

when the moon being in her apogee, appears much less than the Sun, which is most sensible, when he is in his perigee; the cusp of the lunar shadow not reaching the earth, she becomes in a central conjunction with the sun; but not being able to cover his disk, his whole limb or edge appears like a thin ring. Between an Eclipse of the Sun and Moon there are several remarkable differences; 1. The Moon really loses her light, and is obscured for want of the illumination of the Sun; but the Sun does not suffer any loss of light, only we are deprived of it. 2. The moon's Eclipse is not only real, but universal, and appears always in the same quantity on every part of the earth's superficies, where it is visible; but the Sun's Eclipse is varied, and is greater, lesser, or not at all, according to the several parts it is beheld from. 3. The Moon always begins to be eclipsed on the west side of its face or body; and the sun on the East side.

*The Dream of Borreray.*—In the 15th century, Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, invaded the island of Mull with a large force; and Maclean, the chief of that clan, being taken by surprise, was not prepared to resist his powerful enemy in the field. He therefore retired and took up a very strong position near a place called Leckalee, on the western side of Benmore, the loftiest mountain of that mountainous island. The Lord of the Isles encamped by the sea-side, below the men of Mull.

Maclean, of Borreray, was a vassal of Macdonald, and attended his superior on this expedition with all his people. He was a man of great prudence, and stood very high in the esteem of his Lord, who was accustomed to consult him on all important occasions.—Every attempt to compromise the feud having failed, the Lord of the Isles announced his resolution to attack the Macleans on the following morning.—His men were brave and numerous, but the advantage of the ground which his enemies occupied, gave them every chance of success; and there could be no doubt that the Macdonalds must suffer severe loss, whatever the ultimate result might be.

Situated as Borreray was, it did not become him directly to oppose the attack; but availing himself of the credulity and superstition so prevalent in that age, he adopted a more effectual means of preventing the destruction of his mutual friends, and it deserves to be recorded to his honour.

On the morning of the intended battle, Borreray was summoned to council at a very early hour, and he appeared extremely dejected. Macdonald observed this, and remarking that it must naturally be distressing to his feelings to be engaged against his own clan, he kindly entreated that Borreray should take charge of a body of men intended for a reserve. The other thanked the Lord of the Isles, but declined the favour; and assured his superior that though he felt much reluctance to spill the blood of his clan-men, that was by no means the chief cause of his sorrow. The Lord of the Isles requested to know what other cause he could have, and Maclean appeared very averse from disclosing it; but he at last informed Macdonald that he had a dream the preceding night, which gave him great alarm. In his sleep he had been visited by a supernatural being, which claimed to him some verses, which may be translated as follows:

“Thou dark and dismal Leckalee,  
The fatal fights befalls on thee;  
The race of Gillean shall prevail,—  
The stranger's strength this day shall fail.

The lofty, towering Gardnohu  
Shall yield the Eagles plenteous food;  
Ere swords to their black sheaths return,  
The Red Knight's blood shall stain the barn.”

These words are much more expressive in the original Gaelic. When Borreray had told this story and recited these lines in the presence of the leaders of the Macdonalds, they all declared their determination not to attack the enemy. Thus Maclean of Borreray, with great satisfaction, effected his judicious and humane purpose; and the Lord of the Isles left Mull without bloodshed.

*To give new rum the flavour of old spirits.*—An ingenious friend assures me, from his own experience, that if new rum be exposed for a night to a severe frost, and then removed to a heated room, and this alternately for a week or two, it will in that short time have acquired a flavour equal to fine old spirits.