

ever resounded as with the noise of stormy waters when he who bore it was in danger. Summoned by which signal, one of King Conor's nobles, coming behind Illan Finn, thrusts him through. "The weakness of death then fell darkly upon Illan, and he threw his arms into the mansion, and called to Naisi to fight manfully, and expired." Clan Usnach at length deign to lay aside their chess-tables, and stand to their arms. Ardan first sallies out, and slays his "three hundred men of might;" then Airlé, who makes twice that havoc; and last, Naisi himself; and "till the sands of the sea, the dewdrops of the meadows, the leaves of the forest, or the stars of heaven be counted, it is not possible to tell the number of heads, and hands, and lopped limbs of heroes that there lay bare and red from the hands of Naisi and his brothers on that plain." Then Naisi came again into the Red Branch to Deirdré: and she encouraged him, and said, "We will yet escape; fight manfully, and fear not." Then the sons of Usnach made a phalanx of their shields, and spread the links of their joined bucklers round Deirdré, and bounding forth like three eagles, swept down upon the troops of Conor, making great havoc of the people. But when Cathbad, the Druid, saw that the sons of Usnach were bent on the destruction of Conor himself, he had recourse to his arts of magic, and he cast an enchantment over them, so that their arms fell from their hands, and they were taken by the men of Ulster; for the spell was like a sea of thick gums about them, and their limbs were clogged in it, that they could not move. The sons of Usnach were then put to death, and Deirdré, standing over the grave, sang their funeral song.

The lions of the hill are gone,
And I am left alone—alone.
Dig the grave both wide and deep,
For I am sick, and fain would sleep!

The falcons of the wood are flown,
And I am left alone—alone.
Dig the grave both deep and wide,
And let us slumber side by side.

The dragons of the rock are sleeping,
Sleep that wakes not for our weeping.
Dig the grave, and make it ready,
Lay me on my true-love's body.

Lay their spears and bucklers bright
By the warriors' sides aright;
Many a day the three before me
On their linked bucklers bore me.

Lay upon the low grave floor,
'Neath each head, the blue claymore;
Many a time the noble three
Reddened these blue blades for me.

Lay the collars, as is meet,
Of their greyhounds at their feet;
Many a time for me have they
Brought the tall red deer to bay.