

**TORQUIL; OR THE DAYS  
OF OLAF TRYGGVASON,  
WITH LEGENDS, BALLADS,  
DREAMS, ETC.**

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Torquil; or The days of Olaf Tryggvason, with legends, ballads, dreams, etc. by F. Robertson

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**F. ROBERTSON**

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OF OLAF TRYGGVASON,  
WITH LEGENDS, BALLADS,  
DREAMS, ETC.**



*with the author's kind regards*

*1<sup>st</sup> June 1870*

TORQUIL

OR THE

DAYS OF OLAF TRYGGVASON

WITH

Legends, Ballads, Dreams, etc.

BY

F. ROBERTSON

"To Norrway, to Norrway!  
To Norrway, o'er the faem"—  
*Sir Patrick Spens.*

EDINBURGH

ADAM & CHARLES BLACK

1870

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# TORQUIL

OR

## THE DAYS OF OLAF TRYGGVASON.

### Part First.

L.

THE waves were running wild and high,  
Their foam crests white against the sky ;  
The clouds athwart the dome of Heaven  
Burst angrily in gleams of levin ;  
The thunder's savage roaring came  
After each flash of livid flame.  
A strange, wild scene, that storm-beat isle,  
Cleft by the sea from fair Argyle,  
With barren cliffs of deep grey rock,  
Storm-washed by every tempest's shock,  
With hoary mountains, bleak and bare,  
Rearing their summits in mid-air.

A



Deep clefts, where little streams rushed down  
In tiny falls from pools, deep brown ;  
And here, and there, in emerald sheen,  
A meadow stretched of fertile green.

## II.

On a tall rock, layer upon layer,  
Creviced and carved by sea and air,  
A castle stood in grandest gloom—  
Like some old giant's storied tomb.  
Its ramparts circled round the cliff,  
Stone piled on stone, massive, and stiff ;  
Its one round tower stood wide and high,  
In outline dark against the sky.  
Built of huge stones, unpolished, rude,  
But refuge safe in times of feud.  
From this tall tower, the eye was free  
To watch what came by land or sea :  
North, south, or west, the glance quick flew ;  
But east, a mountain checked the view.  
A mountain, where the mist oft lay,  
When brightly shone the summer day,  
As though a veil would circle round,  
What islesmen counted holy ground :  
For here their priest dwelt with the earn,  
In solitude unfathomed, stern.

## III.

On grey ramparts, looking o'er the wave,—  
Where ceaseless rang the ocean's rave—  
A man paced, heedless of the storm,  
That wildly beat his stalworth form.  
His hazel eyes bent on the ground,  
In meditation, wrapt, profound.  
The wind played through his beard and hair,  
That fell luxuriant and fair.  
Its tawny waves told of Norweyan strain,  
From Vikings come, who sailed the main.  
Till, liking well this island strand,  
They settled down to rule the land.  
The many beaded torc was round his neck ;  
His robe of wool, with divers coloured check ;  
The brogues upon his feet of red deer's hide ;  
His broad-leafed sword hung by his side  
In brodered belt, inwrought with wires of gold,  
With magic runes in cunning legends scrolled.  
Such was the chieftain of the isle.—Torquil, his name !  
Young as he was, the land had heard his fame :  
How on the mainland down he bore,  
Sweeping the country bare from hill to shore,  
In vengeance for his father, slain of old,  
When to the isles the mainland warfare rolled.

## IV.

Just now, his heart was very sore and hot ;  
He had prayed for love, from one who loved him not :  
A captive maiden, that his arms had ta'en,  
When raged the island war on mainland plain.  
A chieftain's daughter, gentle, sweet, and fair,  
But drooping with her early weight of care ;  
Weeping for sire, and noble brethren slain ;  
Her captor's suit but gave her double pain,  
Her heart seemed buried in their silent grave.  
To Torquil's love no answering sign she gave.  
This day he found her weeping all alone,  
And his kind heart was anxious to atone  
For ill that he had wrought :  
He took her small cold hand in his, and told  
Of his own father slain of old,  
And how revenge he sought ;  
" Unavenged I dare not let him be.—  
" How could the Gods have then blessed me ? "  
He told his grief that he had slain  
The maiden's sire, and brethren twain ;  
And last, his love he told—  
Prayed her to be his own fair wife,  
With nuptial tie to still the strife.  
She answered, sad and cold,