filial prayer,

And force one tyrant to atone
For all the wrongs we bear.

"Now Prince,—now judge thy Moriat's heart;
Now blame her dear command;
Now, if thou wilt, condemn the part
Her patriot virtue planned"

With rapturous wonder's sweet alarm,—
With speechless joy oppressed,
The trembling Maon reached his arm,—
And sunk upon my breast.—

Dissolved in the applauding tear
That heart to virtue pays,
The wondering melting crowd appear,
While on the scene they gaze.

Low at the feet of Gallia's throne
The lovely Aidé bowed;
Sweet in persuasive charms she shone;
And thus her suit avowed:

"Now, now a boon, my royal sire!
If ever I was dear,
O grant me now one sole desire,
One fond petition hear.

"Let now the flower of Gallia's host
Our Maon's arm attend,
And speed him hence to Erin's coast,
His country to defend.

"To tear the murderer of his race
From his insulted throne,
His wrongs, with vengeance, to efface,
And blood with blood atone."

Propitious to the warm request
Of his enchanting child,
Her suit the royal Father blessed,
And with acceptance smiled.

Then rising, on the Prince she turned
Her more than angel face;
Her eye with heavenly radiance burned
And beamed benignant grace.

"Now go;—to Erin's happy shore
Direct thy course," (she cried)
"Peace to thy native land restore,
And o'er its realms preside;

"And tell that sister of my soul,
Thy loved Momonian Maid,

Like her, I strain to Virtue's goal,
On Glory's wings conveyed.

"Tell her, though oceans roll between
Our shores, at distance placed,
Yet is she by my spirit seen;
And by my heart embraced,

"And say,—when death dissolves our frames;—
When free to Æther's wing,
And borne aloft on purest flames,
Our souls exulting spring;

"Rivals no more, we then shall meet;
In air's bright chariot's move;
And joyful join in union sweet,
And everlasting love."—

Thus while she spoke, tears dimmed her sight;
Her cheek its rose withdrew;
And quick as lightning's radiant flight,
She vanished from our view:

Maon, pale, mute, o'erwhelmed, distressed,
Had sunk before the Maid,
And, to the spot her feet had pressed
His grateful lips he laid.

A while the pitying Monarch gazed,
And dropt a tender tear;
Then from the earth the youth he raised,
His drooping soul to cheer.—

Now, snatched from every trophied wall,
Bright standards float in air,
And, to their Champion's glorious call,
The Gallic chiefs repair.

Fate-winged, along the rolling wave,
Their ships exulting flew;
And Erin soon her harbours gave
To our enraptured view.

Then Retribution's dreadful hour
Appalled the guilty breast!
Stern frowned the terror-giving power,
In blood and vengeance dressed.

As when fierce Neith mounts his car,
With dreadful splendours bright;
And, thundering in the front of war,
Sweeps o'er the fields of fight!

Dismayed before the withering God,
The routed armies fly;

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Death in his arm, fate in his nod,
And battles in his eye!

So his bright car our Maon graced,
In martial charms arrayed:
So his young arm, by vengeance braced,
Shook high its deadly blade!

But the soft muse, of war no more
Will undelighted tell:
She loves the calm, the peaceful shore,
Where gentler virtues dwell.

Haste we from the avenging powers
Of Justice and of fate;
Haste we to Fearmorka's bowers,
With Love's fond hopes elate.

Ah Moriat! How will thy soft breast
The mighty joy sustain?
Ah gently, rapture!—see, oppressed
She sinks upon the plain.

She sinks—but Love's extended arms
From earth her beauties raise;
And Love's soft voice awakes her charms
And cordial cheer conveys.

Speechless awhile, she looks,—she sighs
Unutterable joy;
Nor memory yet a thought supplies
The transport to destroy.

At length, her recollected breast
Recalls the Gallic Bride,
When shuddering, back she shrinks distressid,
Nor seeks her soul to hide.

"Ah Maon! Go!" (she trembling cries,)
"Another claims thee now:
Go, go where fame with love allies
To plight thy nobler vow."

"No, my soul's treasure! never more
From thy dear arms to part;
Here will I kneel, and here adore
With a devoted heart.

"Ah, could'st thou think with empty fame
Thine image to efface?—
Or bid me, with another flame,
This bosom to disgrace!

"Bright Aidé would with scorn have viewed
The wretch, to honour dead;

And shame and hatred had pursued
This base and guilty head.

"Come, dearer than the world's renown!
(And now, at length, my own!)—
Come, with thy virtues gem my crown,
And consecrate my throne!"—

How shall the Muse the tale pursue?—
What words her strain shall swell?
Or paint to sympathy's fond view
What language fails to tell?

Think all that Glory can bestow!
That Virtue's soul imparts
Conceive the nameless joys that flow
From Love's selected hearts.

Conceive the Patriot's glowing breast
Whom grateful nations crow!
With virtue, love, and empire blest,
And honour's clear renown.—

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Here let me end.—And now, O Maid!
Receive the bard's adieu;—
Invoke the favouring Muse's aid,
And still thy task pursue.

'Twill give new objects to thy ken;
Of care thy breast beguile;
And, on the labours of thy pen
Thy country's eye will smile.

I came thy ardour to excite.—
Once more, O Maid! adieu.—
He spoke, and, lost in splendid light,
He vanished from my view.

££

NOTES TO MAON, AN IRISH TALE

1. This story is found in Section 29 of Geoffrey Keating's *History of Ireland*, on this site at <https://www.exclassics.com/ceitinn/for32.htm>

2. *Shrined, in the form of reverend age,
The friendly vision came;
Robed as of old, a Bardic Sage,
And took Craiftin 's name.*

Craiftin , a celebrated Irish bard who flourished in A.M. 3648. Vide Keating.

3. *To them the Muse of ancient days
Avows the tribute due.*

The mention of *the Muse*, in this place, may appear rather too classical, but the

ancient Irish had their Muse, as well as the Greeks and Romans, and her name was *Be-gúbha*.

4. *When the dark blade, with murder keen,
Spared not a brother's breast.*

Cobthach, a prince of an envious and aspiring temper, repining at the greatness of his brother, Laoghaire Lorc, then monarch of Ireland, determined to wade through murder to the throne. To effect this purpose, he pretended illness, and was constantly and affectionately visited by his unsuspecting brother; but finding that he still came attended, and, therefore, gave no opportunity for the meditated blow, he requested a private interview with him; it was granted, and the following day appointed for the purpose; Laoghaire came, but found his brother apparently dead; and bending over him, in the bitterness of his sorrow, was stabbed, by the perfidious and ungrateful Cobthach, to the heart. See Keating, Warner, &c.

5. *Close by the murdered Monarch's side,
The earth brave Ollioll pressed.*

Ollioll Aine, son to Laoghaire Lorc, who was thus murdered by his brother Cobthach.

6. *Clasped round the dying Prince's neck,
His little Maon lay.*

Maon, son to Ollioll Aine.

7. *In her soft hand the style she takes.*

Before the use of paper or parchment, the matter on which the Irish wrote their letters was on tablets cut out of a beech tree, and smoothed by a plane, which they inscribed with an iron pencil, called a style; the letters themselves were anciently termed *Feadha* (woods) from the matter on which they were written, as well as because they were the names of trees; and this was the practice of other nations before paper and parchment were discovered. Warner's *Hist. Irel. Int.* p. 65.

8. *How sweet a rote the royal vales
Of Fearnorka hold.*

In the west of Munster.

9. *As when fierce Neith mounts his car,
With dreadful splendours bright.*

The God of Battles of the Pagan Irish.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF CONLOCH

Teacht Coñláoch go héirinn.

Táinig tialé an boiblaóe
An cuplaóe crioða Coñlaoch
An rna múreá gáireá ginn
ó Dhún-rgaéarí go héirinn
Fáiste dúit a laoch lunn
A macáonín áluinn airmginn
Iy corinnis le do éar nair ndáil
Go nabusy real an reacrán

Anois ó éainzif anois
 O éirich óirítear an doimne
 Do dearbhad do gairze gímn
 An kead éiméaíra an éirín
 Connead an maón ara moíam
 Léir éiric mólaocháib an Albain
 Mo tógam do líog óir leaí
 Anéime éiríra an éiríe
 War é rin bair cčíóir ne real
 Ir nar tulleadé le haonheac
 Conzre me éura do éach
 O noz go lá an luáin bíáíe
 Moir rzuir an laoc da lámach
 Conlaoch maocda foimánach
 Mo zur ceanglad céad nar rluatg mir
 Anzéibionn ir maíe mé'n aíteir
 An rin canar Concubair ne cách
 Cíod gaebmáoir do túl na dáil
 Do bairkead eaíra no rgeal
 Ir na ttocead ma díomda uairde
 Eirígíoir Conall nar lag lámh
 Do buair rgeala den macair
 Fe dearbair le fuair an laoié
 Zur ceanglad Conall le Conláoié

Ygeala uairi ari ceann na Con
Do maio níg aithia Ulad
Go Dún-dealgan ghlanaic ghinn
Fean dun rialthar deicéinn
Fáilte o gac áon moirí an ccoir
Iy mall éangáoir dapi ccabair
Ta Conall marí rcead ambuioir
Iy ceád dapi rloig na cóimidear
Iy deacairi dúinn gan beic ambuioir
Deir na bfeair do maicad a ccoirgair
Iy deacairi dúinn dul cum caeta
Iey an laoc leir ceanglad Conall
Ma rmuair gan dul na dair
Ulaic na nairm naricgeair
Ulaic rreair nari ceir neac
Fuarthail hoire ó cúibneach
An tan éualad Cuna lann
Eigeán agur cúibneac Chomull
An curad buó rreine láin
Teir ag buair ygeil don macáin
Cuir ma bo hegeang durt
Mo ygeala marí capair
beir do moig a élabuibe buig
Yul ma heagal durt comiac

Mí tugaí hóm óm cúmach
 Fgeála éabhair daon cúmad
 Is da ttagaí do neac fa nemi
 Dob géalghúir feiñ dó noíruinn
 Ain rin troido me céile
 Teairc coimiac doh aóiméile
 Ain macaom go bfuair aóim
 Re rhor na eiríoyige coimioiñ
 Ainoyra óglaoió can do rgeal
 ó tá do éiréuct go hádbéil
 Geáir go troidcaim air do leaí
 Is na ceil fear da éiméaí
 Léig daim tuicim air an máig
 Driuid hóm is tū m'ácair
 Iair deir go bfeicid firi fáil
 Éde m'fhulaing isin teagmáil
 Is mé Coílaoch mac na Coi
 Oighe díleat Dún-dealgan
 Éde an rún d'fhágbuir a mbioiñ
 Ain Dún-rgaéaig air órógluim.
 Triuaig a imc gan do maéair
 Ain laéair triac do éoygair
 Mo go ttagingead ri deáira
 Fad éiréaí is tū zonta

Is mé an taéair 'marb mac
 Mar éairéad eioð na úiréat
 Éde an enáim gan romur
 Láim do bi le lúac-donur.
 Is me'n báric ó tuiñ go tuinn
 Is me'n long iair ndul da rciuir
 Is me'n tuball ambair an éiraiñ
 Is beag do fáoil a tuicim.

Triúag nac a gcroíca Crísteac
Ma bhíán ca fuilteac dóirída
Do túicir a síg lútmair
Mo a gcroích fúlcair Foirca
O taim anoir am' beaéaroh
Ir mo máic d'fhearaib' Alban
Maic leó do triáoíad húaillir
'Yar máic d'úairíh na bhfhiancaí
Uch! Ir meara mar tárla
'Do nuaí! damra adonuir
'i Choñláoc na fíleag scoicra
'Do féin air ndóiríad écola
'Do beic ca buaio gan foineair
'i Ir ttoiríeaf duit ran coiríer
Gan trióir cóiríche air uirge
Triúag nar míun duitir áoirce
Do jad umam céo cumair
'Do bheic dubhach ni hi óngnad
Tair-éir coiríac me méimíac
'Do éiríochta anoir Ir ionda
'i hi óngnad mo bheic tuiríeac
'Y gan meic Uiríeac do laéair
'i g'fín me déir na ríóíreair
'Gan mac díleair gan briaéair

Gan Coñláoc ca n'óir damíe
beic gan Máoirí gan áimle
bheic gan áirídan Ir ionnra
Moíca hionnra nac lántríúag
C - r - ú - a - g - h r - l - n.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF MAGNUS THE GREAT

Láoió Wdaḡnuyr moji.

- O. W c̄lénuḡ chanuy na ralm
Dai lom k̄ej̄n n̄j̄ maḡ an c̄all
'H ac̄ eir̄oḡn tai mal beaḡ rḡéj̄l
Wji an b̄k̄ej̄n̄ na c̄ b̄racay r̄jam̄
- P. Dai mo c̄úbar̄ a deḡḡmeic̄ f̄hinn̄
ḡe b̄inn̄ leat̄ teaḡ̄ wji an b̄k̄ej̄n̄
R̄j̄c̄ na ralm̄ wji keaḡ mo b̄éj̄l
J̄r e r̄m̄ j̄r c̄éol̄ dai k̄ej̄n̄
- O. Wda táoió aḡ jom̄ar̄b̄áid̄ do f̄alm̄
Ie f̄j̄án̄ ḡaoid̄eal̄ na nam̄ no c̄t̄
W! a c̄lénuḡ j̄r lán̄ olc̄ lom̄
H̄ar̄ r̄c̄ar̄uȳ do c̄eaḡ̄ meḡ c̄oḡp̄
- P. Cum̄ar̄ic̄ oḡic̄ a oḡláoié̄ m̄oḡji
F̄uḡle do b̄éoīl̄ j̄r b̄inn̄ lom̄

Uin tallaṅ tōḡar aṅ Fhionn
Romairē ljom tear̄ aṅ an bʰéin̄.
O. Lá dūin̄ ag fíadac̄ na leanḡ
Mac̄ tṱápla fear̄g aṅ aṅ nḡar̄
Ḷo bʰacamaṅ mōnan bāic̄
Ug tear̄ ran tṱáiḡ tair̄ leaṅ
Tṱimáoid̄ anoir̄ 'ra nḡar̄
Cmuisṱiḡid̄ an Fhíán̄ ar̄ ḡac̄ aṅ
Fear̄c̄t̄ ceair̄t̄ anoir̄ḡoil̄ ḡo pṱiab̄
Tṱimáoid̄ fō mác̄ nḡin̄ éair̄ḡ
Uṅ é an ḡlóm̄ do chan̄ mṱm̄
Fíon̄ fṱéin̄dē fíair̄t̄ an tṱlōiḡ
Cia do maáad̄ dṱáimair̄t̄ rḡéil̄
Ḷo bʰuiḡe fṱéin̄ a bláé 'ra bʰuair̄t̄
Uṅ rṱin̄ do maáid̄ Conán̄ máol̄
Ḷdac̄ Ḷdōimea fṱa cláon̄ 'ḡhōin̄!
Uṅ áir̄ meic̄ Cumail̄ na ceair̄t̄
Cia bláid̄ ann̄ aṅ fíair̄t̄ no mṱḡ
Ḷduḡair̄t̄ Conán̄ aṅ
Uṅ deaḡ Fhinn̄ cia maáad̄ ann̄
Uṅ fear̄ḡur̄ fíoir̄ḡlic̄ do mác̄
O fṱé c̄leair̄c̄t̄ do dól̄ na cceann̄
Ḷdallaṅ̄ oṅc̄ a Chonán̄ máol̄
Do maáid̄ fear̄ḡur̄ fṱa caoin̄ cṱuē

Raáadóra díárraíó an ríéil
 Ái gíáó dón kéin 'rín do'ó gúic
 Glúairíor fearíúir ainnac óg
 Ái ra ríóó a gcóir na bfeair
 Ír fiárraíúíor do gúic móir
 Cía na ríóig éáiníú táir leair?
 Tá Wááíúir oimínn mar éiríáé
 Wac an Wheíóig ná ríááé ndearíú
 Áiríúig loclann ceáí na ceiríóó
 Gíolla nac míí fíoch ír fearíú
 Cíead fá' mglúair an búirdean bóirb
 Fá ríú loclann na long mbíeac
 Wair díárraíú cumóir áir Fíonn
 Ír íomáíé a ttoiríú táir leair
 Do íreagáir Wááíúir go bóirb
 Áiríúig loclann na long mbíeac
 beáira mé a bean ó Fhíonn
 Dairíóeóir áir tuinn, aguir bían
 bheáíúó an Fhíán coiríac eiríúó
 Doo ílíúáí ríul a deirbíúó bían
 Ír cúiríúó Fíonn caé a ndíúir
 Ríul fá ttoiríú uáíó a bean
 Dair do láirí a Fheairíúir kéil
 Áir an bkéiní ge móir do éeann

Do béaríad liom brian 'ra rían
Mo coimíac d'án tair a ceann
Ar do lámh ze móir do dóig
Ar do fílóig ze móir do níuim
Ar líón do éainig tair lear
Mí beáira brian uasí ēair tuim
D'íll fearígar mo bmaēair feín
Ra raihar le gíem a émuē
Íhígear na ríēala ēall
Ar laēair fhinn har ēuill guē
Aríomig loēlann rúo ra tmaig
Cad ē an rāc dūim a ēeic
Mí gēabard gan bíalad lann
Mo do bean rdo dū 'na bmaē
Mí ējubíad mpre mo bean
D'phear go maēad me azeic
'Rí ējubíad mpre brian d'air
Go ndeāca an bār um bēal
Do maē mac Cuihar me Goll
Dhar móir an gloí dūim beic ttoī
Gan coimíac d'íbeimígead teann
Thabairit do Ríhaígar arim noī
Dair an lámírim oic a fhinn
ó do chíi mar táom anoī

Fleag ari gualainn zac rri moir
Ydo cuadair pompa zo triag
An oioche rin duinn zo la
Mioi gnae linne beie gan ceol
Flead, agur fion eioch yr ceim
Ye bi againn keim pa'n ol
Wair rin duinn zo'n daia lo
Zo bpacan na floig me poie
Weyre mig loclann an aig
Da togbair 'ran triag me'ri nu
Iomda cotan iomda triag
Iomda rgiag, yr luiraeac deairg
Iomda taoiraeac yr mac mig
Mj maibe laoié oioe gan ari
Iomda cloioioin noomclad noiri
Iomda rriol da cup me ciann
A ceae fuitteach fhinn na bplead
Dob iomda fleag or ari ceioin.
Dob iomda an clogad equaid
Dob iomda tuae agur ga
An pa coimiac di bi an
Dob iomda mig agur flae
Ho'ari gal-greine me ciann
briatac fhinn pa leon a tteair

Lá n do clocaib tige 'noim
 Dar mo d'óig fa móir amear
 Mo f'ar d'úim kulang toirad
 b'atad g'oll móir meic R'óime
 R'ime fuáir an t'pól émorad
 Túr ir deimead f'ionmairad
 Ag emad a éim 'fan ceat
 Do imh gac klair mar do g'eall
 Fiañ Eimeann na ccoimlan ccoiúad
 b'irid ar rhuáig imre Gall.
 Thapla mac Cuimail na ceuách
 Ie m'g loclann na muáig náig
 Re céile ar t'uitim fluáig
 Och! a cléimig, t'ruac an dáil.
 Do imheadar im'pear teann
 Go maó dealra me dá óim
 Coimiac fuiltead an da m'g.
 Fa gontad a mb'ig fa ceolg
 Ceangla m'g loclann fan t'pear
 Re mac Cuimail na celear m'boim
 Eimion a'f g'ep m'oi an g'ioim
 Do ceangail f'ionn me na ceolg
 An r'm maídear Conán máol
 G'olla do b' m'án me h'ole

Cumhbó d'ainn Wágnur na lann
Fzarrad a ceann me na cóir
Mí bfuil páirt dáinra, na gáoi
Riot a conáin máoil gan céill
O tápla mé go ghrárbh Fhinn
Iy kearrí hom ann, na ka'd inéin
O tápla iy kam ghráruib kéin
Ynach deanna mé ráir ar phlaicé
Fuáirgéalad túra ón b'éin
U lann éirean na móir ceath
Gad do moza a Wágnur inéin
Warr maóarr plán id' éir kéin
Cumann, caómeaf agus ghráid
Mo do plán abeicé kán b'éin.
Fieitirre rin duic go b'icé
Uin gem máirreaf-dáil am' cóir
Gan buille tábairt ad' a'gairé
Uitíreach hom andearnuaf oir
Uin cablach táirg a t'úairg
Mo plúag le ceiréi gach gléo
Chuáin a'f gem níóir a r'airim
ba lja da maib, no da mbeó
Ug rin duicir tuiruf Fhinn
U cléirigé cádm na mbeann mbláicé

Ma gáir na gcéolan ra ceill
Och! ba bhrúe liom an lá.
Ug rín duice rgeala go bfeóir
U cleimig cáoiri; an mbonb ttear
Do mac níg loclann na ríóig
Iy dó ran hammnead an ttear.
Dair da láimre a cleimig cáir
Da mbeiceá air ttráig o dear
Ug ear laogairie rreab-féim
Uir an bfeim ba móir do mear
Ge taoimre meata gan tlaót
Ug rín dáoirb go beaf mo rgeal
Uim rruige gan éraóirig gan cóig
Ug éirdeaf me doirb bair ccleair.
U é - l - é - l - u - l - g - h.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF THE CHASE

III.

Láoirgh na Fealga.

Oíryn. U Phádrúis an ccúala tu an tfealg?

U níjc Chalpúimh na ppalm paimh

Do momead an áonari le Fionn

Fgan éin neach an d'fianaró fáil.

Phad. U éualar ainejc an móg

U Oíryn glic na ngnóim ngarig

Innir duinn ir na can gó

Cionnar amomead léo an tfealg?

O. U éanamáoir an Fhjáñ go

briéas leó moir paimlaigead píam

le píne 'rle neapc ar lám

Do éigimáoir plán ar gach ghlád

Uioir fúig máin cleimeac a coill

Ge gúir bhinn do éanaró ppaim

Dob' phíimnig na an Fhjáñ

Fíir nar loca anghlad gairig

Mion fuis áon duine accríd
 U Phadruis cáomh ir binne glóir
 Dob' pháiríonís na Fionn an aís
 Fear ar dáin do bhonnac óir
 Da mairead mac Adorna meair
 Mo Goll éidóda nar cáir reád
 Mo mac I duibne na mban
 Lao ó do cúiread cair ar ceád
 Da mairead mac Garra ó na lañ
 Fear nar gann ag cur an áir
 Orcair no mac Ronain gíun
 Do éidóhan 'ran cill mhóir fáin
 Da mairead Feargus rle fínn
 Fear do ghoí mair ar an bheirín
 Mo Dairie rhuinead gan loí
 Agus do cluis ni cúirín rreir
 Da mairead aod beag mac fínn
 Mo Fáolan gíun nar éar neac
 Mo Conan máol bí gan gíuáig
 Udras me fáol gíuam le real
 Ubac beag do bí aís fíonn
 Chuiread gac cionn na fáin 'ruán
 Binne lom rogar a beir
 Na bpuil do cléir ir do cuairé

- P. Ieig feaca a beic da mhoi
U mhc an miz dob' pheáru clúo
Deil don té do gho gac feart
Ciom do ceann ir feac do glú.
Buail d'uf agus ril do déu
Cmeo don té tá of do cionn
Go gur iongnad leat a luad
Ir é iuz buaid ari an bpein
- O. Ué on oc Oirín no rgeal trúaig
Ih bhinn hoinra ruaim do glonn
Gulpiod fuaia rú kad' dia
Uf gan an fhrán do beic beo
Wóu an ceannac hoin ari dia
Beic mearf do éiaí maí atáim
Gan bjad gan eadae gan rpoite
Gan bhonnad oíi ari faoi dáim
Gan garueta gaboi ná rtoe
Gan coimeáda poite na cuan
U bfuai d'ocuar ir do oje
Waiéim dod' miz fe a luach
- P. Ieigean diomairuaid ir cói
Oirín moíri na tpearf tpeán
Fionn na bplaid' ra maib da tpeom
Ih coihóu me miz na neull.

E dia do cum heath ir talam
Ure do beir heath na laoc
Ure cnucaig ad maig ban
Ure do beir blac na ccaor.
Ure beir gealaic ir ghian
Ure beir iarg ari a linn
Ure 'iun toira ir blac
Miom bhonann triac ir euia rinn
O. Uiri deanaim toira na blac
Miri eug mo fain-nig a fuil
Uir ari corraic corpa laich
U corraim eiric 'ra cur clud
Uiri fuirge ari fiant' ari feilg
Uiri nofad meirig adtur floig
Uiri imit keicoll ari rnam
Uiri cornead caic a triac gleid
U bhadruiug ca maib do dia
Triac tainig an diar tar leir
Re mnaoi nig loclann na long
Leir tur ronn jomad ra trear
Mo'n la tainig tairle mac tiam
Fear ari an breid do curi ari
M led nig do tur an fear
Uir ne hOrcairi amearg caic

Mo'n lá éamhc Waghay móir
Fear borb gloimic is nair éim
Is dóig da mairlead do dhá
Go écuimeobad le Fiaha Finn
Silleaí mac anáomhí mór
Re ndóicíde teamair na ttréan
Mí lám ar lám do gab dhá
Dhol da 'mairadōr pionn kēm
Sis ionda cleay gmoih is gleō
Wahaoicēig me plōg Fiaha káil
Mí éualay go ndéanad éaf
Riḡ na héull-guī deayḡ a lám
P. Fgumam d'iomairbaid-gac táoiō
Sifearoim maoil ta gan céill
Sita dia aisi neam na náoih
'pta an Fhaíh uile kaóipéih
O. Si Phadruig trúaḡ nair loc dia
Luī na bpián do éuī aisi Fhoī
Is dia kēm da mbíad anairc
Go ttrioirlead an plair da éoih
Mí mme dkuilayḡ riḡ na bpiáih
Én neac píam anairc na 'nguaíh
Tan duairi aisiḡo no óir
Mo 'ttur plōig go mberlead buaid

San fhoy do c'ach ro an ol
lean ra n'od an eist' maol.
Mi n'asb leir a' mac an lunn
a' d'á chom agur e keir
A' n' loirg na heilde go dián
Go t'liab' gulin na pian n'is
A' n' ndol don eist' ra t'liab'
Fionn na diais' n' a' d'á chom
M'ioi b'kearac' d'ó roir, no r'iar
Cair gab' an r'iadh an ra cenoc.
Do g'asb' fionn roir ra t'liab'
N' a' d'á chom r'iar' a' n' lúth
A' Phadruis' n' n' bolc le dia
A' n' eugrad' an t'riar' a' ceúl
Chualar' fionn n' n'ioi ehan uáig
Gul a' n' b'ruac' an locha r'héin
A' n' do b' an macaoin' n'á
b'pheárua' cáil da b'kac'ar' r'é
Do b' a' g'ruar' mar' an R'ór
N' a' beól a' n' d'ac' na ccaéir
Do b' a' c'near' mar' an mbláth
'ra leaca b'án mar' an áel.
A' n' d'ac' an o'ir' b' a' p'olt
A' n' n'eultain' reaca a' n'ioirg' do b'

* Bhadrúis da bhracáid adreac
 Do bharta do fearc don tinaoi.
 Dmubear fionn ag láimh rgeil
 Uir tinaoi réimh na cúlaca ndi
 Dóirnaig re don gnúir glom
 Uir bracaó tu mo chom ra toir ?
 Uir do feilg ni bhuis mo rpeir
 Uir phacaó mé do dá chom
 Uir ní na feine gan clár
 Ir meara lom rác mo gúil
 Uir é do céile ruair bair
 O' mgean álaín, no do mac
 Cread an rác ra bhuis do cáoi
 Uirndi cáoi ir áine dreach
 Mo cread ar abhuis do bhón
 Uir annsi óg na mboi mím
 Uir kéoi d'urtaó (ar fionn)
 Dubach lom do beic mar chím
 Fáil oir do bi air mo glaic
 Do ráid amoi na bpoit réimh
 Thuirim dom laim 'ran t'pneab
 Uir im m'áobair do beic i bpéin
 Geara nar phulaing fion laoch
 Cuirim oir a ní na bhlaín

Óga a ta Fionn ari iárraó
Go maib a mbliadna a Cháolte
Óac Chumail ma teardatg uáit
A Cháolte éruatg na ceor ceáol
Gabaime oram do laimh
Or cionn cáich do beic da eir
Do bmar an Fhian pa bion
Pa cionn ar rloig beic dar ndic
Sur máoró oruinn gean gairie
Ir dúin báobair do beic acáol.
Gluairteor linn uile amach
burdean cáima na ceat ceuuaig
Ari loig a chon agur Fhinn
Tuir ginn do beicad buad
bh pa ir Cáolte ari tair
'ranpian go dluc ari ndail
Go rhab gusinne o cuais
Go tuagamair buasó ari cáich
Amarca da tuagamair uain
Deir na muag cío é an Fhian!
Ari bmuach an locha pa bion
Aí reanoir mór 'ré liaé
Do cuadmar uile na bail
Ir cúirreáó gnaim ari gac fear

Cnána loma do bí cíníon
An cceileada gnáoi 'ra sean
Whearannuine sup earbairé bío
Thag ári an laoch beiré gan éirí
Sup an iárgaine bí ré
Do táinig accéin le ríuic
D'fíarraigimúine don ríean éiríon
An b'acaid ré laoch go ngor
Ir noime amach an ríeol
Eirí óg agur dá chom
Míon maíó fíonn d'fíeargmaó an ríéal
Supab e feir m'g na b'fían
Sup leig le Cáoite a mún
An fear lúca do bí dían
An cclor duí dearbhadh an ríeíl
Supab e fíonn feir bí an
Leigemaóro tí gáicéa ríioo
Do éiríe bíoic ar sac gleam.
Deirge Conan maol go boib
Ir nofay acóig go dían
Do mállatg ré fíonn go beaf
Do mállatg fo reac an ríhán
Dainra m'fear sup tu fíonn
Do bairfínn an cíonn rínn díoc

'Tcu nari máoró anoir no máin
 Wo gojl mo gliaó 'na mo gnóim
 Iy e m'aonloct ari do émué
 Gan d' Fhian uile bejt mari tári
 Go ndeargair mo yleag 'rmo lann
 Go cclairim do leact ari lár
 O marbaó Cuirair na cclairi
 Re mac Woirna na rglac nóiri
 Ij khusmaorone ari ari ndié
 Fa bhull beó óim ni d'a ndéim
 Cao. Wari mbejt an émué a bhull fion
 Fguri puóari mih é mari tá
 Ri Chonain máorl ta gan céill
 bhurriore do béal go cnáim
 Ors. érióir Orgar keari ka teann
 Fguri bod' éalgaét ni ra mó
 Ri Chonain máorl taigan céill
 Mac muz béim anaóaroh gleoró
 Con. Ri beag mo rpeir an do glóir
 Riine Oiri ba móri baorri
 Fnaó marb do maré abrionn kéim
 Ri cognaó a méiri go rmaoir
 Finne kéim do gnó an gnóim
 Ij hiaó clanna baorriore bog

beis̄ do m̄ac' Oir̄in ad d̄eá̄ḡ
Ḡiom̄c̄ar̄i leab̄ar̄i ban ir̄ clog
Ū Oir̄ḡar̄i r̄eun̄i do do gl̄óir̄
M̄i can̄t do d̄ear̄b̄ar̄ ār̄ ḡm̄oim̄
F̄euc̄maōs̄one ār̄ com̄ar̄i c̄áich
M̄ear̄t ār̄ lám̄h aḡur̄ ār̄ mb̄r̄īḡ
Toḡb̄ar̄ Oir̄c̄ar̄i ā ḡear̄i lann
F̄do léim̄ Conan̄ am̄ear̄ḡ c̄áich
F̄uaḡnar̄ cum̄ar̄ic̄ ār̄i an b̄h̄éim̄
Ir̄ r̄un̄tār̄ r̄éim̄ ār̄ péim̄ báir̄
Ro em̄iḡe an F̄hañ̄ go ḡar̄iḡ
Ūcor̄ḡ Oir̄ḡar̄i na nar̄im̄ náiḡ
Roim̄i mo m̄ac ir̄ Chonán̄ maol
Ḡur̄ ceanglād̄ r̄iob̄ aḡur̄ páim̄t
D'f̄iār̄naiḡ Caoilte an t̄r̄ear̄ r̄ear̄
Do m̄ac Cum̄aill̄ nar̄i c̄leat̄r̄ t̄áir̄

Cao. Cja haca do Thuáta Dē

Do m̄ill do ḡh̄é mar̄i atá?

Fm. In̄ḡean̄ Ḡhus̄l̄im̄ (do m̄á̄r̄ó F̄ionn)

Ḡear̄a am' c̄eann̄ do c̄uim̄ r̄i

Dul̄ r̄a b̄r̄iúac̄ an locha r̄nám̄h

D'f̄á̄ḡar̄il an r̄h̄áil do t̄uit̄ r̄jor̄

M̄ar̄i r̄h̄illmaōs̄one r̄l̄án on cen̄oc̄

Do m̄á̄r̄ó Chonán̄ nar̄i bolc̄ méim̄

Go n-óráidh Gúleann gan mól
Ódair ccuimhí Fionn 'n-áruic kéin
Chruinnigeamair anoir ra n-áir
Chuirreamair r-áic raor go de ar
Fhliab Gúlmne o attuáig
Tugad Fionn air gúáilíe kear
Uir kead oí naoidé 'róct lá
Dhuir gan rpar tocailt na húair
Go ttairc éugairn amach
Gúleann go p-iar ar an uairn
Cuac ceairnac agur é lán
Do bí aláir gúlmn dóir
Do mac Cumair nar máic gne
Gur éoirbhir rí an coir oir
Uir nól díg dó ar an coir
Ye na luig air r-od go kairn
Tairc a éruic kéin ra n-áir
Uir m-ig na b-riar rna neac reair
Léigeamaoid t-ri gáirca g-rod
Fdo éuiríe b-rioc ar gac gleairn
U Pháoiris nach r-iar fon mbair
Uir ccuala tu mair an t-riair.

U P - h - a - d - u - i - s .

IRISH ORIGINAL OF MOIRA BORB

Láojó an tAghóige bhóirib.

'Ta rgeal beag agum air fhionn
Ní rgeal nach ceannró a ruim
Uití m'ac Cumáil ba maic goil
ba cumáil r'n m'eam' f'aoigal
Do bámaíne beagán r'ioig
Uití earrúad m'ic bóbaí m'oil
Tig cúgáim r'a féol tar leat
An cumáic beag r' bean ann
Caogad láoc d'úim m'un ní
ba maic air ngáim r' air ngáit
F'ití dar ndéir ar maig ad chí
Shabamáoir air gach c'ioch neait
Eirgeamáoir uile go dian
Uití f'ionn na b'fian agur goll
D'f'airc'ití an cúmaic b'áir c'ém
Ma n'ém ag r'goltaid na t'om

Míorí fhan an cuíach gan tear̄.
 Súir gab calad̄ ran bporic ngnáe
 'Ymarí do táinig ari an ear
 Ab' éiríge ar macaon̄ mna
 Dob' ionann d'ieac̄ di 'rbon̄ gréim
 Dob' fheairí a méim na a dealb
 An mgean táinig i ccéim
 Do bámarí féim noimpe ann
 Do níam̄ic rí pobal fhinn
 'rdo beannas̄ rí go gíunn dō
 D'fheagairí mac Cumáil narí éim
 Go huíal hím̄ i gan tōḡ
 Fuirgear a b'fialgnuir̄e tholl
 An̄i laim̄ deir̄ fhinn̄ níe Cumáil
 Gac̄ aon̄ díob̄ do'n̄ níam̄aol̄ deair̄e
 An̄i acéile níor̄ cúim̄neac̄
 Fiafmaigear̄ fíon̄ ka deair̄e d'ieac̄
 Ca hár̄id̄ do'n̄ níam̄aol̄ álam̄ uir̄i
 Ca t'ieab̄ a ttangair̄ a bean
 Inm̄ir̄ do r̄gél̄ go maich̄ dúinn̄?
 Ar̄ mé m̄gean̄ níḡ fo cúinn̄
 Innéorad̄ go c'ruinn̄ mo páil
 Míorí fháḡ tír̄ ka níad̄aí̄n̄ gríam̄
 Nar̄ iaruir̄ar̄ féim̄ do fhlair̄h̄ cáil

bhíḡ do fribail ann gac móo
U nḡean óg ar march dealb
U n fajt̃ ea ttánḡair i ccáin
Tabairi dáin féin fhoy go dearb
Ḃo cúmaire oit̃ ór tu fionn
Do m̃ásh m̃inn an macaom̃ mná
U ñi kheabair harrilic̃ 'roo búad
Gáb mo cúmaire go lúac̃ t̃riac̃
Do m̃ásh mo m̃iḡ ba m̃air̃ foy
U ñt̃m̃ c̃ia táoi air do chí
Gábair do cúmaire a bean
U ñi gach fear da b̃ruil i ccl̃i
U ta m̃om̃ me f̃loch do m̃uill
Laoc̃ ar m̃air̃ goil air mo loirḡ
Ḃac m̃iḡ f̃orcha ir̃ g̃er̃ air
Thó ba harrm̃ Ḃoig̃ne borb
Geyra do cúmaire na cíom̃
Go mbeim̃ñ air fhioñ do fal
Mać mbéim̃ñi aige do m̃náoi
Gey m̃air̃ a ḡñom̃ 'ra ágh
Do m̃ásh Oirḡair do ḡl̃or̃ m̃iir̃
Fear̃ cóirḡc̃e finne gac l̃áoi
Mo go b̃róineadh fionn do g̃er̃
U m̃áca tu m̃iir̃ do m̃náoi.

Éiníog Órđar agur Ğoil
boib a ccorđar lom na ccaē
Ma rearam a nđar don tirlōđ
Eioiri an bkear mōri 'ran bean
Zib ċimāoio ċuđamh ari rōēud
Iaoc ra mēud or đach a kear
Zig cēm na kairge go djan
Zin njan ra 'nar đab an bean
Clogad tihleac for a ceann
'Đan bkear nar ċim 'rdo bi tihēn
rđiac iomlan bi ari a deir
Dioim lān a cclear ari an cclē
Dhá manāoir đairge go mbūad
'Ma rearam i ngablann arđeic
Ziri neairt ari đairge, ari đoir
Hi kaca kear mar rin aī ē
Clogioim toirteamuī nar đān
Dhi ēall ari ēaob an khir inōiri
'raig imir cclear or a ceann
Zig teaī dō i ccionn an tirlōđ
Hēull klaēa, ir moig niođōa
Fo an bkear řām ka caoim cruē
Đairē a řnūad, ka geal a dēud
Iúairē a rēud no đac rruē

Ḃap ḂáimḂ an Ḃcéub 1 cḂim
'ra fear nari mím leir an bḂém
Ḃi fear faráil an fḂim
Teaf go nuirge rin a ccém
ón tuim map ḂáimḂ 1 cḂim
D'fíarfíatḂ mo ríḂ ba maḂt cḂu
Ḃn aḂnḂeann tu a bean
Ḃn é rúo an fear a deár ?
ḂnḂim a meic Cumáil Ḃim
Ḃr pudar móm é don fhém
TairḂeḂ mḂre do bḂeḂ mḂr
Cia móri do Ḃeire fhḂ fhḂil
TḂ an laoḂ fo ra maḂt claḂ
Re fíoḂ 'rre neairt d' ar cceann
Ir d'fhúadaḂ uáim an bean
Do bḂ 'ngar do Ḃúalaim fhḂ
Thug mac Ḃórina urcari dian
Go cḂoḂa na dḂáḂ da fíeḂ
Ḃim fhan an tuicari 'bḂ dian
Da rḂeḂ go ndearna dá blaḂ
Do cḂat OrḂar ba móri fearḂ
Ḃ cḂaorreaḂ deairḂ da lám cḂé
Re ar mḂarḂ re Ḃcéub an fḂim
Ḃóri an béub do moḂe lé

Do éuaib̄ ḡoll an aḡnib̄ m̄m̄
 Do éapib̄ an f̄h̄m̄ ba ḡap̄ dh̄o
 C̄ia be é̄kead̄ iad̄ ann̄ r̄m̄
 Do ba ḡapib̄ a ḡoḡl̄ ra nḡléo
 bh̄ad̄ap̄ a ccloḡb̄m̄che ḡan̄ toḡo
 Aḡ r̄naoḡdead̄ coḡp̄ aḡuḡ r̄ḡiaé
 Āi coḡm̄aḡé coḡm̄aḡe aḡ d̄iḡ
 M̄i f̄haḡckḡoḡ aḡiḡ m̄em' m̄iáe
 O toḡic̄naḡ m̄e ḡoll na naḡm̄ náḡḡ
 Āoac̄ m̄iḡ f̄oḡm̄cha ḡem' éáḡ c̄m̄uaḡo
 Āoam̄iḡ é̄m̄ i c̄c̄ám̄ic̄ an̄ b̄ean
 R̄éḡ' éuḡ an̄ keap̄ r̄m̄ ra cc̄úan̄
 Āiḡlaḡc̄éap̄ m̄m̄ aḡ an̄ éap̄
 Ān̄ laoé̄ kap̄' éeap̄m̄ t̄reap̄ iḡ ḡh̄oḡiḡ
 C̄uḡic̄ap̄ ra b̄m̄áḡaḡo a m̄éoḡi
 F̄aḡl̄ óḡi an̄ oḡóḡi mo R̄iḡ
 D̄éḡḡ t̄uḡc̄ioḡa an̄ f̄h̄m̄ m̄óḡi
 Āi b̄oḡo an̄ éuaḡm̄, t̄m̄úáḡ an̄ c̄éḡm̄
 Do b̄i m̄ḡean̄ R̄iḡ ko éuḡm̄
 bh̄ad̄ap̄m̄ aḡ f̄ioḡm̄ iḡ an̄ b̄kéḡn̄
 leḡé bh̄ad̄ap̄m̄ do ḡh̄oll̄ aḡm̄ náḡḡ
 Do'n̄ laoé̄ doḡm̄ naḡi é̄láḡé i cc̄aḡh̄
 M̄a-luḡḡe ko deaḡḡḡhoḡ m̄m̄
 Da leḡḡeap̄ aḡ f̄ioḡm̄ na b̄ḡleáḡ

Āo'ac̄ap̄m̄ k̄ém̄ ra deap̄iḡ a d̄heac̄l̄
 M̄ioḡi éuḡḡe neac̄ t̄m̄úáḡ no t̄h̄én̄
 Āinoḡ' ó d̄'áḡm̄ic̄aḡḡ mo éḡuḡh̄
 Āiḡ m̄ḡche d̄am̄ r̄ḡuḡi doḡm̄' r̄ḡéi.

r - ḡ - é - a - l b - e - a - ḡ.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF THE WAR ODE TO OSGUR

Roꝛꝥ Oꝛꝥuꝛi m̄ic Oꝛꝛiꝛi ꝑe huꝫ c̄aꝥa ꝥaꝑa.
Eꝛiꝥe Oꝛꝥuꝛi ꝑh̄eꝛi, a ꝑh̄iꝛi an c̄oꝛꝥuꝛi c̄ꝛuꝛaꝛꝥ
le do bꝛiꝛaꝥaꝛꝥ aꝛꝥ, beꝛi neꝛiꝛ aꝥuꝛ buꝛaꝛð
ꝛi m̄eꝛc Oꝛꝛiꝛi na m̄b̄eꝛm̄ioꝛ̄, ꝥaꝑaꝛð ꝥꝛeꝛꝑe ꝥaꝥa
comloꝛiꝛi
Ma ꝑeꝛc do m̄eꝛc d'ꝑhoꝛꝛuꝛiꝛi, aꝛi c̄aꝥh no ꝥo
ꝥꝥoꝛꝛiꝛi
ꝥaꝑ bꝛiꝛoꝛðað ðh bꝑeꝛið, ꝥo hOꝛꝥuꝛi mac ꝥaꝛꝛaꝛð
Ma Riꝥꝥe aꝥa ad' aꝥaꝛð, ꝥꝛiꝛoꝛꝥið aꝥuꝛ ꝥaꝛaꝛꝥ
loꝛꝛaꝛꝥ aꝛi m̄ac Choꝛꝛuꝛiꝛi, ꝥaꝑ ceꝛꝛꝑala a
ccoꝛꝛiꝛiꝛi
Mo ꝥo bꝑaꝥꝥaꝛi eꝛꝛiꝛi, le do ꝑꝛeꝛꝥ ðꝛuꝛbꝛuꝛiꝛi
bꝛaꝛð bꝛiꝛaꝛꝛeꝛoꝛiꝛi ꝥo duꝛaꝛbꝑeꝛc, o c̄eꝛaꝛðaꝛi do
c̄ꝛiꝛoꝛꝥaꝥh

Fréagairi iad go tairbreac, d'a leabrad, 'rda
nohileach

Uí mhic m'g'han cáme, do ghnó ghnóma agus fogla
buó dearbéa do r'géal, go meannach an-
gabha

Uí fáoi f'lat go n'gairge, cláon go luac a meirge
'r a cógadó ir áirde, r'gair a maich me cambrie
b'ó maí éumh a tuile, gion gur t'iom in teirre
Tabairi fáoi deac' gola, o zach R1 go m'isle
Ma gabh orad uac'a, cor gur a m'g'ce

Uí Or gur éim'g' fúca, cairra agus t'riota
Uí g'núir ir cáomhe c'rotá, éim'g' a d'úir a cca'ca
lean le keirig mo g'ota, am'irig ir deairig da'ca
D'éana maib'ca t'rioma, b'ó air c'ónrad goirle
Cinn air do lu'c' pala, 'r'gan f'ionn ad' g'oirie
Ceannur dona r'jañab, do leanar d'ó'g'r'g'éala
Corair a'g' agus ámeair, tabairi gáiric'a a
t'ceair'raig

G'ó ar b'uir deac' anoir ear, buó b'ua'ac' do éur ear
Do éacha d'a namur, cuir flatha da ccumur
Uí Or gur é'ru'cach áluir, b'ó go ru'bac' r'ir-
b'ir

Uí cára d'áir é'ir ear, láir air do g'núir m'ir-
d'uir

Ἄ Οἴσῳμῃ ἡαὐ ὄτῳε εἰρεαὐ, ἄο ὀόρῳμῃ ἡαὐ
ὀβῑαὐ

Ἐῳμῃ ὀοῃμῃ ὀο ἔμῃαὐαὐ, ὀα ἡαῃεῳμῃ ἄο ὀο-
ῑμῃαὐ

ἒμῃαὐ ἄεῃμῃ ὀο ἡαῃμῃ, ὀ ῑμῃμῃ ὀο ἔμῃμῃ
ὀὀῃμῃ ὀῃ ἄῑὀῃμῃ, ὀὀῃ ἡῃαὐ ἄ ἒμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ
Ἐαῃμῃ ἒμῃαὐ ῑμῃμῃ, ἄῑ ῑμῃμῃ ἄ ἡῑὀῃμῃ
ἄῑὀῃμῃ ἒμῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ὀῃ ἄῑ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ὀῃ
ἄῑὀῃμῃ ἒμῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ἄ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ὀῃ
ἄῑὀῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ἄ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ὀῃ
ἄῑὀῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ

Ἐῳμῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ὀο ἒμῃμῃ ὀῃὀῃμῃ, ἄ ἒμῃ ἡῑ ὀῃ
ἄῑὀῃμῃ

ὀὀ ἒμῃμῃ ἄο ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ἡ ἡῑὀῃμῃ ὀὀ ἒμῃ-
μῃμῃ

ὀὀ ὀῃὀῃμῃ ἄο ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ὀὀ ὀῃὀῃμῃ ἂῑὀῃ
ἡῑὀῃμῃ

ὀὀ ἒμῃμῃ ὀῃ ἡῑὀῃμῃ, ὀῃ ὀῃ ὀῃ ὀῃ ὀῃ
ἂῑὀῃμῃ

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IRISH ORIGINAL OF THE ODE TO GAUL

Rory Dhoill mac Adomna.

Urb aigneach Goll, fear cogad fhin
Laoc leabair lonn, foghair nac tinn
Goll cruicac caoin, fear-aineach ruad
Faoir-naoirdac a taob, maraige na rluag
Adac Adomna fear, fa cruada a gal.
U ehu fa fear, fear feineamul rin.
Laoc kemmde rial, ir gile glon.
U raob a eall, laoc adoda mor.
U tair do gaid, mar teso a ceat
Rem klata fear, ce min a chear.
U meid n mion, 'ra rgen gan gion
Ir fe ir gloine dphion, oide na rgal
Hion lag a lain, fear deoigeal caoin.
Mac treigean Dain, a coogad rian.
Or barrab beann, iarrar ort rion.
Fa hegal linn, a tagra muot rion.
Ze trom a ehu, 'rmarc Goll um nio.
Gid mor n treid, rait rluag do righ.

Casbreath na ndám, leadraic na ríóig
 Tonn casrige éirín, goll meanmaic móir.
 buó heagair dúit a ríinn, laóc cinnce ceair
 fuaóc mílte a neairt
 A deirimye mót, a ríinn an fhuilc tair
 Aii goll na bhuir, aineirige ni tair.
 Ir maing éagimur mair, a ceac ni tinn
 Flaic gan rheall, gnam éad aii goll
 Aii méad aii éam.
 Aderim mót a ríinn, coihair ir geall.
 Fíe buan do goll, gan fhuac, gan rheall
 Naighead go tinn, Aderim mót a ríinn
 Ma nduicir ndoinn, bíd aii eagla gúill
 Ge buan me maic, a ceac ni dóig.
 Ionhráigéac áig, ceanraic ríóig.
 Uair a géan, a eiric ni mion
 Fuilteac an ceair.
 Duara na ríol, omdeiriceac me rluáig
 Tombeairicac trín, corc caea ir buan.
 Fíor flaic é, ar rial lomlán da fíer
 Domne ina ríolt, a bhuinne maí éair
 Lomlan a cóir.
 Eirre ra éíor, buó cóir d'a cúir.
 Ir meanmaic bíor, ir dealbac a gnúir.

ʒn ʒaɪɾʒɪðeac ʒɪnn, nɪ bʁuɪ nɪð oɾ ʒoll
ɪɪ ðeɪɪm oɪt ʁhɪnn, ɪɾ tɾeɪɾe e nɑ tɔnn
ʁlaɪtɛaɪnuɪ a ʁhɔɾ. ɔaɪtɛaɪnuɪ a ðneay.
ʒɪɪ ʒoll nɑ clɪɾ, nɪ ɾɪɪm a tɾɾeay.
ʒɪleata mɔɾ, bɾonntac a ðaɪɪ.
Cɔnʁaðac a tɾeðɪn. ʒɪ ʁheayɾ ʒo bɾuɛ áʒ.
ʒɪɾɪ ʁɪðɛ a buanayɛt aɪɪ éach.
ɪáɪaéað laoð, ɪoʒa nɑ ɪɪoʒ.
ɪeomɪn aɪ áʒ, cɪðða nɑ ʒɪɪm, ɪeabɪɪɪ a ɪaɪɪ
cleayɛ cɔnuɾ búaɪ, ɾonay nɑ bɾɪaɪ̃
ʒðɔɾɪðálað caom, ɪoɪʒalað dɪan
eaynác a ɾɛaɪɪ, buan ɪúɪn aɪ ʁhɪɪ.
buayð cɔɪɪlann aɪɪ, ɪeɪðɪeac a ʒaɪɪ
ɾonay nɑ ɪoð, ɾolay a deað
cuɪɪɪð ɾe ɪeay, aɪɪ ʒach tɾeéay ɔa ɪéað.
ɔo ʒnác nɑ ʒaɪɪ, oɪʒan nɑ cɔon
ɾo ʒɪáð nɑ mban, bɪon ðaɪɪɪ maɪ ɾɪɪ
ʁlaɪtɛ ɪeayɾac caom, ɾlaɪtɛleac úɪ.
ʁeay clɪɾde ɾaop, ʁeay bɪɪɾte múɪ.
ɪa cɔɾaoyɾeac cɔoyɪ, ɪeáɛan a ɪaɪɪ.
Caɛaɪɪ ʒoll, ɪécaoyɾeac teann.
Tɾeɪɾ ɛɾɪðɛ a ʒuɪɪ, bɪð ɾɪðtða ɪɪɪɪ
ɾe ɔo ɪeɪð ʒan ɪeɪɪɾɾ, tɾɪaɪ ɾɪðayð ð ʁhɪoɪ̃.
ɪɪ ɾúay mo ɪeɪ̃, tɾeɪɾɾɪɾe m'ɾɪoɛ.
ɔhɪð a ʁheayɾuɪ ʁhél, ɔo ɾɾuɪ mo ʒɪúayɪ
ʒɪ áayɑ ʒan ðeɪɾɾ, a béal tana deayɾ
ʒɪ eɪeac aɪɪ ɪúɛ, ɔo éɪɪ oɾ áɪɪð.

Cum me go rearcam cum reos,
U Dhé, gan earbaid ari njust.
D' n trion garb fhuairituir mór,
Re cóir glom go ccolim ccsúir.
Dairt mo córac aibveac úi,
Taróvveac a torad 'ra taob,
Ionng éagac boñógac búan,
Ftuad téadac óróógac éaoim.
Ionng gan clár a ttaóam ari,
Gan rcát a rcaóam na rtoim.
Feoltáir tpe clár na cceañ ngarb
Dairt buidh rál marb gac gleañ goim.
Tpe gmarbác gac tuñe trág,
Uiri riarlan da gairne an gaoc
Imgeadh tairi cáblaic na ccsúic,
Uimac a ríoc ir a rraoc
Fhor kadúir fosleimeac tpean
Romimeac mar dhraódh dhúir,
Breaclong na feolbratac raor,
Taob cpeatlom orflatac úi.
brúg dhealbac naórac ngriobac
Gharig beañbaclac óiocrac na ccolg,
Fhor rnarcaom ir raobrac reairg,
Na rrrarcaoir ndearig mbaoílach mboirb.

Ṭiobhlac rí n̄ a rí g̃ na rí a n̄
Ṭar lín ír g̃ac n̄ó buí leam
Ḃan baogal Ṭar bolgais̄b na ttoñ.
Ṭi noñ r̄eac̄ boirdais̄b na mbea n̄.

Ṭi tabrian ceangal.

beannaig̃ an longro anonn Ṭar r̄áile aig̃ dul
bhačalac̄ éruimpac̄ lúnniac̄ lan čirde,
Ṭi čreatalac̄ r̄gúnr̄ac̄ r̄iúnčac̄ lan t̄r̄ioimac̄
Ṭi h̄aribčac̄ h̄ionntac̄ čubarčac̄ áččearac̄.

Ṭi ččim̄ aji jora Čr̄ioirt̄ noč̄ d'čulain̄g̃ an r̄áir̄.
Ṭar b̄uirčeari don bujōm̄ na (don) l̄un̄g̃ na
b̄ruim̄ go b̄iáč̄.
busleac̄ maic̄ g̃aoič̄e ír taóide ír t̄usleac̄ 'na
deag̃ač̄o
O č̄uim̄r̄ais̄b̄ d̄ūim̄ baoi go taoič̄b̄ na č̄uim̄ne don
'r̄r̄áim̄.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF ELEGY TO THE DAUGHTER OF
OWEN.

Ua Gíaráin cecm̃t.

Féach oriam a mhéan boḡam, me d' n éag ar
naic̃beoḡaḡo
Cí nḡo ñ doḡḡéanta duib̃r̃i, a moiréalta r̃áor̃i
r̃uḡb̃h̃i
Ua baor̃i mar̃i c̃ác a' m' cúḡe, féac̃ daḡr̃h̃h̃ie
or̃uḡñ,
Uí gur̃ab̃ mh̃eáct̃a ar̃ ñoḡeac̃, a b̃e c̃eḡḡeal-
ta c̃raḡb̃c̃eac̃.
Uí r̃ada añ t̃r̃éḡḡe ac̃áḡm r̃oḡñ, ḡañ aḡḡe aḡḡ
aoñḡḡaor̃i or̃iam,
Uí m̃ḡaḡñ r̃l̃óḡḡ b̃ar̃t̃ana b̃ḡeag̃, r̃óḡḡi m̃eap̃b̃aḡḡor̃i
ñr̃ m̃éḡean.
Uí ana b̃r̃óḡḡc̃e ar̃ m̃eḡoḡeḡc̃ oḡuḡñ, ḡac̃ añḡuam
da b̃r̃uḡl̃ or̃uḡñ,

Dul ka émað ir émoð dom' éear, nri pmoé o
 liaið mo leiðear.
 Coimbe óic leiðioy mo iuyt, do émeiðear ðac
 óð oiméimic,
 Oim zéi bpoiméadmañ me cáé, a phoit phoi-
 ðéazac phioñblaé.
 Ohaoiðy, pór a bmaéari máñ, do maðay toñ
 ay tpoimðmað,
 Coimead mo émoide me a éoiy, tuð me ðuicri
 le ðioðioy.
 Rúnnañ noéðamañ do neac, a éul phoitmañ
 pháimðeac
 Ai loy a ndeama ðuic, pðiméioy mib (tmaé)
 mo émeabiuð
 Ai uaim an éiðeantay ro, a rtauð ðnéðeal-
 tay ðmianðlan.
 Cuñ añiy, me tpoimðmað te, do ða laim a
 ccuimé a céile
 Ai émað phioñya añ a ðnaicð zeañ, na pponya
 tmaé a' m' éiméall,
 Re pðig ir mlye na mñ, yñ cuðam an aic
 uaiðmð.
 Ai éiab phioñphoitac eanðémuñ, a béal bioñ-
 phoclach balpym

Tabairt aithir leab bair bair, farrcað doðo
air mo dearlair
Fág raon do glairneoir am glair, dom airneoir
a fhal orðair.
Da moir cōirneir ne gloine, tōg iab zan fhor
aonuir,
Zi cūl nēir cūglaodac ērom, ar fēac zo
fmoñairac orom.
Do beir mar rom buð baðac, ir beir foibir
foðraðac,
Fom toimeirce air nois, foibirce rñair
air fāoðor.
O bair do geabam zo gmad, fo aithair a marair
orad
Tu fēir ag an ēag buð ērāð, na fēac do fceir
ad' fcaēan.
Ful meallair fēir air aon, na fēac air an
fhoit fmoñair.
Luğa fceal duine no dīr, a gloine mar nēir
nuairōgair.
Zair rom fōr cian mo clor, fceal neairneac
air fmoñair,
Zin fcar buð fcairāda fceir, fōcāre na
fhead fhoirneir

Chosóde arii na kéac oitá, glaca míne méari-
corra,
Troioð geal málla triác ar buiñ, rála reang-
malla réanðuñ.
Áduna tti bod' áilneact kéin, do buairéad
a ðil ðnúyriéio
Do éac ní robuana riub, do réanad ðac áic
oitá.
Da meallta me rílead na rúl, rii éhioñ a
éiab cladúr,
Ádo nuari ní roimeallta rið, a rtuad rói-
neanta riubii.
Áairéac dáoið a óireac nári, ðoio mo éioide
o a éairclári.
O' n ðoio ðéi geairiýáoðlac me, neambaoðai
duic an díðriéio.
Áta an tuac ðo leii riub, ir da mbeio áonduine
ad' aðaið,
Íi duic nac compánac cili, a éiué éioimpánac
ééioðiiñ.
Tuðaið uaið airéac mo éioide, a ðnúy ri-
maireac aingliðe,
Á mé rhióirnári ðoim maie ðloim, ir oim me
ríoirðriáð kéacaið.

Go fcað me feim, la an aonaf ðm' buacast
doñ,

It cõmrad feimðe no ðeigrm, ó plúri na
fcaer;—

Fámaon gēi na cfeusim fēn, agur an fagart
an fāgast,

Mo gon dúbamaon an ccurasde, ful fa dtēd
re anon.

Ce gum bolc leir ē, molcað mire gnáð mo
cnoide;

Ce gum bolc leir ē, fudre mē le na caosb;—

Ce gum bolc leir ē, mile a érafn̄ tui líri a
cnoide,

'Fa néalt an trolar, a mbéal a pobast, ir tu
breoid mo cnoide.

'Fa ðia ðilr cnead do ðioncað, má mgean̄ tu
uaim?

Mil eolar cum do éige agum, cum do éimò na
do éluo:

Tá mo dáoi faoi leatrom, agur mo mām̄
faoi brón;—

Tá mo gaoita go moir a fceirig lom, agur mo
gnáð bcað uaim.

Ta fmuic an mo fúille 'rnoir cõdast me néall,

Úc a fmuic an̄ oirra, céad gnáð; má bcaða
an oide a feir;

Faoi do ccurasdeire, do ðult me an doim̄
uile go leir;—

'Fa éraebm cúbairca, cad ar a ccúbairca,
do leabair a mbreig?

**IRISH ORIGINAL OF ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN
BURKE**

U mbreatain 'r an éirínn rhaodéarís an táird-
phlaid clú
bachur san éireacht, is gáirí thu a triácht
air ccúl
U charaid na cchárí do ríaradh dáim go húr
Mór bairneabach an kéile gur ead tu a
rhean de buic
Ur dubach do diaire Tiađaraid lán do cúim
U plúir na dtreád budh gaolmáir cáil is clú;
bud rúgáé ráim an táirdéladé rēáan de
buic
'r go Dún-móir ó éiríall re ta an kíad ra Ráir
air gcúl

Uinéal ceann Ráin is fear is do tuisgeadh gach
cúir
Uinéal gac dáin buidh gnáth leis emeac is clú
Fíáil éiríe fáil, 'na Ráir ad imhíod ari cclú
O éiríall an báir ari 'heáan mac Chonrae búi
U leac ata ad gear-chlú ari gér is uir chu-
marais bneadh
Uin aló bi kéir meainuil, ríodit, chlú fáil
agur Ráir
Is leac abeic plémeainuil ceimeainuil mari ar
kollar do chách
'Y gur ari do éiríodh go láeteainuil tá plé-
rur chonrae ari íar
Cia do tuisgear clúiríod na Ráir ari ríubal?
Cia béiríear buaidh an chumais, go connacht
no báir gach clú
Cia béiríear chuáin le cumar an pláta ón
Ríomán
O déag uáin comneal na cuideáchtan 'heáan
de buic
Uinéal is móir beir ceannar a cclú 'na ríodit
Is an do lán halla buidh gnath aitear is nu-
aidheacht-céol
Uinéal áitaca ac gáir ríme adais ríodit is bídín

Ye mo chriadh deacriach an ríádhmáireach a
beith na luighe a nduinnóir

Do ghéar éúina an té úd éúiri an báir ari ccúil
O léig múiri go céin clúd go cláir na Róimian
Doiri ach gur éag uairn an fear féimeathúil
Féaan de búic

Mi beairrach Firi Eudbaird coirí-méig úd an
pláta ari ríubal

Ta cead aig gach máireach ó cláir na Róimian
Theact le na neachmaird gan gearán kúinn
Ta ariigid gan allar le ráigail a tuairn
Mi fear a bacadh nuair nach mairrean agair
Féaan de búic

Féacht ccéad déag gan bimeig ir da ríichion
ari ccúir

Go ceair a Fé, do meiri an dáta nuadh
O téacht mje Dé dai ráerid o cháin an ubairl
Doteaf an lae kúairi éag tú af héadan de búic
Ar dubach an Green club ag caoineadh o bá-
raigeadh tu

Aigur keadh na tíre chóidhe an ríáirach
chun

Ta an ríagaird ríiriglic ro líoga mo chriadh
fan búin

Aigur rin cuimiofadh miora do mairé ari
Fhéaan de búic.

U chúl áluinn deap, na bháinnisib cceapic,
Iy breadh iad, 'ray glay do fúile!
Ygo bhuijl mo chioiohe flat da flat, mai á
fniókeohre,
Ie bhadhain mói kada a fúil leat.
Da bhúisíní o chéapic beic rinte leat,
Iy eadriom 'ray deap do fribalcuinn!
Ygo réisicainn gac rgaric ag éalod lem' fceapic
Uii choillciga' rgaric an bhuuchta!
Ygo deimh keih a bean, ce mói é do meap,
Iy náii hom éu dom' dhúiltadh!
Ce deag tu me gan pláinte agam!
Ygan kac na coii aii mo fribalta.
Uj dana mo laii, 'rmo phásteach mo gmadh,
Gmadh dhil! ma bhonn tu fribal leam, .

Éamonn an chnuic ata agad ann,
 'Y ar daer anoir ann a dhútharoh
 Ya zhrádh ya chumánn! 'Ya zhrádh zach nduine!
 An ttrialla ya real don Dúmáin leam?
 Dáir a bhrágháoir go deimh ceol agur imhit,
 Y uairle na bfeair arúghradh.
 Cáoira cuslín, raíra agur bholair,
 blaéa agur blar na núbliab.
 Planda don duilleabair fúinn agur córainn,
 Agur párach go mulla glúme.
 'Ya báb chnearda cháoir! do páirt leam na
 rgháoir,
 'Y go rhráimkunn an táoir ad déirgí
 'Y go mbfeair leam do zean, zhrádh zeal na
 bfeair!
 Ma an áruir na náoir 'nuáir éagkunn!
 Och! y cláé lag do bím, 'y mo flánte uaim
 da rhróherí,
 le zhrádh ceairt don mháoir do éirg me.
 'Y go dob' áil lom da máoirheam: ach plan leat
 aíháoir!
 O brághbair me air díe na céille.
 'Y do beairuín a leabair gan breig dúit le ródh,
 go ndéankunn do córadh air chéad bean.

'T go siachfainn leat anonn tuar tréiníuiri na
ttonn,
'T go ttreisgúin an doían go léiri oir.
Bíar anéar tu an am go nélodh' tu leaí
I' tréich m'pe fann gan éireacht,
Bíar éiríse a ngleann, gan éiríim, gan íeabair
Fáoi gaeza na ceann am' aenair.
'Tairmí lag, i' m' chiorche ta an chnead
'Tair deínín nach gar dháin fáeríom!
Le hionamcaídh reair do plúir na mban,
'Tair píob mar eala aisi aenloch.
Bí díáíche dáite cíoríca carpa,
'Tair mach rnarpa cíáebach!
'Tair a bíaze me o cheairt beir rínte leat,
I' deínín gur gar antéug dháin.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF
CAROLAN

Ís bfuair me a gáim 'rme falcadh na ndeor
go húi,
Sich cnuadh leac dhaingean air leabaidh na
cúe nócúman,
Ís tréan mo labairt, ye meafair nach cúir
náire,
éin boct rgarite me a cóislead mo cúl báire,
Ís fáil, níl reanad, níl galra co tnom-éiríte,
le heug na ccairad, no rgarad na ccompánac.
Ó do leim! mo deacair! mo níllead! mo bhrón,
r' mo éirad!
Ó do ceol-éiríte nílir! mo bhréar! mo fáil-
bhróir dáir!
Cia éirlead air dúine beir air buslead, no a
bpein mar táir!
Mo deora fola do fáilad ad' deirg gac lá.

Thug me an chuairt 'rdo' airneach leim,
m' airtear 'rme air eir mo fáilad,
Air uairg mo éirad 'rdo meairg rir madair
mo fáil

IRISH ORIGINAL OF SONG FOR GRACEY NUGENT.

Uí mañ leam tuisle ari blaé na ríne
Guaeri an aindri ir rúgairgead
'Ygumab i muz báiri a ccasl 'ra ttuisri
Uíi innaib bpe ad glíce na ccúige ad
Cia be bjad na hajce d'aoisde 'rdo ló
Mí baogal do atuisrire daoidce no bion
Uíge an ríogum tréim ir aoisne méin
Fi cúl na ccraeb rna béáinnig
Uí taoib maí ael ra ríob maí géir
Ra ghaoi maí gíem an traimiasó
Mac tapasó don te dasi geallad maí rpie
bheic aicire zeuz na ccamólaoi
Uí ruairic 'rar ráim do plánte geanaíu
Uí áluinn deay do rúilglar
Re éluinn gac lá aig cách da aicri
Suí ráinneac car do cúltair

Fud maí a deirim leir an ógímaoi ríem
'bhruil a glóir m' r binne ma ceol nanén
Mí rianr no gíeann dasi rmuairig cean
Mac béuigdear go cinnce ag Guaeri,
Uíub na reud ar diuicdeay de ad
Uí cúl na ccraeb 'rna béáinnig
Gó ionnuin lom-ferm tu
'Ydadaim don rgeal ac dólrainn
San bpeig do pláinte.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF SONG FOR MABEL KELLY

Ce be ma bfuil re anóán do
A lámh do bheic faoi na ceann
Adearum fein nach eagal báir do
Go bháic no ann a béo bheic tinn
A cúl deir na mbaicall cáinneac fionn
A com maí eala ag fháil ari an tuinn
Siad agur rpeir don gairmaró; Wáible fein
ni Cheallaró
Déud ar deire ar leagad an ariur cinn
Yníl céol dar bhinne á feolad an duine
Maic ar béol dó tuigre a maic an gac céim
Ta gmuaró maí Róir an dhuicé

A y buan na cónaíra an tSle
 A nora ar mne glaire bláic na an éiríe
 Ye deir gac ollamh molaó éiríe fíll nésill
 Go ccuimtea na corra a collaó le fáirgúic béil
 Híil ainmúir lom ann. A fáim-labhrach bhinn
 Aicé óitair linn go ghuinn do fláinte fém
 Odéagadair na mna mánla
 A y a ttráctairí an domhan go léir
 A dearym nac fúil na náit ann
 Aicé Aáble le clu ann gac céim
 A nraic gac duine a ccáilgeacé 'ra ccéill
 A y áigmarí don fhle aráigal ón déir
 Cúil na ccraeóir y fíne, lúb na ttréad ar bhine
 Fnuad na geire gile a bháige 'ra táeó.
 Híil aen da bheic, nac iongantac a gléar!
 Mac néirgíóir géilte ambarra na ccraeóir
 'ra té nac léir do an cónneal
 Láil do rpeir a leimé
 Yiar keairí méirí y tuigirí do náiríun gaeóeal
 Yí ar deire cora boya láil agur béal
 Péime nora y rora a fáir le go kéir
 Ta an báime ro linn
 A fáirgúic luicé ghuinn
 Fáirgúic go bhuairí me an fáill. ar áigmarí lom é.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF SONG BY PATRICK LINDEN

Ingean tair na mbánróch is áine na laéige
bhuáct

Do bhóiméul cólla dá éiríod ad fáir tuis a
phéanna 'nuár

Don tuis da teaghad ndán do beic ndáil na
mban-ndéte ari cuáit

Do mhóiréad leatya an táilleagan kar fáir
gum an éuda uaf'

Ta cáoi ari lafad dáiréhuil na fábuiread
deanta is gúaró

Aguy on láod meari Conall Ceáirnac cum ári
caeta in éirínn uáit

'Tgan bháon doo' gáol nír táime a bláit cáoih
na méui lag luáct

Do mhóiréul Cholla mhóiréul lonna ó gaebeal
glar do gláit

Ta daé na heala cclóidón me béo gúit na ccáoi
ar páit

U leaca glon na hóig-méine is móy lionta
bháon a fáir

Gac planda teaf da cclóidóiláoié korrgáoié
ráontair cláit

'Tgac bháon teaf da béol cadmí dhóiréad
rih dáoié óh mbár

Ta deairéul ceair fíol Róig aguy mhóircholla
an ríé tug báit

Gan reairgadair kad gac nóríatg don mhóiréula
mhóiréul bláit

U dealbach oibhóigad améoi mih ari fíol
ríóy le ríáonad láit

'Tgac mhóiréul usle ari li na hle ó bháoiéitg go láit.

IRISH ORIGINAL OF THE MAID OF THE VALLEY

bean dubh an gleána.

Uíbhacab tu no an ceúala tu an rtuairie dob'
aile ghaos?

I ngleanta duba 'rme in uairghor, gan ruairi-
mor do lá na d'óidh',

beslin caoin an truanhoirg do buairi me 'rdo
bheodairg mo chioide,

Udo beañacht rheim go buan leig sa di an ccuan
úo be áit i mbó

Áta re rghioita abrhoita do chom riang
'rdo miala chael

'rdo beslin tanuio raos rin na raosirín do bean-
raoh bheas,

Do chioib ar gile ray mihne, ioña an ríoda 'rná
cluih na nēan,

Ár buairca cmaróce bime 'nuairi rmaoimim
air rgaruim léi.

Á nuairi deaircar i do téig me, le gēi rfeairc
da ghaos 'rda rhd.

Á iniona chiocha glegeal, a dēio deair, 'ra
dlaos-rholt oiri,

ba gile a dpeach na Desioie chuiri láechria
na Uioe air kéodh,

'r na blánad iirín na ccláenhoirg le air triáo-
chadh na mílte triéon.

Árluiri na mban, na triéig me air báeclach le
raimc dá rdoiri,

Gan chliu gan mēair, gan bēara achd blaedhea-
pacht ir bhuiohean ir gleo,

Ircumdo rirín dpeachta bpeaiga gaosheilge
dhuir oioice an rhorairi,

'rdo rghuioiruin rdairi na rfeine go leiricheairc
'r na míleadh móiri.

Reliques of Irish Poetry

***CRÍOCH* (THE END)**