

Thomas Campbell (1777-1844)

5 *Lines Written on Visiting a Scene in Argyleshire*

At the silence of twilight's contemplative hour,
I have mused, in a sorrowful mood,
On the wind-shaken weeds that embosom the bower
Where the home of my forefathers stood.
All ruined and wild is their roofless abode, 5
And lonely the dark raven's sheltering tree:
And travelled by few is the grass-covered road,
Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,
To his hills that encircle the sea.

Yet, wandering, I found on my ruinous walk, 10
By the dial-stone aged and green,
One rose of the wilderness left on its stalk,
To mark where a garden had been.
Like a brotherless hermit, the last of its race,
All wild in the silence of nature, it drew, 15
From each wandering sunbeam, a lonely embrace,
For the night-weed and thorn overshadowed the place
Where the flower of my forefathers grew.

Sweet bud of the wilderness! emblem of all
That remains in this desolate heart! 20
The fabric of bliss to its centre may fall,
But patience shall never depart!
Though the wilds of enchantment, all vernal and bright,
In the days of delusion by fancy combined
With the vanishing phantoms of love and delight, 25
Abandon my soul, like a dream of the night,
And leave but a desert behind.

Be hushed, my dark spirit! for wisdom condemns
When the faint and the feeble deplore;
Be strong as the rock of the ocean that stems 30
A thousand wild waves on the shore!
Through the perils of chance, and the scowl of disdain,

May thy front be unaltered, thy courage elate!
Yea! even the name I have worshipped in vain
Shall awake not the sigh of remembrance again:
To bear is to conquer our fate.

35

1800

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