

John McDermott, Lachin Y Gair

Away, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses!
In you let the minions of luxury rove;
Restore me the rocks where the snow-flake reposes,
Though they are scared to freedom and love:
Yet, Caledonia; beloved are thy mountains,
Round their white summits though elements war;
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch Nagar.
Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy wander'd;
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;
On chieftans long perish'd my memory ponder'd.
As daily I strode through the pine cover'd glade.
I sought not my home, till the day's dying glory
Gave praise to the rays of the bright polar star;
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch Nagar.
"Shades of the dead! have I not heard your voices
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale";
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,
And rides on the wind, o'er his own Highland vale.
Round Loch Nagar while the stormy mist gathers,
Winter presides in his cold icy car:
Clouds there encircle the forms of my fathers;
They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch Nagar.
Yet, Caledonia; beloved are thy mountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch Nagar.
"Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions foreboding
Tell you that fate had forsaken your cause?"
Ah, were you destined to die at Culloden,
Victory crown'd not your fall with applause:
Still were you happy in death's earthy slumber,
You rest with your clan in the caves of Braemar;
The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud number,
Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch Nagar.
Years have roll'd on, Loch Nagar, since I left you,
Years must elapse ere I tread you again:
Nature or verdure and flowers has bereft you,
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's plain.
England! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved on the mountains afar:
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch Nagar!
Yet, Caledonia; beloved are thy mountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch Nagar.