



FISHING
ADVENTURES

BY

MALCOLM FERGUSON.





James Donald Dobson





FISHING INCIDENTS AND ADVENTURES.

I will esteem it a gain if you
will kindly recommend me
to your fishing friends & some
other friends.

Truly yours
M. D. [Signature]

you present your
to our present
mutual interest
M. D. [Signature]



Yours faithfully
W. Magnusson

FISHING INCIDENTS

AND

ADVENTURES

WITH

A DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ALL THE PRINCIPAL LOCHS
OF PERTHSHIRE,

ALSO,

A DAY ON LOCH DOON AND LOCHINDORB, THE DEE, TWEED,
FINDHORN, &c.

BY

MALCOLM FERGUSON,

Author of "A Tour through Orcadia," "Rambles in Breadalbane," &c.

DUNDEE: JOHN LENG & CO.

EDINBURGH: MACNIVEN & WALLACE.

MDCCCXCIII.



INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Nearly the whole of the following Fishing Sketches and Reminiscences have previously appeared in print—most of them during 1892—chiefly in the *People's Journal*, the *Stirling Observer*, and the *Oban Times*. At the special request of numerous friends they are now republished in book form.

RAVENS CRAIG, CALLANDER,

July 1893.

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A Fishing Adventure on the River Duchray.

WHILE spending some holidays at Aberfoyle, accompanied by my son, a youth of some fourteen or fifteen summers, named Seamus, we arranged to have a day's fishing on the Duchray Water, along with Mr Mitchell, landlord of the Bailie Nicol Jarvie Hotel. We were induced to undertake such an arduous expedition from a current report that a large number of salmon had ascended the river, and that the "Big Linn" was hotchin' with them. Report farther added that a certain well-known angler had one day landed no fewer than seven salmon to his own rod from the famous pool below the Duchray Falls a few days previously.

We started from the Hotel pretty early on a bright summer morning, and drove up fully a mile beyond the head of Loch Ard, and there discharged our smart "coachie," Alex., and his mettled black mare "Meg." From thence we steered our course across the hill ridge between the watershed of Lochs Chon and Ard and Gleann-Dubh, or Duchray Valley, following so far the usual track taken by those who ascend Ben Lomond from the Aberfoyle side. The distance from the clachan of Aberfoyle to Comar, at the head of Gleann-Dubh, which is the best starting-point for ascending the Ben, is some nine miles more or less. Thence the climb to the summit is rather steep and rugged, but comparatively short. The climber having ascended for the

most part up along a deep, dark, narrow ravine, finds himself suddenly on the summit of the lofty Ben Lomond, 3192 feet above the sea, emerging, as it were, from the weird, hollow bosom of an old volcanic crater. The view from the crest of the mighty Ben—

“ Who often shrouds
His lofty summit in a veil of clouds,
High o'er the rest exulting in his state,
In proud pre-eminence, sublimely great ;
One side, all awful to the astonished eye,
Presents a rise three hundred fathoms high.”

On gaining the summit of the ridge we descended the other side in a slanting direction, and struck the Duchray at the south-eastern base of Ben Lomond, and in a jiffy had our rods in order, and at once began our day's work—Mr M., as usual, with the worm, his favourite mode of fishing, and when on the river he usually carried a good supply of these wriggling speckled tempters handy in his big waistcoat pocket. Seamus and self fished with fly, to which the trout rose greedily, and in a comparatively short time we had several dozen nice yellow trout, which, though rather small in size, were in fine condition. As we descended the stream the pools were larger and deeper, and Mr M. landed some very good-sized trout, the worm being evidently the favourite bait with the bigger fellows. As previously arranged, we all fished down the river. Not a living creature was to be seen along this eerie, solitary valley, with the exception of some blackfaced sheep nibbling athwart the hillsides, with a number of frolicsome young lambs congregated here and there on some knoll tops busy at play ; some boxing, others playing at hide-and-seek or keek-bo round a big stone, and some frisky fellows trying to jump on their mother's back, &c. Now and then the husky croak-croak-croak of a solitary, sullen raven was heard as he soared slowly along high above us. The river was in capital ply, and being favoured with a

fine, bright, bracing day, and lots of room on the open moor—not a tree nor a bush of any sort to prevent a free cast—fishing was very enjoyable.

After proceeding some miles down the river the murmuring roar of the waterfall was distinctly heard in the distance. I happened to be the first to reach it. Here the stream bounds over an overhanging precipice of considerable height into a remarkably deep circular cauldron formed out of the solid rock, and familiarly known in the district by the name of the “Big Linn.” The foaming water escapes from the boiling, whirling, dark pool through a narrow gap only a few feet in breadth. I have seen cascades of greater height, but, with the exception of Foyers, the Duchray Falls, combined with the grim and savage surroundings, is one of the wildest and most awe-inspiring spots I have ever seen. After scrambling down the steep and rugged side of the gloomy gorge, I managed to get within a cast-throw of the “Big Linn,” but in less than five minutes I got somewhat alarmed on observing a small waterfall descending from the broad brim of my felt hat past my nose. I immediately commenced to retrace my steps, and with no small difficulty I managed to get clear of the dripping, weird ravine, breathing a silent vow never to enter it again for all the salmon that ever ascended the Forth, leaving Mr M. with the only gaff we had to catch as many salmon as he liked. However, after getting a good drenching with the thick watery mist or spray, he was glad to give it up, and leave all the salmon unharmed in the “Big Linn.”

Round about, and for a long way below the Falls, both sides of the glen are covered with trees of various sorts, but chiefly oak and thickly-tangled copsewood, in some parts extending for a considerable distance up the hillside on either side of the glen. Shortly after leaving the Falls we lost sight of Mr M., and after a long and weary search for him—our

loud halloos being re-echoed from crag to crag athwart the deep secluded valley—we could find no trace of him, and we became alarmed lest he had toppled into one of the deep dark pools and been drowned. To add to our distress, we got completely lost and bewildered amidst a dense forest of young oak-wood, intertwined with rank, luxuriant brackens rising up above our heads—about the longest brackens I had ever seen anywhere. After battling for a considerable time trying to escape from our woody prison, we at length got outside the dense copsewood quite “forfouchen” and fagged, and beheld the surrounding hills gorgeously gilded in the refulgent golden gleam of the descending sun. After proceeding some distance along the mountain side, not knowing very well which direction to take, there being no road or footpath of any description whatever to be seen, our only course was simply to follow the shed of the river. At length we met a shepherd, accompanied by a couple of swanky-looking collies. Our first eager question on meeting him was to ask if he had seen Mr Mitchell of the Aberfoyle Hotel going down the glen, but he told us that he had neither seen nor heard of him passing. The shepherd, to whom we gave the bulk of our baskets to lighten our burden, kindly volunteered to accompany us for some distance down the glen until we struck a footpath leading down to Duchray Castle.

After a long, weary trudge, footsore and sad at heart at the near prospect of having to face Mrs Mitchell and break the distressing news to her as to the supposed sad fate of her worthy husband, we reached our destination about eleven o'clock at night, and found, to our great relief and joy, that our friend, the jolly landlord, had reached home a few hours before us, quite done up. He had summoned a number of the most active men in the neighbourhood, who were on the point of setting off with rakes and other implements to drag

the river for us, as it was generally concluded that we had both fallen into the river, which was pretty much swollen, and been drowned.

The Duchray, or Amhuinn Dhu—*i.e.*, Black River, as it is still commonly called by the natives—takes its rise on the north-east shoulder of Ben Lomond, and after a run of about twelve or thirteen miles in a south-easterly direction, through a dreary, solitary valley, seldom trodden by human footsteps, forms a junction with another head stream, which, singular enough, is without a name. It takes its rise a short way north-east from the head of the Duchray, and falls into Loch Chon, the highest of a short chain of three beautiful small lakes—Loch Chon and Loch Ard, which is divided into upper and lower Loch Ard. These three lakes, one of which I have fished for several days annually for many years, are well stocked with beautiful trout, of exceptionally fine quality. The nameless stream which flows from the lower end of Loch Ard forms a junction with the Duchray water in front of the ancient Clachan of Aberfoyle—the waters of the Duchray not unlike the colour of well-attenuated London porter, the Loch Ard stream as clear as crystal. The two waters may be seen quite distinctly for a considerable distance flowing swiftly along side by side in the same bed before the two streams get thoroughly blended. From the Clachan of Aberfoyle the two united head streams are now called the Forth, and form the boundary line in that direction between the counties of Stirling and Perth, which, from its parent tiny rill well up the side of Ben Lomond till it mingles with the sea below Stirling, is one of the darkest, and, for many miles, the most sluggish running river in Scotland, owing, no doubt, to a large proportion of its entire run being through flat tracts of peat moss, and having a fall of only a very few feet from a point below Gartmore to near Stirling, a distance of about twenty miles.

“The descent, however, still continued, turned, winded, left the more open heaths and got into steeper ravines, which promised soon to lead us to the banks of some brook or river, and ultimately made good their presage. We found ourselves at length on the bank of a stream, which rather resembled one of my native English rivers than those I had hitherto seen in Scotland. It was narrow, deep, still, and silent; although the imperfect light, as it gleamed on its placid waters, showed also that we were now among the lofty mountains which formed its cradle. ‘That’s the Forth,’ said the Bailie, with an air of reverence, which I have observed the Scotch usually pay to their distinguished rivers. The Clyde, the Tweed, the Forth, the Spey, are usually named by those who dwell on their banks with a sort of respect and pride, and I have known duels occasioned by any word of disparagement.”

“Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
 And in the race they mock thy tide;
 Torry and Lendrick now are past,
 And Deanstoun lies behind them cast;
 They rise the banner’d towers of Doune,
 They sink in distant woodland soon;
 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
 They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
 They mark, just glance, and disappear
 The lofty brow of ancient Keir;
 They bathe their coursers’ sweltering sides,
 Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides.”





A Fishing Adventure on the Forth.

A NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING.

I CAN enjoy a run with a biggish salmon occasionally very well, but, as a rule, I generally prefer to stake my credit on numbers rather than weight. Not being favoured with an extra stock of patience, I sometimes get into a sad mess with some of the big fellows, often losing the “sma’ en’ o’ my rod an’ a guid cast o’ flees.” I have a very vivid recollection at this moment of a tussle with a large trout in which I made a narrow escape with my life. It was a big native trout—the foreign fellows, viz., sea trout, not having arrived at the time from their travels in Seatroutland. I had gone with a Glasgow friend, Mr B., to Rob Roy MacGregor’s country to have a few days’ sport on the far-famed Loch Ard and adjoining streams, where I have fished several days annually for many years. In my visits to that part of the country I always put up at the Bailie Nicol Jarvie snug and comfortable hotel. On this, my latest fishing excursion there, my success at the start was but so-so. The first day my friend, Mr B., who is a crack fisher, did very well, his basket being at least double the weight of mine. I resolved, however, by hook or by crook, to be upsides with him the following day, and accordingly made some quiet arrangements to take the day by the forelock; but I kept my plans to myself. Pretending to be very tired, I slipped early to bed, leaving my friend and the landlord at their toddy. On the following morning I got up about four

o'clock, and, keekin' through the window, saw the morning looked "no' sae bad." My favourite fourteen-foot rod was all prepared the night before, "wi' a cast o' my best flees on," so I stole quietly out in my slippers, leaving all the household in the land of Nod. The river being only about thirty yards or so from the hotel door, I commenced operations at once, and found the trout in a capital mood for catchin' flees, and in a few hours I had several dozen tidy trout (off and on about the size of Loch Fyne herrings) secure in my basket. I was just on the point of returning to the hotel, when, quite unexpectedly, a regular thumper made grab at my sma' trail flee; but suspecting a' wasna richt, he bolted down the river at full speed—my pirn going at the rate of about two hundred revolutions per minute—never lookin' ahint him till he reached a deep pool about fifty yards down the stream. I commenced cautiously to wind up the line, approaching step by step to where the fellow had taken up his position skulking behind a big stane, saying, nae doot, to his wee brithers, "Guid preserve us a', my freends, but I ha'e got an awfu' fricht! Surely this maun be some new-fangled flee I hae nabbit this mornin', wi' sic a deil o' a lang trailin' tail, an', if I'm no mista'en, it's still stickin' about my upper gum, which I feel stoonin' as if I had an attack o' my aul' enemy, the teethache." On getting my rod and line in proper trim, I gave the fellow a slight tug, just to feel if my wee flee had a guid grip. He did not seem to relish the tugging process, and at once scudded across and round the Linn, and made a jump clean out of the water to see what was what. After a good deal of manœuvring, I managed to get him landed on the bank. I laid down my rod, and soon had him in my hands; but the slippery rascal, making a final effort to escape, and saying to himsel', "By jingo, noo or never," slipped through my fingers and wriggled down the bank. In my eagerness to recapture him I lost my equilibrium, and

went head foremost into the pool. After a very hard struggle I managed to crawl out, but could see no trace of my freen', the big trout.

I at once made for the hotel, chitterin' and hirplin' on bare feet like a drookit hen, having lost my bonnet and my bauchels while soomin' in the Linn. On reaching the hotel I met the landlord, who, on seeing the saturated state of my garments, said, "Dear me, Mr F., were you drowned?" "Not quite," said I, "but pretty near it." He at once insisted that I should change my claes; and knowing that my wardrobe was limited to what was on my back, he called his kind and active better-half, who, on seeing how matters stood, soon procured one of the guidman's tweed suits for my accommodation. But the guidman being a stalwart, buirdly man, weighing over eighteen stones, and an extra size round the middle, his claes did not fit me very weel; but with the assistance of a few preens and some strings, I managed to get them fixed on. Shortly after getting myself rigged in my new claes I took a dauner outside the hotel, and saw my Glasgow freen', with his hands a-kimbo ahint his back, taking a stroll, and every noo and than taking a glint athwart the sky to see in what airt the clouds were moving. On meeting me, he said, in a careless sort of way, "A fine mornin', sir," and was passing on. Not being in a very good mood, I replied, "I suppose ye hae yer share o't." Turning sharp round, he exclaimed, "Bless—*Me*—Mr F., is that you?—upon my word I didn't know you—what the deuce is up with you? Has some Highland robber ran awa' wi' yer claes in the nicht time?" I briefly explained the nature of my mishap, fully expecting his sympathy; but, in place of sympathy, my unfeeling friend could scarcely take his breakfast for laughing, every noo an' than taking another swatch of my tweed suit, and speerin' all the particulars of my morning's adventure.



A Day on Loch Ard,

WITH DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS SURROUNDINGS,

INCLUDING LOCH CHON.

“ The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended far beneath
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wandered o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And pondered refuge from his toil
By far Loch Ard or Aberfoyle.”

LOCH ARD lies within a mile or so from the Duchray Water, which forms the boundary in that direction between the counties of Stirling and Perth, at an elevation of 105 feet above the sea. About a mile west from the Clachan of Aberfoyle the first view of the lower lake is exceedingly beautiful and picturesque. Directing the eye due west, the massive rounded summit of Ben Lomond is seen towering to the clouds in the background. In the nearer view you have rounded eminences clothed with weeping birch and oak to their very summits, the bare, grey, ragged rock here and there peeping out through the overhanging foliage. Immediately under the eye the lower lake, stretching out from very narrow beginnings to a breadth of half a mile more or less, and nearly a mile in length, is seen at a glance from end to end.

On the right the banks are skirted with extensive oak woods, &c., which cover the hillside more than half-way up. This spot, in days of yore, formed the barrier between the low country and the almost inaccessible wild region that lies to the westward, and is called the "Pass of Aberfoyle." Previous to the formation of the road which now stretches along the banks of the lake, a few brave, hardy men stationed in this narrow pass could have repulsed an army in attempting to press further into the Highlands. In the time of the Commonwealth a party of Cromwell's army, attempting to penetrate into the upper country by this Pass, was repulsed by a band of Highlanders, headed by the Earl of Glencairn and Graham of Duchray, whose castle—situated about a mile to the southward—the invaders had just reduced to ashes.

There is a huge rock in the pass stretching down to Loch Ard, the road leading to the ledge of it, on which some of Rob Roy's Highlanders were espied, and on the top of which appeared a female figure of the finest and most commanding form. "She might be between the time of forty and fifty years, and had a countenance which must once have been of a masculine cast of beauty; though now, imprinted with deep lines by exposure to rough weather, and perhaps by the wasting influence of grief and passion, its features were only strong, harsh, and expressive. She wore her plaid, not drawn around her head and shoulders, as is the fashion of the women in Scotland, but disposed around her body as the Highland soldiers wear them. She had a man's bonnet with a feather in it, an unsheathed sword in her hand, and a pair of pistols at her girdle. This was Helen MacGregor, Rob Roy's wife. 'What seek ye here?' she asked Captain Thornton; and was answered, 'We seek the outlaw, Rob Roy MacGregor or Campbell, and make no war on women, therefore offer no opposition to the King's troops, and assure yourself of no evil treatment.' The Amazon retorted—'Ay, I am no stranger

to your tender mercies. Ye have left me neither name nor fame; my mother's bones will shrink aside in their grave when mine are laid beside them. Ye have left me and mine neither house nor hold, blanket nor bedding, cattle to feed us or flocks to clothe us; ye have taken from us all, all. The very name of our ancestors ye have taken away, and now you come for our lives.' The parley ended with orders to the soldiers to move forward. They did so. An ambuscade of Highlanders opened fire on the troops, and at the expense of one man slain and two wounded the former won an easy and complete victory. The sergeant who led the advance was shot through the body and perished in the loch, into which he rolled down from the face of the cliff. Others were killed, and some dozen were made prisoners, among whom was Captain Thornton himself." Near this spot Bailie Nicol Jarvie and his two friends, Osbaldistone and Fairservice, had been made prisoners the night before by Captain Thornton, and taken along with him in this hapless adventure. During the brief but fierce and bloody encounter between the redcoats and the Highlanders the prisoners made their escape, and, when scrambling along the face of the steep, rugged pass, the Bailie lost his footing, and probably might have rolled down the face of the precipice into the deep waters of Loch Ard, and been for ever deprived of the satisfaction of seeing his mortal remains laid beside his respected, revered father, the Deacon, whose acts and words he was so fond of quoting, but for the projecting horizontal branch of a sturdy oak tree, which, catching hold of the skirts of his riding coat, fortunately supported him in mid air, where he remained dangling for some time, till rescued from his perilous and awkward position. "I next took the liberty of asking him how he managed to extricate himself. 'Me extricate myself! I nicht hae hung there till the day of judgment ere I could ha'e helped myself; wi' my head

hingin' down on the tae side and my heels on the ither, like the yarn scales in the weigh-house. It was the creature Dougal that extricated me as he did yestreen ; he cuttit aff the tails o' my coat wi' his durk, and another ghillie and him set me on my legs again as cleverly as if I had never been aff them. But see what a gude thing braid claith is ! Had I been in ony o' your rotten French camlets now, or your drab de berries, it wou'd hae screeded like an auld rag wi' sic a wecht as mine. But fair fa' the weaver that wrought the weft o't, I swung and bobbit yonder as safe as a gabbard that's moored by a three-ply cable at the Broomielaw.' ”

Proceeding westward, you lose sight of the lake for rather more than a mile. The upper lake, which is by far the largest, is separated from the lower by a narrow stream fully two hundred yards in length. The best view of the higher lake is from a rising ground near its lower end, where a path strikes off to the south through the wood that overhangs this connecting stream. Looking westward, you have Ben Lomond in the background, rising at the distance of about five miles in the form of a regular cone, its sides presenting a gentle slope to the N.W. and S.E. On the right you have the lofty mountain of Bonoghrie running westwards towards the deep valley in which Loch Chon lies concealed from view. In the foreground Loch Ard stretches out to the west in fairest prospect, its length about three miles, and nearly a mile and a half at its broadest part. Its shores are beautifully skirted with variegated woods and coppice, and its northern and western extremities finely diversified with meadows, corn-fields, and farm-houses. A cluster of rocky islands near the south shore lend their aid in ornamenting the surface of this most charming and picturesque Perthshire lake, and numerous jutting rocky promontories, sheltered deeply indented creeks and bays, with waving overhanging foliage, increase the effect of the romantic scene.

A small wooded island is seen near the south shore, which is called Duke Murdoch's Island. On this isolated, rock-bound island Murdoch, Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland, during the captivity of James I. in England, erected a fortress as a place of refuge, when he began to dread the danger he might be exposed to in the event of his cousin, James I., returning from his captivity in England and ascending the throne. It is said that it was at this castle he was arrested and brought to Stirling for trial and execution. Two months elapsed between his arrest in his fortress on Loch Ard and his being brought to the block at Stirling Castle.

Proceeding westward along the banks of the lake—under a rocky precipice of 30 to 50 feet high—from the opposite side of the loch on a calm day there is a most remarkably distinct echo returned from the rock. A short way above the farm-house of Ledard, and nearly opposite the west end of the loch, there is a very fine cascade—the Falls of Ledard. The stream, which is considerable, falls in one sheet over a height of ten or twelve feet into a deep circular basin, formed out of the solid rock—a light blue whinstone—and so transparent that at the depth of ten feet or more the smallest pebble may be distinctly seen at the bottom. By the action of stones and gravel brought down from the higher reaches when the stream is in flood, and rumbled hither and thither with great force inside, the basin seems finely polished. From this basin, dashing over a curiously-formed ledge of rock, it precipitates itself again over an irregular slope of over sixty feet, overhung on either side by curiously-formed oak trees, &c., growing out of crevices in the face of the precipitous rock, and evidently of great age.

Loch Ard is one of the earliest trouting lochs in Scotland, fishing opening early in March, and good sport is often got at the start. The trout are reckoned to be as fine in quality

as those of the now widely-famed Loch Leven, and, as a rule, average fully half a pound. Live minnow and phantom are occasionally used for trolling, and sometimes larger trout are got with them, but it is chiefly fly fishing that is practised, trolling for trout being generally considered by experienced anglers poor, dull, monotonous sport. Some days, when the weather is favourable for fly fishing, with a smart westerly breeze and a bright, speckled tartan sky overhead, capital baskets are often got. The best months are March, April, May, and June. I have fished Loch Ard for several days for many successive seasons, and always found a somewhat tousy, yellow-bodied fly, with woodcock wing, a favourite. Loeh Ard is now of easy access from almost any point of the compass by rail to Aberfoyle. The proprietor of the classic Bailie Nicol Jarvie Hotel has the fishing on the loeh, and has always capital boats and experienced boatmen on it for the convenience of anglers staying at his hotel.

Some two miles beyond Loch Ard, Loeh Chon opens to the view, a fine sheet of water some three miles in length by about half a mile wide at its broadest part, and lies at an elevation of 290 feet above sea level, adorned with three beautiful wooded islands. The loch is fairly well stocked with finely-marked yellow trout, which are very lively, and give capital sport. Trout of five and six lbs. are often got in this loch.

From time immemorial till within a comparatively recent date Loch Chon was a favourite haunt of the heron tribe.

“ On Duchray’s towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch Chon.”

On one of the islands in the loch an immense number of these long-legged, long-necked, ungainly birds built their nests regularly every season, owing, no doubt, to its singularly sequestered, secluded situation, and the abundance of fish in the lake. I daresay that, with the exception of the one which

existed for many centuries in the wild and romantic glen of the impetuous Findhorn, the heronry on Loch Chon was probably the largest in Scotland. A solitary heron may still be seen occasionally about the loch, but I believe that none have built their nests there for a good many years.

A short way north-west of Loch Chon there is a place called Coir-Shi-an, *i.e.*, the Corrie or Cove of the Daoine-shi, *i.e.*, men of peace, or fairies, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their resort. In the neighbourhood of said Cove there are several rounded, conical hillocks, and particularly one near the head of the lake, by the skirts of which many persons are still afraid to pass after sunset. It is said that if on Hallow-eve any person goes alone round that hill nine times towards the left hand a door shall open by which he will be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race have been entertained in their secret recesses. There they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets and delicious wines. Their females far surpass the daughters of men in beauty. The seemingly happy inhabitants pass their time mostly in festivity and dancing to the notes of the softest music—

“’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in Fairyland,
When fairy birds are singing.”

But unhappy is the mortal who joins in their joys or ventures to partake of their dainties. By this indulgence he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound irrevocably to the condition of the Shi-ichs, or men of peace. The Daoine-shi—the fairies of the Highlanders—though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish, repining race of beings, who, having themselves but a scanty portion of real happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy in their subterraneous abodes a sort of

shadowy happiness, a tinsel grandeur, which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortals.

“ And gaily shines the fairy-land,
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December’s beam
Can dart on ice and snow.”

It is said that the celebrated Viscount Dundee was dressed in green when he commanded at the battle of Killiecrankie, and to this circumstance the Highlanders ascribe the disastrous events of that day. It is still reckoned peculiarly ominous to any person of his name to assume this sacred colour.*

A woman, as is reported in Highland tradition, was conveyed in days of yore into the secret abodes of the men of peace. There she was recognised by one who had formerly been an ordinary mortal, but who had by some fatality become associated with the Shi-ichs. This acquaintance, still retaining some portion of human benevolence, warned her of her danger, and counselled her as she valued her liberty to abstain from eating or drinking with them for a certain space of time. She complied with the counsel of her friend, and when the period assigned had elapsed she found herself again upon earth, restored to the society of mortals.

That there have been instances of persons who have been released from fairyland and restored to the society of mortals is still generally believed. Sir Walter Scott’s thrilling story of Ethert Brand, so exquisitely told in the fourth canto of “The Lady of the Lake,” is one, his brave and intrepid sister being the instrument of his deliverance.

“ It was between the night and day,
When the fairy king has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, ’twixt life and death, was snatch’d away
To the joyless elfin bower.

* In the great battle with the Fingalians, which, according to tradition, finally decided the fortunes of the Druidical order, their standard was green.

But wist I of a woman bold,
 Who thrice my brow durst sign,
 I might regain my mortal mold—
 As fair a form as thine.

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
 And made the holy sign,
 And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
 A spotless hand is mine.

And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
 By him whom demons fear,
 To shew us whence thou art thyself,
 And what thy errand here.

She cross'd him once—she cross'd him twice—
 That lady was so brave,
 The fouler grew his goblin hue,
 The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him thrice, that lady bold ;
 He rose beneath her hand
 The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
 Her brother, Ethert Brand."

We have in a more recent tradition a story almost similar, except in its unfortunate catastrophe. The Rev. Robert Kirke, who first translated the Psalms into Gaelic verse, had formerly been parish minister of Balquhidder, and died minister of Aberfoyle in the year 1668, at the early age of forty-two. He was walking, it is said, one evening about the gloaming on the little rounded knoll to the west of the Manse, which is still called Dun-shi, *i.e.*, the Fairies' Knowe, when he suddenly fell down dead—as was at first believed—but this was not his fate. Mr Kirke was a near relation of Graham of Duchray Castle. Shortly after his funeral he appeared in the same dress in which he had sunk down on the Fairies' Knowe to a mutual friend of his own and of Duchray. "Go," he said to him, "to my cousin Duchray, and tell him that I am not dead. I fell down in a swoon and was carried away into Fairy-land, where I am now. Tell him that when he and my friends are assembled at the baptism of my child (for he had left his wife pregnant) I will enter the room, and if he throws the knife in his hand over my head, I

will be released and restored to human society." The time of the christening arrived. They were seated at table when Mr Kirke entered, but the Laird of Duchray, by some unaccountable fatality, neglected to perform the prescribed ceremony. Mr Kirke retired by another door, and was seen no more. It is firmly believed by not a few that he is still with the elfin people in Fairyland. I had occasion not long ago to call at the house, and had some conversation with a well-known and respected old lady who resides in the neighbouring parish of Balquhider, in which parish Mr Kirke was at one time the respected and beloved minister. This now aged woman evidently had not the slightest doubt that poor Mr Kirke was at this day living in the mysterious land of the Shi-ichs. I may mention as conclusive evidence that there are other folks besides auld wives who believe that Mr Kirke is still alive. Of course there are some unreasonable, sceptical mortals to be met with in the world who will hardly believe anything, not even the Holy Bible. I had occasion to be present at the annual business meeting and dinner of the Edinburgh Perthshire Association, which was held at the classic Bailie Nicol Jarvie Hotel, Aberfoyle, on the 24th September last (1892). The Chairman—Colonel Stirling of Kippendavie—in proposing the toast of "The New Members," coupled with it the name of the Rev. Mr Taylor, minister of Aberfoyle. Mr Taylor, who replied in a brief but eloquent speech on his own and the other new members' behalf, told the Chairman that he was hardly correct in referring to him as the minister of Aberfoyle, as the Rev. Mr Kirke was still alive, and might return any day from his lengthened captivity in the land of the Shi-ichs, and resume his sacred duties as the duly and legally appointed parish minister of Aberfoyle. In that event he (Mr Taylor) would be obliged to quit his snug, cosy manse, and look out for another kirk, which sometimes was not easily got.

It may be mentioned that not very long before he was seized and carried off by the Daoine-shi, Mr Kirke had written a very interesting book about the elfin people, entitled "The Secret Commonwealth." The book was reprinted in Edinburgh in 1815, but is now quite out of print, there not being a single copy to be had at any price. It is generally supposed that the men of peace were exceedingly angry with Mr Kirke for divulging their secret mode of living and general history, from which it would appear that the Daoine-shi are descended from the ancient Druidical order, who, in days of long, long ago in matters civil and ecclesiastical held the sway in Celtic Europe. "That this hierarchy existed in Scotland can be satisfactorily proved from other sources, but it is presumed that to an inquiring mind the still remaining traces of the Daoine-shi, or men of peace, will furnish the best evidence of their identity with the ancient Druids, as well as the documents that can now be obtained of the particular tenets of a system of worship whose very essence was secrecy, and the knowledge of which has been for ever buried with the extinction of the ancient order who professed it."

I daresay there are few, if any, clachans or hamlets within the bounds of the county which within the last ten or fifteen years have undergone such a very marked change in their general aspect as Aberfoyle. Instead of the quiet, sequestered, out-of-the-way little hamlet, with its humble dwellings, mostly all thatched with bracken, &c., and of the most primitive-looking description, it is now—especially during the summer season—quite a gay, busy place compared to Sir Walter Scott's description of it in "Rob Roy." "There is the inn of the clachan kept by mine hostess, Jean M'Alpine, who, when Frank Osbaldistone and Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Andrew Fairservice reached her door at a late hour, presently opened the door with a lighted piece of split fir blazing in her

hand. . . . There was at the door of the hovel the 'white' wand, the token that gentlemen had taken up the public-house on their 'ain' business. Within the principal apartment the fire, fed with blazing turf and branches of dried wood, blazed merrily in the centre, but the smoke, having no means of escape but through a hole in the roof, eddied round the rafters of the cottage and hung in sable folds at the height of about five feet from the floor. The space beneath was kept pretty clear by innumerable currents of air which rushed towards the fire from the broken panel of basketwork which served as a door, from two square holes designed ostensibly as windows, through one of which was thrust a plaid, and through the other a tattered greatcoat; and, moreover, through various less distinguishable apertures in the walls of the tenement, which being built of round stones and turf cemented by mud, let in the atmosphere at innumerable crevices. . . . The beds were cribs of different dimensions beside the walls, some formed of fractured boards, some of shattered wicker-wood or plaited boughs, in which slumbered the family of the house—men, women, and children—their places of repose only concealed by the dusky wreaths of vapour which arose above, below, and around them. The stable, in which horses were stowed away along with goods, poultry, pigs, and cows, was under the same roof with the mansion-house. There is the clachan itself, which consisted of about a dozen miserable *bourocks*, composed of loose stones cemented with clay instead of mortar, and thatched with turf laid rudely upon rafters formed of native and unhewn birches and oaks from the woods around. The roofs approached the ground so nearly that Andrew Fair-service observed they might have ridden over the village the night before and never found out that they were near it unless their horses' feet had 'gane' through the rigin'."

The Baillie Nicol Jarvie Hotel of the present day is a large,

commodious, modern establishment, where one can have all the comforts and luxuries of the "Sautmarket," and stands within a hundred yards or so of the railway station. A four-in-hand stage coach starts from the station several times daily during the summer season, across the hill to the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, in connection with the Loch Katrine steamers. There are several large, handsome shops in the place that will compare favourably with those to be seen in much larger towns; a post and telegraph office, an Established Church—the only church in the village—which, I daresay, will be found a boon and a blessing to the people of the place; a branch bank opened for transacting business only two days a week; and a considerable number of recently-erected villas occupying very good sites along the roadside to Loch Ard. The picturesque little valley of Aberfoyle, which extends for about a couple of miles in length by one broad, with its winding river, its meadows and richly-wooded knolls—enclosed on every side by lofty mountains—has long been admired for its singular beauty. A stranger approaching the clachan from Loch Ard or the west might readily fancy that there is no possible outlet from the vale wherein the village lies. The Forth, the railway, and the public road leave the place by a gap between two hills quite close together, and immediately diverge in different directions. A few hundred yards west from the hotel the road skirts the base of an immense *debris* of detached boulders of rock and loose stones, the accumulation of ages, that have toppled down from the face of the tremendous overhanging cliffs above—Craigmore—which rises almost sheer up to the height of over 1200 feet above the vale below. From this precipice immense masses of rock come tumbling down now and again with a noise like thunder, and the path through which they have passed is marked out like the deserted channel of a torrent.

I daresay there is now no relic about the old clachan of

Aberfoyle that is viewed and examined with such keen interest and curiosity as the famous coulter which Bailie Nicol Jarvie used with such telling and unlooked-for effect in his memorable hand-to-hand combat with his big, sturdy, hairy-legged, kilted antagonist—Alistair M'Tavish, at Jean M'Alpine's little inn at Aberfoyle. " 'We are three to three,' said the lesser Highlander, glancing his eyes at our party, 'if ye be pretty men, draw ;' and unsheathing his broadsword he advanced on me. I put myself in a posture of defence, and, aware of the superiority of my weapon—a rapier or small sword—was little afraid of the issue of the contest. The Bailie behaved with unexpected mettle. As he saw the gigantic Highlander confront him with his weapon drawn, he tugged for a second or two at the hilt of his shabbe, as he called it ; but finding it loth to quit the sheath to which it had been long secured by rust and disuse, he seized as a substitute on the red hot coulter of a plough which had been employed in arranging the fire by way of a poker, and brandished it with such effect that at the first pass he set the Highlander's plaid on fire, and compelled him to keep a respectable distance till he could get it extinguished. The coulter may still be seen firmly secured by a strong iron chain to a sturdy old oak tree of a most peculiar formation, which stands immediately in front of the hotel." I believe Mr Blair, proprietor of the hotel, has been repeatedly offered a fabulous sum for the coulter, no doubt by curiosity hunters or "Barnums," but, of course, siller won't buy such a unique and much-prized relic.

A special and prominent feature of Aberfoyle is its famed slate quarries, where between 70 and 80 workmen—all Highlanders—chiefly from Easdale and Ballachulish districts, are regularly employed. The quarries are situated high up the mountain side, at an elevation of some 1200 feet above the sea and about two miles and a half from the village. The

slates are conveyed from the quarries to the railway station by a tramway 2 feet 4½ inch gauge. From the quarries to a certain point of the way there is only a single line of rails, and worked by horses. From this point there is a double line of rails, which for over seven hundred yards is laid along the face of a remarkably steep declivity—a shoulder of Craigmore. The ascent rises over 600 feet, and a large proportion of its length has a gradient of onc in three. The double line is self-acting—that is, the loaded waggons going down the steep incline bring up the empty ones by means of a wire rope ¾-inch diameter. Each carries 500 full-sized slates, weighing about 17 cwt., and as a rule six waggons are taken down at a time. The production is rather over two and a half million full-sized slates annually, about one-third of which is a beautiful green shade of colour, a slate now in great demand for the better class of houses and public buildings, such as schools, churches, &c. For the last ten years or so these quarries have been worked very successfully by the present Company, and more especially since the railway was opened to Aberfoyle. While in the neighbourhood recently (September 1892), the intelligent manager of the works, Mr Russel Lindsay—who is well known and much respected in the district—kindly offered to give me a ride up to the quarries in one of the empty waggons, which I declined with thanks, my life not being insured. The following excerpt from the session books of the Buchlyvie U.P. Church congregation shows that the Aberfoyle slate quarries have been wrought for a long time:—"The foundation-stone of the Buchlyvie U.P. Church was duly laid on the 7th day of February 1751. On the 29th day of January 1752, the managers appointed all the corners of the community to go to the slate quarries of Aberfoyle to convey slates for the church. The weather not being very good, it was delayed till the 9th of February following, when men with sixty

horses proceeded to the quarries, the slates being packed in pocks and carried on horseback to Buchlyvie." The following various items show the cost of the new church :—

The Laird of Buchlyvie for ground,	£5	0	0
Building,	26	3	0
Lime,	11	0	0
Raising stones and sand, ..	10	4	0
Wood and wright work,	48	5	0
Slating, including price of slates, ...	20	4	0
Sundries,	32	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total cost,	£152	16	0

Aberfoyle gave one eminent son to the world of letters—to whom the writer was related by marriage—William Richardson, who was born in the manse in the year 1743, being the son of James Richardson, minister of the parish. When a student of Divinity at the Glasgow College he was appointed tutor to the two sons of Lord Cathcart, with whom he went to Eton, where he remained for two years. In 1768 he accompanied them to St Petersburg, their father having been appointed as British Ambassador to the Russian Court, and there the tutor acted as Secretary to his lordship. One of his pupils having died, he returned with the survivor to Glasgow in 1772, and soon thereafter was appointed Professor of Humanity in the University of that city, which chair he filled with great acceptance and honour till his death in 1814. His pen was very prolific, as the following list of his works clearly shows :—“A philosophical analysis and illustration of some of Shakespeare’s remarkable characters”—1774 ; “Cursory remarks on tragedy, Shakespeare, and certain Italian and French poets”—1774 ; “Poems, chiefly rural”—1774 ; “Essays on Shakespeare’s dramatic characters of Richard III., King Lear, and Timon of Athens, with an essay on the faults of Shakespeare”—1783 ; “Essays on Shakespeare’s dramatic character of Falstaff, &c.”—1789 ; “The Indians,” a tragedy—1799 ;

“Essays on Shakespeare’s dramatic character of Macbeth, &c., &c.”—1801. He also contributed to *Steuart’s Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, and to the *Mirror and Lounger*, and wrote the life of Professor Arthur prefixed to his works, and an essay on Celtic Superstition, appended to Dr Graham’s “Inquiry into the authenticity of the poems of Ossian.” I have now in my possession a copy of several of these works, which had reached a fifth edition. A fine portrait of the Professor, by Raeburn, was for long in Gartmore House, the seat of Mr Cunninghame Graham. The said portrait is now in the possession of Mr Richardson—a relative of the Professor—who resides in the south of England. Before leaving for St Petersburg, he thus sung his

FAREWELL TO ABERFOYLE.

“To thee my filial bosom beats,
 On thee may heaven indulgent smile,
 And glad thy innocent retreats,
 And bless thee, lovely Aberfoyle
 How pleasing to my pensive mind
 The memory of thy bold cascade,
 Thy green woods waving to the wind,
 And streams in every vocal glade.

The simple church, the schoolhouse green,
 The gambols of the schoolboy crew ;
 Meadows, and pools that gleam between,
 Rush on my retrospective view.
 Shades, too, and lanes by old age sought
 To wander in at close of day,
 To ruminate the pious thought,
 And pray for children far away.

Timely descend, ye fost’ring showers,
 With plenty bless that humble vale,
 And fair arise, ye fragrant flowers,
 And healthful blow, thou western gale.
 And there, meand’ring Avendow,
 By no invidious fen defiled,
 Clear may thy youthful current flow,
 And love to linger in the wild.”



A Day on the Lake of Menteith,

WITH DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF INCHMAHOME AND ITS
ASSOCIATIONS.

THIS charming Perthshire lake is situated pretty close to the south-west boundary of the county, fully six miles from Callander, about five from Aberfoyle, three and a half from the Port of Menteith Station on the Forth and Clyde Railway, and fifteen miles from Stirling. A special feature of this lake is its somewhat circular or oval formation compared with the numerous other famed Perthshire lakes, which, as a rule, extend in the proportion of ten miles or so in length by one mile more or less broad. It also lies at a very low level compared with all the other lochs of the county, being only some 50 odd feet above the sea. There is a small loch in the same parish—Loch-na-Balloch—which lies at an elevation of about 1100 feet above sea level. The Lake of Menteith is about six miles in circumference, and a large proportion of it is comparatively shallow. It is adorned with three islands, the largest of which is called Inchmahome, *i.e.*, the Isle of Rest.

“The world’s gay scenes thou must resign,
Stranger, when youth has past,
Oh! were such bless’d asylum thine
As this, the Isle of Rest.”

The island consists of about five acres of ground, one-half of which was church lands, and the other half was occupied as

a garden by the Earls of Menteith. It contains one of the most ancient priories in Scotland, founded by King David I. It was endowed by Sir Malcolm Drummond, a zealous adherent and friend of Robert the Bruce, who greatly distinguished himself at the Battle of Bannockburn, and soon after that ever memorable event he bestowed on the Priory of Inchmahome his estate of Cardross.

Immediately on stepping ashore on the island the priory looms in front, in the weird, glimmering shadows of some giant hoary outspreading trees, the wreck of its former glory. It is gradually crumbling away to decay before time's withering hand, but is still a striking monument of the zeal and industry of its early founders. The ruins of this priory are a most interesting and impressive sight. They bear witness to its extensive dimensions, to the exquisite style of its Gothic architecture, and to the high place it must have held among the monastic institutions of its era. For many centuries the choir of the church has been used as a place of burial, and within the precincts of the sacred building rests the dust of illustrious nobles and distinguished chiefs of renowned Celtic clans—Comyns, Stewarts, Drummonds, Grahams, &c. ; but I daresay what will be viewed with most interest is a recumbent monument of two figures—male and female—cut out of one large stone. The knight is in armour, one leg crossed over the other in the manner of the Crusaders. A triangular shield with check fossè proves the bearer to have been a Stewart, but the arms on the shield show that the figure is not the founder. The arm of the lady is twined affectionately round his neck, and, while much of the monument has been defaced, this memorial of affection seems to have been respected. This unique and most interesting monument is supposed to represent Walter Stewart, fifth Earl of Menteith, who married a granddaughter of the founder of the priory. This Earl Walter

was the third son of Alexander, High Steward of Scotland, and one of the most renowned men of his day. He greatly distinguished himself at the famous battle of Largs, when King Haco of Norway invaded Scotland in 1263.

It was to this secluded "Isle of Rest" that the young Queen Mary was hastily conveyed for safety by her guardians—the Marquis of Montrose and Lord Erskine—immediately after the battle of Pinkie, in 1543. On a gentle rising rounded knoll at the south-west side of the island stands what is still called Queen Mary's bower or summer-house. This interesting spot was for long adorned with a row of boxwood trees planted at regular intervals all round the oval space, with a thorn tree in the centre. Only two of these relics of the long past now wave their green boughs over the favourite playground of the young royal maiden, whose subsequent sad history is widely and familiarly known. In long bygone days Inchmahome was much honoured with the presence of royalty, including King Robert Bruce.

"When monarchs, far from din of Court,
Did to thy fairy shades resort,
And maiden Queen, with joyous smile,
Sported through thy sylvan isle."

There is sufficient evidence of Bruce having visited the island in the year 1310, and the fifth year of his reign. King James VI.—Queen Mary's son—is said to have been the last of the crowned heads whose feet trod its hallowed soil. The nave of the priory was for long used as the burial-place of the Grahams, Earls of Menteith, and the unhonoured last resting-place, it is said, of John Menteith of Loch Ruskie, whose name is still abhorred and detested as the base betrayer of the brave and noble-minded patriot, Wallace.

Close to the ruins on the south may be seen what is called the nunnery, and at the south corner of the island stands a rounded, beautiful green verdant knoll, termed the "Nun's

Hill," the nunnery communicating with it by the Nuns' Walk, enclosed on either side by a high wall, a considerable portion of which still remains. This hill is said to have been a place of recreation for the nuns, and tradition has handed down a very tragic story of which it was the scene. A nun—a beautiful and accomplished lady—and a son of one of the Earls of Menteith having fallen deeply in love, the lady resolved to lay aside the veil and return to the world. The fond lovers had arranged to meet on a certain night on the Nuns' Hill, to which the young lady was to row in a boat from the east side of the lake. In the meantime the Earl's domains were invaded by a fierce neighbouring clan, and his son fell mortally wounded while leading his father's clansmen against the invading foe. In his last moments the brave youth unconsciously divulged to his confessor his arranged meeting with his lady love. Enraged at the insult offered to his church, the cruel-hearted monk resolved to be avenged. It was a beautiful moonlight starry night when the monk threw aside the gown and cowl for a warrior's dress, and took up his place at the appointed spot of the fond lovers' meeting-place. By and by a small dark speck is seen on the Inchie shore. It was the nun in her lover's boat. She, footsore and wearied, had tramped the plain all the way from Stirling to the lake, and was pushing her scallop over the tiny rippling waves. Soon the boat touched the shore, and the fair lady sprang into her supposed lover's arms; but alas, it was only to be savagely hurled back to perish in the dark waters of the lake. Next day the monks on the island had the body taken from the lake and buried in an upright posture on the knoll—hence the name "Nun's Hill." A large stone on its summit marks the supposed spot. At a certain hour about the gloaming, tradition says a dark, mysterious-looking figure may yet be seen slowly treading the "Nun's Hill."

I daresay that not a few of those who may pay a visit

to Inchmahome will view with a keener interest and be more impressed with its remarkable trees than even with the grey crumbling ruins of its ancient priory. Many of these trees, more especially the Spanish chestnuts, are of an exceptionally large growth. I had occasion to be on the island several times quite recently (September 1892), and found several of these giant chestnuts to be over twenty feet in girth some feet above the ground. A special and peculiar feature of nearly all these hoary monarchs of the woods is their having grown twisted in the form of a huge corkscrew or rope. Several of the largest of these venerable trees have succumbed to the winter's stormy blasts, and lie prostrate on the soil that nourished them for ages, and have evidently lain there in the same position undisturbed for many long years. Others, although dead, are still standing upright, but without a single leaf. The very bark is decayed, and washed clean off with the wind and rain, and now stand with their huge twisted, naked trunks bleached and bare, presenting a saddening picture of departed life and former grace and beauty. There are a good many sturdy, hoary oaks of no mean size to be seen here and there athwart the island, and although evidently of great age, most of them seem still full of life and vigour, and were richly arrayed the last time I saw them in their bright green summer garb. There is also a considerable quantity of very light silver hazel on the island, which appears to be in a thriving, healthy condition, and is quite above the size of ordinary hazel, so common in many places on the mainland.

Adjacent to Inchmahome on the south-west is the island of Talla, signifying the hall or castle of the chief. There stood the strong castle of the great Earls of Menteith, which for long was their favourite and chief residence. It was occupied down to the period of the Revolution. The ruined walls of this ancient stronghold cover nearly the whole area

of the island. In the turbulent times of bygone days families of distinction in the Highlands studied to have their residence on islands for the sake of security against the sudden attacks of their rival neighbours. They could on any emergency command the navigation of these lakes by collecting all the boats into the island.

In days of yore there was a singular sport much indulged in and greatly enjoyed by the Earls of Menteith and visitors to the lake, royal nobles, and others—namely, fishing with geese. This curious and unique mode of fishing is said to have afforded great amusement to the spectators. A number of geese were let loose upon the lake, each having a line a certain length with baited hook tied to one of their legs. As a rule they would not proceed very far before a big, voracious pike would dart and pounce upon the tempting bait, and then began the tug-of-war. As soon as the fish found itself firmly hooked it would dart hither and thither at great speed and force amidst the blue waters of the lake. Sometimes an extra big, heavy, strong pike would drag the poor struggling goose beneath the surface, but the fowl would soon reappear again, spread out and flap its strong wings, and try with all its might to fly, but would again and again be dragged back, until at length the long-necked, loud-cackling, web-footed champion would land his wide-mouthed, sharp-toothed, scale-armed captive on the beach in triumph.

In olden times, if all old tales could be fully relied on, the district around the Lake of Menteith abounded with witches, as well as Daoine-shi—*i.e.*, fairies and water-kelpies, &c.—and it would appear they once did one of the Earls of Menteith a special and kind service. A large company of friends, as the story goes, whom he was entertaining in his castle on the island of Talla, had completely drained his cellar. The butler was despatched to Stirling for some more wine, with strict orders to be back as speedily as possible. He

failed to return that night. The Earl found him early next morning lying sound asleep on a bench in the servants' hall, with the wine cask beside him. Rousing him up, he upbraided him severely for his conduct in not returning the previous evening. "Pardon me, my Lord," said the butler—"I have been for wine, and, if I am not mistaken, have brought you the best that ever was in your cellar before. When near the shore on my way back I spied two honest-looking old women with a sow-back mutch and a longish straggling beard, each mounted on a broomstick, and crying to each other, 'Hae-wi-ye, Marion Bowie; Hae-wi-ye, Elspie Hardie.' 'Hae-wi-ye, too,' says I, mounting like them on a broomstick. In a twinkling we were scudding through the regions of space, and in a jiffey found ourselves in the gorgeously plished palace of the King of France. As for myself, I was seated near a large sideboard, where there was a store of the most delicious wine I had ever tasted, and, being invisible to the other people, I took the opportunity of filling your Lordship's cask. I also found the beautiful gold cup out of which his Imperial Majesty was wont to drink. I then mounted my mettled trusty nag, and returned as quickly as I went, and here I am again, my Lord, at your Lordship's service." At dinner the wine was pronounced exquisite. When their host told the company how he had come by it they were all filled with amazement, as they might well be; but incredulity was out of the question. The butler produced for their inspection the elegant gold cup he had found in the palace of the King of France, on which was beautifully engraved the *fleur-de-lis* of the House of Bourbon, and that, of course, clinched the butler's marvellous story.

For long the Lake of Menteith has been abundantly stocked with pike and perch, some of the pike being of large size, and consequently it contains comparatively few yellow trout. Occasionally when trolling for pike an odd trout is hooked,

but as a rule few, if any, are ever killed with the fly. If the proprietors were to clear out and exterminate the coarse, voracious pike from the lake, which could readily be done with proper nets, &c., then have the lake well stocked with yellow trout, I daresay that in a few years the Lake of Menteith might compete favourably as a trouting loch with the now widely-famed Loch Leven.

The Lake of Menteith, although not quite so large, bears a striking resemblance in many respects to Loch Leven in Kinross-shire. These respective lochs are both comparatively shallow. The deepest part of Loch Leven is less than twenty feet, and a large proportion of the Lake of Menteith is not much deeper. Their respective immediate surroundings are also similar, being somewhat flat and sylvan, with a considerable portion of their banks richly clothed with variegated overhanging foliage. Both lochs are adorned with two principal wooded islands. Inchmahome in the Lake of Menteith, and the Castle Island in Loch Leven, are as near as may be the same size, each containing very ancient crumbling ruins of great historic interest. The name of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots will always be associated with these two lakes. On the Island of Inchmahome, in the Lake of Menteith, she spent probably the happiest days of her innocent young life, playing with girlish, buoyant, happy glee with her favourite young companions, the four Maries—Mary Beaton, Mary Seaton, Mary Livingstone, and Mary Fleming. In later years (16th June 1567) she was imprisoned in the castle or fortress on one of the islands of Loch Leven, in which she was closely confined and strictly guarded as a State prisoner. Loch Leven Castle is a massive block of grey granite, flanked by heavy towers, a favourite haunt of owls and bats, and is eternally bathed in mists, and defended by the surrounding waters of the lake. There languished poor Mary Stuart, oppressed by the violence of the Presbyterian lords,

torn by remorse, troubled by the phantoms of the past and by gloomy terrors of the future. She made several attempts to escape from Loch Leven, and it would appear that she knew the place where, once landed, she would take refuge, for she saw from her prison windows George Douglas and two of her former most devoted servants wandering about in expectation of her escape.

“This George Douglas, the youngest son of the house, was passionately in love with the captive. His enthusiastic admiration of her great beauty, rank, and misfortune determined him to brave all dangers in the attempt to restore her to liberty and her throne. He arranged signals with the Hamiltons and other chiefs who, on the opposite side of the lake, awaited the hour for an enterprise in favour of the Queen. The signal agreed upon for the flight, which was to be a fire kindled on the highest tower of the castle, at length shone forth in full view of the Hamiltons. Soon an unperceived boat glides over the waters of the lake, and, approaching its banks, delivers to them the fugitive Queen. Thus her romantic escape from her gloomy prison was at last accomplished (May 2nd, 1568). On making their escape from the Castle, in order to prevent instant pursuit, Douglas locked the strong iron grating of the door of the tower behind them, and threw the keys into the lake.”

A very good bird's-eye view of the Lake of Menteith may be obtained from a certain point of the public road when approaching the Port of Menteith from Aberfoyle. From this standpoint the whole lake, with its three green wooded islands and its immediate surroundings, are seen at a glance, presenting a singularly beautiful and picturesque landscape picture. The handsome parish church, which was rebuilt on the site of a very old and primitive-looking building in 1878, with its prominent spire, stands on a slightly raised knoll on the banks and close to the edge of the lake. Adjoining the

kirkyard on the south stands the mausoleum of the Grahams of Gartmore, also on the brink of the lake, the tiny rippling waves constantly breaking with a gentle coronach against its foundation. The manse, a large, commodious, comparatively modern house, occupies a beautiful site on rising ground a few hundred yards north of the church, and partially screened from view midst some splendid old trees, and overlooks the whole expanse of the lake. The Lake of Menteith Hotel, a pretty large and comfortable tidy house, stands close to the margin of the lake, with a neat handy pier and small harbour—only a few yards from the hotel door—where a number of excellent boats are kept for the convenience of the numerous summer visitors, who come from far and near to view the sacred and historic Island of Inchmahome.

A short way further round the east side of the lake the white-shining farmhouse of Inchic is seen ; and at the extreme south-east point of the lake, close to where the infant Goodie leaves its parent lake—and, after a very slow, sluggish run of fully eight miles, falls into the Forth below Thornhill—stands Lochend House, belonging to H. D. Erskine, Esq. of Cardross. A mile or so east from the lake stands Rednock House, at one time the chief residence of Major-General Graham Stirling of Duchray, &c., now the property of the Rev. A. Graham Sheppard. About a couple of miles nearly due south from Rednock is Cardross House, the seat of H. D. Erskine, Esq. of Cardross.

“ That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Survey'd the skirts of Ben Venue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath
To view the fontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce,
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate.”



A Day on Loch Dronkie.

WISHING to have a day's trout fishing on Loch Dronkie, I wrote to G. Addison Cox, Esq. of Inver-trossachs, for permission. He promptly sent a reply by return of post, with permission not only for one but for several days' fishing, and very courteously offered me the use of his private boat on the loch. Having engaged the same boatman—Alastair—whom I had for several days on Loch Vennachar, &c., we left Callander one morning (4th June 1887), driving up by Kilmahog, thence along the Trossachs road, crossing the Vennachar by the Garthonzie Bridge, thence up the south side of Loch Vennachar. After a very enjoyable drive of fully five miles, we reached Invertrossachs House, where the road along the south side of Vennachar terminates. Here we discharged our "coachie," to return for us in the afternoon. From the mansion-house we had to walk about a mile across a heath and heather-clad moor to the loch, and there found a first-rate boat ready for us, and in a jiffey we were afloat and drifting across the loch before a gentle breeze blowing from the north-east.

By the Glasgow Water Commissioners' Act of 1855, power was given to raise Loch Dronkie 25 feet above its previous summer level, for the purpose of providing compensation water to the riparian proprietors of the river Teith lower down during extreme dry weather, so that Loch Dronkie, properly speaking, is now a large reservoir for storing water.

A special and striking feature of Loch Dronkie is its peculiar shape compared with all the other Perthshire lakes, which, from Lochs Chon and Ard (the two farthest south) to Loch Rannoch in the north, lie, with only one exception, nearly due east and west; whereas Loch Dronkie lies in the form of the letter T, with a long, narrow arm extending close on two miles westward, running parallel with Vennachar, and terminating in a sharp point within a few hundred yards of the new road recently made from Aberfoyle across a spur of Ben Venue to the Trossachs, Loch Katrine, &c., the head of the T lying about due north and south. Before the loch was raised, there was a nice green valley running in a line with the extreme south end of the loch westwards, which is now submerged, and forms part of the loch, and a second arm, but not so long as the other. About the only head stream or feeder to the loch flows in at the head of the two respective arms. The surroundings of Loch Dronkie are exceedingly beautiful, more especially the long arm running westwards, the banks on either side rising up from the water's edge in a series of romantic, craggy knolls to the sky line, and richly adorned with tinted foliage of every hue and colour—at the time of our visit in their freshest bloom and gayest summer attire—

“ Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild
 Each plant or flower, the mountain's child,
 With boughs that quaked at every breath.
 Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
 Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
 Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
 And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
 His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
 Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
 His brows athwart the narrow'd sky.”

Some elevated hillocks adjoining the lake, from which a splendid bird's-eye view of the famed Trossachs and its picturesque surroundings can be obtained, are favourite spots with artists and photographers—the sharp, bare pinnacle of

Ben-Aan presenting a prominent and striking object in the varied and magnificent landscape picture spread out before the spectator's enraptured gaze. From the time we left Invertrossachs House till we returned to it in the afternoon we neither met nor saw a human creature, and not even a single human habitation was to be seen in any direction during the whole time we spent on the loch; and with the exception of the bleating of some sheep and lambs scattered here and there athwart the hillsides, and the clear ringing whirr-vock-vock-vock-ok-ok of the moorfowl—which seemed to be very plentiful—solemn stillness reigned around the sequestered Highland lake. In course of the afternoon, while drifting up the north shore of the long, narrow arm of the loch, its steep, ascending banks confining our view to the bright, blue heavens above—

“ The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue ;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.”

a somewhat singular incident occurred, which for a time absorbed our whole attention. In a partially open glade of the surrounding thick foliage we observed an object which appeared to be a human form moving amidst the bushes and brackens, but from its peculiar attire we were not very sure whether the figure was male or female, but it was apparently walking on two legs, and evidently making its way towards the beach to have a “swatch” of the drifting boat and its two lone occupants. Our curiosity was fairly aroused to ascertain who or what the mysterious-looking figure could be or want. I gave Alastair the hint to guide the boat pretty close to the shore. All at once, as if by magic, the strange-looking figure suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. Whether it assumed the form of a fumart and crept into one of the dark, weird caves in the face of the rocky bank of the lake we “couldna”

say. We immediately landed and made a careful search amongst the copsewood, but could find no trace of the mysterious-looking figure which had aroused our curiosity to such a pitch. When returning to the boat I remarked to Alastair—"What in a' the world could yon queer-looking figure be?" "Weel, sir," quo he, "I canna understan' what it could be at all, at all; but I have been often told that this used to be an awfu' place for brownies and water-kelpies."

All the lands on the west side of the loch belong to the Duke of Montrose, and the opposite or east side to G. Addison Cox, Esq. of Invertrossachs. Invertrossachs is only a comparatively modern name; formerly (thirty odd years ago) the place was called Dronkie, and the present mansion-house was built on the site of the old farmhouse of Dronkie. The house stands in a fine position, commanding a varied and splendid lookout. It is surrounded on three sides by extensive woods and private grounds, which are almost wholly encircled by water—Loch Vennachar on the north, Loch Dronkie on the west, and the stream Dronkie on the south. The river leaves its parent lake at the extreme south-east corner, and flows pretty swiftly, winding down through a beautiful vale, and after a run of close on two miles falls into Dronkie Bay in Loch Vennachar, just immediately below Invertrossachs House.

Formerly the Invertrossachs estate consisted of three separate farms, namely, Western Duilater, Dronkie, and Cul-na-Greine (a Gaelic word signifying the back of the sun), which is very expressive and appropriate to the place, the farmhouse being situated at the base of some high hills, the sun never shining upon it for several months during the winter season. I have often heard an interesting story told regarding a former tenant of this farm and a small landed proprietor, who at one time was well known in that district. I will here relate the story, in the hope that by doing so it may

act as a solemn warning to all farmers, lairds, and some other dour, thrawn folks forby, if at all possible to keep clear of the ticklish meshes of the law and 'cute clever lawyers. It would appear, as the story goes, that the aforesaid farmer had sold a horse (a four-year-old chesnut cob) to a landed proprietor, who was owner of an estate consisting of one good large farm, a very pretty spot, in that district of Perthshire. The laird soon discovered that his newly-bought, braw, young horse had some objectionable and even dangerous habits. When yoked to a cart, instead of pulling it in the usual and common way with well-trained, sensible horses, the chesnut cob insisted on pushing the cart backwards. One day, when in one of his thrawn tantrums, matters came to a climax. Immediately after being yoked, he began to kick and fling up his heels, and soon had the fore end of the cart box, as far as he could reach it with his heels, smashed to shivers. The enraged laird resolved there and then to have nothing more to do with such an obstreperous, unmanageable brute of a horse, and sent a messenger to the farmer to come at once and take his horse away with him, as he would on no account keep him any longer. The shrewd farmer, however, had the price of the horse secure in his pocket, and refused point blank to take the cob back, or have anything whatever to do with him. Finding that he could make nothing of him, the laird went to his law-agent and told him to institute proceedings against the farmer to compel him to refund the price paid for the horse. The farmer was determined to defend the case, and one day found his way to Stirling and called upon a well-known lawyer in that ancient Royal town, and told him the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, anent the disputed case, leaving the man of law to "pit in a' the lees himsel'." To make a long story short, the decent Highland farmer gradually got involved in heavy law expenses, and at length was compelled to let "doon the

barrow and break." The 'cute lawyer, however, with the farmer's consent, carried on the case for several years, I believe, and before the "dreich" law case was finally settled, the laird got into pecuniary difficulties, and had to sell his charming small Highland estate to clear off heavy law expenses, which, according to current report, amounted to upwards of £2,000.

The proprietor of Invertrossachs, in order, I presume, to avoid being bothered with discontented farmers—many of whom may be heard continually grumbling, either against their tyrannical landlords or the "clerk of the weather"—farms his estate, which is chiefly grazing, himself, and keeps a stock of very good blackfaced sheep, &c. On landing in the afternoon we had a fair basket of splendid trout—perfect beauties—all about the same size, exceptionally well formed, beautifully marked, and in fine condition.

The loch, which is strictly preserved, is evidently well-stocked with trout. We saw a great many rising in every direction, grabbing unwary flies, and all good-sized trout, but, as a rule, very shy and difficult to catch. Occasionally, however, on a favourable day, with a good rattling breeze from the south-west, and a nice "tartan" sky above, excellent baskets are secured on this loch.

Having arranged to have a second day on Dronkie some time later—the weather for a considerable time having been exceedingly dry, and all the streams and lakes in the district were remarkably low—we had never seen Vennachar so low before. The Glasgow Water Commissioners have a number of rainfall gauges placed in various places here and there within the area of Loch Katrine valley or watershed. Five of these gauges are under the charge of Mr Cater. One is placed at the lower end of Vennachar, at an elevation of 275; one at the Brig o' Turk, 279; one close to the outlet of Dronkie, 415; one at Ledard, 1500; and one on the

south-west shoulder of Ben Ledi, 1800 feet above sea level. As indicated by these gauges, less rain had fallen during the months of March, April, May, and June of that year (1887) than during any four consecutive months since the opening of the Loch Katrine Water Works about thirty-three years ago. Had a stranger to the district walked the day we went from Callander to Invertrossachs he could hardly fail to note that all the streams and rills along the way were very low, and many of them quite dried up; but I daresay he would be much astonished and puzzled on reaching the Dronkie Burn to see that stream in full flood, raging from bank to brae, careering swiftly down the Dronkie Vale, and sweeping with considerable velocity into Loch Vennachar. The sluices at the loch had been wide open for several days.

On reaching Loch Dronkie, to our surprise and astonishment we found it comparatively empty, at least over twenty feet below its normal level, and presenting a strange and remarkable picture in contrast to its appearance the last day we were on it, when it was quite full to the brim.

On the 27th August the loch was drained to the last drop of the twenty-five feet added to its depth. It took from the 27th August 1887 to the 13th May 1888 to fill up to its normal level, the sluices being closed all the time.





A Day on Loch Vennachar.

WHILE on a visit at Callander, I arranged to have a day's trout fishing on Loch Vennachar (13th May 1887). Knowing—as any experienced angler can testify—that my chance of a good basket depended in no small degree on having a good boatman, I engaged a well-known Callander man, named Alastair MacFaurlain, a very “decent, douce, canny chiel,” than whom a more handy and intelligent boatman I could not desire.

The road for the loch branches off the main street of Callander, opposite the M'Gregor Hotel, and runs straight south, crossing the river Teith by a fine old bridge of three arches, built in 1764, and then along Bridgend. This portion of the village, which is situated on the south side of the river, and which used to be called Callander proper, has undergone comparatively little change for the last fifty years or more. At the extreme south end of Bridgend a road forks off to the left, leading to Thornhill, Port of Menteith, Aberfoyle, &c.; and another to the right, leading to Loch Vennachar, Invertrossachs, &c., running parallel and overlooking the river Vennachar all the way to the loch. As we proceed we get a fine view of the west end of Callander, with its charming villas beautifully situated and finely sheltered from the northern blasts, along the base of the romantic crags of Callander, which rise almost sheer up from behind

the village to the height of over 1000 feet above the level of the sea—

“ Whose cliffs in solemn majesty are piled,
And frown upon the vale with grandeur wild”—

and beautifully adorned with varied tinted foliage. About a mile from the village the Callander Hydropathic is passed on the left. It is a substantial but plain square building, presenting a very inelegant architectural design compared to several similar institutions throughout the country, such as Crieff, Pitlochry, Peebles, &c. The farm of Bochastle is seen on the opposite side of the river, with a haunch of Ben Ledi sloping down to the farmhouse. Bochastle, with the two adjoining farms of Coilantogle and Milton, belongs to the Earl of Moray, and is tenanted by a well-known and respected farmer, Mr J. Steuart, whose stock of splendid Highland cattle is widely famed as one of the very best to be found in Scotland. A number of his principal prize-takers may usually be seen browsing in some fields adjoining the Callander and Oban Railway, which runs through the low-lying portion of Bochastle farm. A short way beyond the farmhouse of Garthonzie the march between the estates of Garthonzie and Duilater, each consisting of one farm, and also the boundary line between the parishes of the Port of Menteith and Callander, is passed. Duilater, with several other small landed estates in the neighbourhood of Callander, was for long the property of the Laird of M'Nab. The only spot of land in Scotland now claimed by this once noted but now dispersed clan is their ancient burying-place, situated on the beautiful and romantic rock-bound island of Inchbhuidhe—*i.e.*, the beautiful island—at Killin. Duilater was purchased about fifty years ago by the late Mr Donald M'Laren, banker and merchant, Callander, who bequeathed it to his respected daughter, Miss M'Laren, of Callander, during her lifetime,

and at her decease (she died 16th July 1888) it became the property of the Free Church.

After a pleasant drive of two miles and a "bittock," we arrived at the foot of the loch. The distance from the old toll-bar at Bridgend to Mr Cater's cottage, foot of Loch Vennachar, is exactly two measured miles, but in order, I presume, to simplify matters, and avoid "vulgar fractions," it is usually charged as a three-mile hire.

Probably there is not another loch in Perthshire that can boast of such a convenient and secure little harbour for fishing boats as the one at the foot of Loch Vennachar, which is finely sheltered "frae a' the airts the win' can blaw." Here Mr Cater keeps a fleet of excellent, handy boats for the convenience of anglers. Alister having secured his favourite green boat, we were soon afloat, and drifting up the south shore before a smart north-easterly breeze. About half a mile from the pier we pass the boundary march between Duilater and Invertrossachs. The latter extends for fully four miles along the south shore of Vennachar, and is the property of George Addison Cox, Esq., Dundee. While drifting across Dronkie Bay we had a fine view of Invertrossachs House, which occupies a beautiful site on the brow of an elevated eminence overlooking the lake below, and commands a varied and magnificent look-out. Invertrossachs House was occupied for about a couple of weeks by Her Majesty the Queen, with several members of the Royal Family, in September 1869. The place then belonged to Steuart M'Naughton, Esq., who was much respected and esteemed by all the people of every creed and station in that district.

During Her Majesty's stay here one of her favourite walks was along a winding path overlooking the lake, and leading to a neat, rustic summer-house situated on a knoll close to the extreme western boundary of the Invertrossachs grounds, from which a view is obtained of surpassing magnificence

and grandeur. Straight in front, and forming the foreground of the landscape picture, the whole expanse of the bright lake is seen at a glance, and across the lake, straight opposite, Ben Ledi is seen from its base to its very summit. Turning round to the west, Ben Venue is seen towering up to the clouds to the left, with its bare, rugged, ragged front—

“Craggs, knolls, and mounds confusedly hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world.”

To the right of the narrow defile

“Ben Aan heaves high his forehead bare,

appearing like two hoary giant sentinels guarding the dark, weird entrance to the enchanted Trossachs and the famed Loch Katrine beyond. The Queen, who is said to be a great admirer of the works of Sir Walter Scott, could not have chosen a more favourable spot from which to survey the scene of “The Lady of the Lake,” one of his greatest and most popular works. The course of the chase—so graphically portrayed in “The Lady of the Lake”—from Uam Var in the Glenartney Deer Forest to the Trossachs—may be followed by the eye with one sweeping glance—

“The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade ;
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Ben Voirlich's head,
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.
As chief, who hears his warder call,
'To arms ! the foemen storm the wall,'
The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook ;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Tossed his beam'd frontlet to the sky ;

A moment gazed adown the dale,
 A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
 A moment listen'd to the cry,
 That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh ;
 Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
 With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
 And, stretching forward free and far,
 Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var."

The eye can readily follow the track of the exciting chase from Uam-Var, aslant the wide and fertile valley of the Teith, and away to the bristling Trossachs, at the base of Ben Venue, a distance of over twenty miles—

" 'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through Cambusmore ;
 What reins were tighten'd in despair,
 When rose Ben Ledi's ridge in air ;
 Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
 Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,—
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.

Held westward with unwearied race,
 And left behind the panting chase."

As the chase continued up along the shore of Lochs Vennachar and Achray, all the huntsmen had lagged far behind except Fitz James, mounted on his "gallant grey," and only two of the pack of hounds—

" Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,
 While every gasp with sobs he drew,
 The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
 Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
 Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
 Fast on his flying traces came,
 And all but won that desperate game."

On entering one of the Trossachs' darksome glen, at the base of the wild, rugged Ben Venue—

" The hunter mark'd that mountain high,
 And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
 Where that huge rampart barr'd the way ;
 Already glorying in the prize,
 Measured his antlers with his eyes

But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock ;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trossachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took."

During her stay at Invertrossachs, Her Majesty visited various places of historical interest in the neighbourhood. One day she drove to Balquhiddy to see Rob Roy's grave. Another day she drove round the lower end of Loch Vennachar, and up the north side of the lake to the Brig o' Turk, to pay a special visit to the well-known Big Kate of Lanrick, or Mrs Ferguson, who kept a small, humble inn near the Brig o' Turk, and who, I believe, was by far and away the biggest and heaviest woman (over 27 stones) then in broad Scotland. She seldom travelled or left her humble but picturesque abode at the Brig o' Turk ; but occasionally she made a business visit to Stirling, and usually drove to Callander, and from there to Stirling had to be accommodated with a seat in the luggage van, as the ordinary railway carriage door would not admit her bulky form. When attending church she usually sat on a big chair in front of the pulpit, being quite unable to enter any ordinary-sized pew. She was not less remarkable for her extraordinary size than for her pawky humour and inimitable story-telling, sometimes in Gaelic and other times in broken English. Her house, with its plenishing, &c., was of the most primitive description imaginable, the rafters of the roof begrimed with the peat reek of a hundred or more years, and shining as black as ebony. Above the door once hung a rude board on which was painted a half-size portrait of Sir Walter Scott, but evidently the work of a "'prentice han'." Before leaving the Queen presented Mrs Ferguson with her portrait and two sovereigns. Immediately after the Queen's departure, Big

Kate got a small hole bored through each of her highly-prized gold pieces, which she regularly wore ever afterwards suspended round her neck to the end of her earthly journey. She died on the 16th of March 1872, at the age of 74, and was buried in the old kirkyard of Callander. Her maiden name was Steuart, and her respected father was long tenant of Lanrick farm, and an elder of the Established Church.

Directly opposite Invertrossachs House, on the opposite side of the lake, Coillie Bhroine—*i.e.*, the wood of lamentation—is seen stretching along the shore. This wood owes its name, it is said, to the malignant and horrible action of a gigantic water-kelpie perpetrated at this place long ago. Various versions of the traditional story have been handed down with regard to the cruel action attributed to this atrocious water-kelpie. Sir Walter Scott, in his notes to the “Lady of the Lake,” says:—“The river dæmon or river-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the water-kelpie of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forbode and witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers, and one of his most memorable exploits was performed on the banks of Loch Vennachar. It consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession with all its attendants.” From the uniform version given of this traditional story by intelligent old people, natives of the place, it is quite evident that Sir Walter had made a mistake as to the scene of the event, which was not Loch Vennachar, but quite a different loch, namely, Lochan-na-Corp, which signifies “the loch of the dead bodies,” situated on the north-west shoulder of Ben Ledi, with a water area of between one and two acres, and probably one of the highest situated mountain tarns in Scotland. Tradition bears that this loch was the scene of a most distressing and heartrending calamity, from which it derived its name. Many centuries ago Glenfinlas is said to have been inhabited by a clan or followers of

Saint Kessock, who in his day was the favourite saint of this Highland region. The inhabitants of the lonely, secluded glen had for long buried their dead in the ancient kirkyard of St Bride, situated on the banks of the river Leny, a short distance below the lower end of Loch Lubnaig. There being no roads of any sort in this wild, inaccessible district of Perthshire in days of yore, the remains of those who died in the glen were carried across the north-west shoulder of Ben Ledi and down the north side of the hill alongside the Stank Burn, which issues from Lochan-na-Corp, and enters Loch Lubnaig close to where the lake discharges its waters by the river Leny—this being the shortest route from the glen to the place of burial at St Bride. On one occasion, when a funeral party was crossing this mountain ridge while the hills were covered with snow, they accidentally went on the loch, which was frozen over and covered with a coating of snow and snow wreaths. When about the middle of the lake the ice gave way, and the whole party were drowned. Ever after this very sad accident they gave up taking their dead to St Bride, and formed a new burying-place in their own sequestered native glen, on the banks of the Glenmain River, close to its junction with the Glenfinlas water, and which to this day is called Cladh-nan-Cessonich—*i.e.*, the burial-place of the M'Kessocks.

As the district of Glenfinlas and Loch Lubnaigside, where the accident is said to have taken place, has been inhabited by the same race of people (Stewarts and M'Larens) from time immemorial, the story has been handed down from sire to son, and appears to be well authenticated. According to several good authorities, including the late Dr Robertson, for many years the much-respected minister of the parish of Callander, the most general version of the Loch Vennachar tragic story is somewhat as follows:—That one fine warm summer day, while a number of children were playing on the

pebbly shore of Vennachar, a beautiful speckled horse with a long bushy tail and mane emerged from the lake. Such was its apparent gentleness that one of the children—a plucky little boy—after gazing for some time with admiration at the beautifully spotted horse, ventured to approach it, and at length got on its back. Another and another of his companions followed his example, the cunning, deceitful kelpie gradually lengthening its broad back as the youngsters eagerly advanced one by one till the whole little band was mounted; the treacherous kelpie then wheeled suddenly round, plunged into the deep water of the lake, and steered for his cave on Ellain-Bhroine with his precious burden, and there the savage, greedy monster devoured them all except one brave little boy, who managed to swim ashore, and escaped to tell the tale.

Dronkie Bay on Loch Vennachar was the scene a few years ago of a very distressing accident, resulting in the death by drowning of two persons and the miraculous escape of a third. Being unable, after repeated inquiries, to ascertain almost any particulars or even the exact date on which the accident referred to occurred, I wrote a note to my friend, Alexander M'Niven, Esq. of Innishewan, Glendochart, one of the gentlemen who was in the boat when the accident took place, and he sent me the following reply:—

“Innishewan, 14th May 1887.

“MY DEAR SIR,—In reference to your inquiry about the sad accident on Loch Vennachar, it took place on the first day of April 1882. The Callander Angling Club had a competition on the loch that day. James Mitchell, Esq., solicitor, Edinburgh, was my balloted neighbour in the boat; Donald Campbell, a baker from Callander, was our boatman. Campbell was a very heavy man, and not accustomed to handle a boat: I was told that he had not been in a boat for many years. The Committee was much blamed for engaging such an inexperienced man for a fishing competition. So long as the boat was going with the wind there was comparatively little to do, but I soon saw that he would not be able to row against the wind. So at Dronkie Bay we turned in order to get back to the landing-place. The wind by this time had greatly increased in strength, so I took an oar along with him, but he could do very little,

and we were making no progress. So Mr Mitchell and myself resolved to pull back to the pier, and Campbell was to go and sit in the stern while we rowed the boat. In passing to the stern the boat gave a sudden lurch, and Campbell stumbled, and his great weight coming against the gunwale of the boat capsized it. After a terrible struggle midst the surging waves, we all managed to get hold of the upturned boat, but it turned round and round just like a barrel each time we took hold of it. I left the other two for the purpose of going round to the other side, in order to balance the boat, so as to prevent its going round about. While in the act of doing this, Campbell got hold of my coat, and his great weight nearly drowned me, but after a severe struggle I managed to get clear of him. He then managed to get hold of the boat once more. Mr Mitchell was then holding on at the bow, Campbell at the middle, and I at the stern. In this position we remained for a long time, the boat tossing hither and thither among the raging waves. Campbell died in this position, but held his grasp of the boat for long after he was dead. I saw his head gradually sink on his breast until his mouth was under water. After losing his hold of the boat he never sank, but floated to the shore long before I reached it, holding on by the drifting wreck. Poor Mr Mitchell was terribly excited, screaming and crying wildly for help. At last he made a hard effort to get up on the keel of the boat. I repeatedly urged him to keep quiet and still, but he would, right or wrong, be up. At length the boat rolled over, and his head went down; he seemed to die in a minute, as he never gave a kick or moved. I then managed to get a hold of him to keep him from sinking, and kept hold of him all the time with one hand, and the keel of the boat with the other, till after a long and dreary waiting the boat drifted ashore. I had then nearly a mile to walk for assistance to take the bodies out of the water and send for a conveyance to take them to Callander.—Faithfully yours,

“ALEX. M'NIVEN.”

On reaching the beach, although much exhausted from his prolonged and terrible battle for life, Mr M'Niven at once started for the nearest habitation for assistance. Before his return, however, another of the competition boats, in which were other two members of the Club, namely, R. N. Slight, Esq., Chirnside, Berwickshire, and Peter Anderson, one of the Earl of Moray's gamekeepers, with Sandy M'Farlane as boatman, drifted into the bay. Observing the wrecked boat, they immediately started for the spot, and found the capsized boat and the two bodies pretty close together, which were being dashed with great violence hither and thither amidst the wild surging breakers against the rough stony beach, the

wind at the time blowing strong and straight across the loch from the north.

We continued to drift up the south shore to the head of the loch, Alastair being bent on trying the old bed of the river which flows down from lochs Achray and Katrine, higher up into Vennachar. The old run of the river is a favourite part of the loch with anglers, and where, when the trout are in a "guid mood for catchin' flees," biggish thumpers are often secured. A considerable portion round the head of the loch is comparatively shallow water, which was formerly flat meadows, but when the loch was raised these level haughs were submerged, and now they form part of the loch.

By the Glasgow Water Commissioners' Act of 1885, power was given to raise Loch Vennachar 5 feet 9 inches above its previous summer level, and draw it down 6 feet for the purpose of providing compensation water to the riparian proprietors of the river Teith lower down. The drainage area of Loch Katrine valley to the outlet of Loch Vennachar is 45,000 acres, or nearly 72 square miles. The loch is about five miles in length, averages about a mile broad, and lies at an elevation of 269 feet above sea level. It has salmon and splendid trout, but of late years has been so excessively fished that even a first-rate fisher with a favourable day need hardly expect to secure a very heavy basket. I know one gentleman who had two days on the loch very recently and had pretty fair sport. The first day he had an even dozen, the next eleven good-sized trout, several of them over a pound, and in splendid condition. These, I believe, have been about the best baskets got as yet this season (1887). Twenty-five or thirty years ago the writer used to get capital baskets on this loch, and many of the trout were over 2 lbs. ; indeed, it was then rather rare to catch a small-sized trout on Vennachar, forming a singular contrast to Loch Lubnaig, only a couple of miles or so farther north, where trout are much more numerous,

but much smaller in size. Some three years ago the Callander Angling Club got 1,500 young Loch Leven trout put in Loch Vennachar, and an odd one of these is got occasionally, weighing from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 lb. The salmon fishing on Loch Vennachar this season has been exceptionally good. From the opening of the fishing to the end of April, thirty-five salmon have been secured on it, and five on Loch Achray. The average number taken for several previous seasons was only four or five fish. It is somewhat difficult to account for such an unusual number of fish finding their way to Vennachar this spring compared to former years. I have heard it stated repeatedly that it was owing to the salmon ladders at the entrance to the loch having been altered and improved lately. However, this view is quite erroneous, as no alteration whatever has been made at the entrance to the loch for many years. Salmon have not the slightest difficulty entering the loch from the river. There are two runs—one by the old channel of the river, and another by the new cutting opposite the sluices (seven in number), and fully 6 feet below the level of the old river-bed; the former with a fall of only 1 in 10, the latter 1 in 22, each with an open, even run, without anything in the form of a ladder or obstruction of any description whatever, while the fish that ascend the other head stream of the Teith have to encounter no small difficulty getting up the shelving, rugged Pass of Leny—which they can possibly do only when the river is in a certain state—on their way for Loch Lubnaig, which lies at an elevation of 405 feet above sea level, or 136 feet higher than Loch Vennachar. The correct explanation, I believe, of such an unusual number of fish having found their way to Vennachar this season, and so comparatively few to Lubnaig compared with former years, is the fact that a gravel bank has gradually been formed at the mouth of the river Leny at the junction of that stream with the Vennachar water,

preventing fish so far from entering the Leny river as formerly.

On landing about five o'clock, after a pretty hard day's fishing, we had only four fish, but good-sized trout, two of them rather over a pound, and in fine condition. Remarking to Alastair that I felt quite ashamed going back to Callander with such a poor basket, "Oh, weel, sir," quo he, "I have seen some crack fishers coming off the loch this year with a clean basket, so ye're no worse off than some other fisher folks. The day was too bright, and they never tak' so well in this loch in an east wind; but I hope ye'll have better sport the next day you go to the loch." Our conveyance being in waiting for us, we were soon on our way back to Callander.





A Day on Loch Achray,

WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.

THIS charming little lake lies nearly due east and west, at an elevation of 276 feet above sea level, and about midway between Lochs Katrine and Vennachar, forming the middle link of the "chain" of lakes formed by these three beautiful and romantic Perthshire lochs, their waters throughout pure and clear as crystal. This "chain" of lakes, with their connecting streams, forms the boundary between the lands of the Duke of Montrose and Mr Cox of Invertrossachs on the south, and that of M'Gregor of Glengyle, the Earl of Ancaster, and the Earl of Moray on the north. Loch Achray extends as near as may be $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile in length by fully half a mile broad at its upper end, gradually narrowing to a sharp point at its lower end, somewhat in the form of the letter V, with a slight bend to the north towards the extreme eastern point. The stream—Achray Water—which issues from Loch Katrine at its south-east end, descends with a pretty rapid flow through the tangled, wooded "bristling territory" of the Trossachs, forming in its downward course several beautiful cascades, and falls into Loch Achray at its extreme south-west end, with a fall between the two lochs of about 90 feet. The nameless stream which flows out of it at its lower end immediately after leaving its parent lake forms a junction with the river Turk—or Finlas Water—a stream of consider-

able volume, which descends from Glenfinlas—an extensive green, verdant, sequestered valley, enclosed by lofty mountains, presenting, as it were, a secluded little world by itself. After a winding run of a few miles, with a gentle flow through flat haughs, the united streams fall into Loch Vennachar, the difference of level between the respective lochs being only some five or six feet.

By far the best bird's-eye view of Loch Achray and its immediate surroundings may be obtained from almost any of the heights along the face of the hillside rising directly up from the south shore of the lake, but better still from the summit of Craig-Vad, or, in Gaelic, the "Rock of Wolves," a rocky eminence situated only a few miles from the Trossachs Hotel, and a few hundred yards off the public road leading from the Trossachs to Aberfoyle. I daresay there are few spots of the same altitude in broad Scotland that commands such a wide, varied, and magnificent view as that which presents itself from the summit of Craig-Vad, from which an immense expanse of landscape bursts upon the spectator's gaze at once, extending for more than a hundred miles, from Ben Laoidh and the mountains of Glenorchy on the west, to the sugarloaf-shaped Lomond Hills beyond the long Ochil range on the east; Ben Lawers, Ben More, and Beinan, &c., in Breadalbane on the north. At an elevation of some 1,500 feet above the valley below he has before him the opening of Loch Katrine and the whole range of the Trossachs from the summit of Ben Venue to that of Ben Aan, Loch Achray, as it were, lying under his feet. Glenfinlas, Ben Ledi, Loch Vennachar, and the villages of Callander, Doune, Dunblane, Bridge of Allan, and the ancient royal town of Stirling, with its hoary, historic castle and the Wallace Monument, presents a prominent feature in the panoramic prospect.

"Every admirer of sublimity will dwell on this scene with delight. There can be nothing grander in nature. What-

ever route the visitant of the Trossachs has taken, let him not persuade himself that he has done enough until he has seen this wonderful scenery from the summit of Craig-Vad."

From the "Rock of Wolves," Loch Achray is seen at a single glance from end to end, and looking away past its lower end the Brig o' Turk, and a short way beyond in the same direction, the quaint, ancient little hamlet of Duncraggan is seen.

"Few were the stragglers following far,
That reached the Lake of Vennachar,
And when the Brig o' Turk was won
The headmost horseman rode alone.

Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green."

Straight opposite along the north shore Glenbruach House, the residence of H. W. H. Dunsmore, Esq., is seen standing out prominently on an elevated plateau in the face of a steep-ascending, thickly-wooded hillside. A short way further to the west, and lower down, stands the Trossachs Parish Manse, embosomed amidst luxuriant shrubs of varied hues and colour, and some fine old trees—a handsome, comparatively modern house, forming a striking contrast to many of the plain, old-fashioned-looking, white-washed parish manses to be seen in many parts of the country. A little further on the Parish Church is seen, which stands on a fine green verdant knoll on the banks of the lake which it overlooks. Half-a-mile or so further to the west stands the Ardcheanachrochan or Trossachs Hotel, situated near the weird entrance to the famed Trossachs—

"Where the rude Trossachs' dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle ;"

a large and imposing castellated edifice in complete harmony with its singularly picturesque and magnificent surroundings.

Immediately behind the house the mountain side rises up with a very steep ascent in terraced, ragged, bosky crags, terminating in the rounded summit of Sron Armaitte, some 1,200 feet high; and an impetuous mountain stream comes tumbling down the steep hillside with an ever-varying, never-ending noisy murmuring sough, passing the end of the hotel, with Loch Achray stretching along immediately in front of the house. This splendid-looking hotel was erected by Lord Willoughby in 1849, from designs by Mr Kennedy, of London, but the house has been repeatedly enlarged since.

The loch holds salmon at certain seasons of the year, and is fairly well stocked with fine yellow trout, which are very lively, and give capital sport. I have still a very vivid recollection of a hard tussle I had with a big native trout the first time I had ever been on this loch. I had occasion to be staying for some days at the Trossachs Hotel, and one fine morning I started pretty early for the loch to have a day's trout fishing. The morning being very calm, with hardly the smallest ripple on the water, the boatman—Iain—suggested that we should row straight across the loch to the mouth of the river—Achray Water—which was in half flood at the time, and was seen rushing with considerable force and velocity for a long way into the smooth, placid waters of the lake. We rowed direct from the pier to the track of the river, where the impetuous current had in some measure spent itself, and, quite unexpectedly, at my second throw I hooked a pretty heavy fish. He instantly darted for thirty yards or so, then made a sudden leap of several feet clean out of the water, “nae doot” to see what was what, coming down with a walloping plunge, and for a short time fought fiercely for sweet liberty. Not expecting to fall in with such an unusual thumper, and the loch being so calm, I had put on one of my finest casts, with a set of small flies, and so felt somewhat doubtful as to my being able to secure the

wild, racing, tugging rascal. However, he caved in much sooner than we anticipated, and in less than twenty minutes we had him secure in the boat. It was a splendid trout, beautifully marked, and in excellent condition; indeed, a perfect model trout, and weighed close on four pounds, and was the heaviest and finest trout I have ever caught on any of the numerous lochs of the district, all of which I have fished repeatedly. Mrs Andrew Blair, who was then landlady of the hotel, said that it was the heaviest and finest shaped trout she had seen taken off the loch for some years.

By and bye a smart breeze from the south-west sprung up, and in course of the day we had several fine drifts down along either shore, and secured a fairly good basket of nice ordinary-sized trout, some few close on a pound, and all in fine condition. Loch Achray is very conveniently got at—just a few hundred yards from the hotel door—compared to most of the lochs in the surrounding district, to reach which one has either to walk or drive for several miles.

A well-known writer and authority on Highland scenery (Dr MacCulloch) thus writes:—"I need not describe the particulars of views which can scarcely be overlooked by the dullest spectators, but there are two at least of this lake which ought to be pointed out, because they lie out of the ordinary track, and have probably been seen by few. These are to be obtained by ascending the hill in the direction of Loch Ard, and they are perfect under a morning sun. At the uppermost point Ben Venue occupies a prominent place in the picture; its long rocky ridge sweeping down in a beautiful curve, and separating Loch Katrine from Loch Achray; the former stretching far away to the west, embosomed in its bold mountains, and the latter buried beneath the romantic and rocky ridge of Ben Aan. A finer mountain view is rarely to be seen, though it is of a map-like character, but at a lower point Loch Achray itself offers a picture not

only well adapted for the pencil, but exceeded in grandeur by few of the landscapes of this fertile and splendid tract. Its elements are the same, but the rich mixture of rock and wood which closes the western end is here seen in all its wonderful splendour of detail, uniting with the romantic ridge beyond to enclose like a diamond in a rich casket this lovely sheet of water, and towering high over it as if to protect it from the injuries of the elements and the intrusion of man."

"The falc'ner tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay ;
Prompt at the signal of alarms
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms ;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas ! thou lovely lake, that e'er !
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear ;
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep ;
The lark's blithe carol from the cloud
Seems for the scene too gaily loud."





A Day on Loch Katrine,

WITH BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES OF ITS SURROUNDINGS
AND ASSOCIATIONS.

I DARESAY there is no other loch to be found within the bounds of Queen Victoria's wide domains—on which the sun never sets—that is so well and so widely known as this charming Perthshire lake. Loch Katrine, with its singularly picturesque and grand surroundings, is visited every season by large crowds of tourists hailing from various distant parts of the wide world—and the numbers are yearly increasing—to view the lake and its romantic scenery, including the equally famed Trossachs. It would be almost presumptuous for the writer to attempt any lengthened description of Loch Katrine and its classic scenery after the inimitably beautiful and faithfully just description given of it by the magic master pen of our distinguished poet—of undying memory—in one of the most popular of all his works, “The Lady of the Lake,” in which the great magician has made the whole district “seem the scenery of a fairy dream.”

“ Oh ! who would think, in cheerless solitude,
Who o'er these twilight waters gilded slow,
That genius, with a time surviving glow,
These wild, lone scenes so proudly hath embued !
Or that from ' hum of men ' so far remote

Where blue waves gleam and mountains darken round,
 And trees with broad boughs shed a gloom profound,
 A poet here should from his trackless thought
 Elysian prospects conjure up, and sing
 Of bright achievements in the olden days,
 When chieftain valour sued for beauty's praise,
 And magic virtues charmed St Fillan's spring,
 Until in worlds where Chilian mountains raise
 Their cloud-capt heads, admiring souls should wing
 Hither their flight to wilds whereon I gaze."

Sir Walter Scott's manuscript of the "Lady of the Lake" is now in the possession of Francis Richardson, Esq., of London (brother-in-law to the writer). An edition of the "Lady of the Lake," edited by W. Minto, M.A., Professor of Logic and English Literature in the University of Aberdeen, was published in 1891. In his preface, the editor says :—"When the Messrs Black of Edinburgh, who represent the original publishers, asked me to undertake a revision of Lockhart's edition, I suggested that the text should be collated with the author's MSS.; and at their instance, Mr Francis Richardson, the owner of the MS. of the 'Lady of the Lake,' kindly placed it at my disposal."

When approaching Loch Katrine by the road leading from Callander, the most prominent and striking objects in the prospect are Ben Aan on the right and Ben Venue on the left—

"High on the south, huge Ben Venue
 Down to the lake in masses threw
 Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
 The fragments of an earlier world ;
 A wildcring forest feathered o'er
 His ruined sides and summit hoar,
 While on the north, through middle air.
 Ben Aan heaved high his forehead bare."

These two conspicuous and picturesque Bens stand out prominently like two hoary giant sentinels guarding the entrance, as it were, to the enchanted scenes that lie beyond the weird, narrow "pass" of the Trossachs ; indeed, without these two wild, picturesque mountains the scenery of the

Trossachs and Loch Katrine would possess comparatively little interest. Ben Aan (in the parish of Callander) towers up directly above the rugged precipices of the Trossachs to the height of over 1800 feet above the sea on the north. For four or five hundred feet from the summit it is perfectly pyramidal, and so steep and bare on the south side as to preclude all access, and is reached from the north side only. Ben Venue (in the parish of Aberfoyle) is 2395 feet high, and in some respects is perhaps one of the most remarkable and picturesque mountains in Great Britain. The north face of the Ben is mostly strewn with immense masses of detached rock boulders, which appear to have been torn from the top of the mountain by some terrible convulsion of nature in some long bygone age, and hurled pell-mell down the steep acivity of the hillside. The whole slope is sprinkled more than half-way up with curiously-formed birches, alders, and mountain ash, and evidently of great age, with a grace and in a style which the pencil and brush may in some degree exhibit, but which verbal description cannot easily present.

The first peep one gets of the loch itself gives but a faint idea of the wide and varied expanse to which it stretches as the traveller proceeds farther on to the west—

“ A narrow inlet still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck’s brood to swim.”

Advancing by the north shore of the loch, we pass along a narrow road, in some parts cut out of the solid rock, which overhangs the deep waters of the lake far down below. As we advance by the margin we lose sight of it for a short distance, but only to enjoy it again opening with increasing grandeur, and presenting new and striking views of Ben Venue rising almost sheer up from the brink of the loch on the opposite shore. The pebbly beach opposite Ellen’s Isle

is soon reached, where the fair Ellen, gliding in her little skiff barge, had her first interview with the Knight of Snowdon.

“ But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When, lo ! forth starting at the sound
 From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock
 A damsel guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 The weeping willow twig to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
 The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
 Just as the hunter left his stand,
 And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant strain.
 With head upraised, and look intent,
 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art,
 In listening mood, she seem'd to stand
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

To enjoy the scenery in its full extent, the traveller should proceed to the square rock which projects its bluff head into the loch at its broadest part, about a mile below Brenchoi farmhouse. From there the view to the south is truly magnificent. More than six miles of water in length by two in breadth is under the eye, the remaining four miles to which the loch extends being lost in a turn amongst the mountains on the right. The mountains of Arrochar terminate the prospect to the west—

“ The western waves of ebbing day
 Roll'd o'er the glen their level way ;
 Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
 Was bathed in floods of living fire.
 But not a setting beam could glow
 Within the dark ravine below,
 Where twined the path in shadow hid
 Round many a rocky pyramid,

Shooting abruptly from the dell
In thunder-splinter'd pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass—
The native bulwarks of the pass—
Huge as the tower which builder vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement ;
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair ;
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drops sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs."

If the traveller or tourist wishes to have a nearer view of Cori-nan-Uriskin, or the wonderful cave or den of the goblins, and the wild, weird Bealach-nam-Bo, situated higher up the mountain side, some 900 feet above the level of the loch—which, as Sir Walter says, "is a magnificent glade overhung with aged birches higher up the mountain than Cori-nan-Uriskin : the whole compose the most sublime piece of scenery that the imagination can conceive"—and then continue his climb and plant his foot on the crest of the Ben, it will be necessary either to hire a boat and row across the lake, or start from Achray House and walk up along the south side of the stream which flows from Loch Katrine into Loch Achray.

Ben Venue is rendered venerable, in the estimation of the Highlanders, by the celebrated Cori-nan-Uriskin—the cave or recess of goblins—situated near the base of the mountain on its north-eastern shoulder, and overhanging the loch in solemn grandeur, in the form of a circular amphitheatre of some six or seven hundred yards in its upper diameter, gradually narrowing towards the inner base. Surrounded by

towering ragged precipices, most of the inner slope of the cove is strewn with immense fragments of detached boulders, that at some period in the distant past had toppled down tapselteeie from the cliffs high above. In some respects this weird cave or Cori-nan-Uriskin resembles the famed Quirang in the Island of Skye—by far the most remarkable and awe-inspiring piece of wild scenery I have ever seen anywhere. It would be needless attempting to pourtray the singularly gloomy grandeur of Cori-nan-Uriskin: the inspiration of the muse, however, has pourtrayed the scene to perfection:—

“ It was a wild and strange retreat,
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
 The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
 Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast ;
 Its trench had staid full many a rock,
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
 From Ben Venue's grey summit wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
 And form'd the rugged silvan grot.
 The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden shone
 Some straggl'ing beam on cliff or stone,
 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
 No murmur waked the solemn still
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill ;
 But when the wind chaffed with the lake
 A sullen sound would upward break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
 The incessant war of wave and rock.
 Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
 Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern grey.
 From such a den the wolf had sprung,
 In such the wild-cat leaves her young ;
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
 Sought for a space their safety there.
 Grey Superstition's whisper dread
 Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread ;
 For there, she said, did fays resort,
 And satyrs hold their silvan court,
 By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
 And blast the rash beholder's gaze.”

Several well-known writers' accounts and descriptions of the reputed denizens of Cori-nan-Uriskin vary considerably. In the year 1811, Alexander Campbell—who, I believe, was a native of the parish of Callander, and to whom Sir Walter Scott makes repeated reference in his notes to "The Lady of the Lake"—published a work, "A Journey from Edinburgh through parts of North Britain," containing remarks on Scotch landscape, biographical sketches, &c., &c., in two bulky volumes, and embellished with forty-four beautiful engravings, including a wonderfully correct sketch of Cori-nan-Uriskin, taken on the spot by the author. I give the following quotation from Mr Campbell's book:—"Pathless and perplexed with all the wild luxuriance of brier, bramble, thorn, and a multiplicity of matted vegetation, till lately—when a road, rude it is confessed, but on foot and on horse-back passable, was with much difficulty constructed—the entrance to Loch Katrine was known to the natives only, and indeed to but very few of them. On turning a creek to the right we enter the celebrated Pass called the Trossachs. These rugged masses leave their hoary cliffs, and bend in all their fantastic wildness over us, as we proceed on to the extremity of the Pass, where some more conical than the rest seem, to a lively imagination, as if placed by nature as mute spectators of that thrilling amazement which the stranger feels at his entrance on the confines of the lake, the east end of which is the deep and dark pool on whose margin we now halt. Here let us pause. Look up to the left; behold that gigantic precipice, wooded to the top, bending over the pool in sullen grandeur. Among these rocks, whose gloom rests eternal on the bosom of the lake, in former times a savage band, ruthless, intractable, and cruel, had fixed their lurking-place, and issued forth, naked as they were born, committing depredations on the peaceable inhabitants of these glens, ravishing the women, murdering those that resisted, setting

fire to the habitations all around, and butchering without distinction the old and the young. Hence this precipice retains the name of *Cori-nan-Uriskin* (the den of the wild men or savages). Such is the tradition respecting this headlong steep, whose appearance is so striking on our first entrance to Loch Katrine."

The Rev. Patrick Graham, D.D., in his "Sketches of Perthshire," published in 1812, says the *Urisks* were a sort of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the *Brownies* of England, could be gained over by kind attentions to perform the drudgery of the farm, and it was believed that many families in the Highlands had one of the order attached to it. Thus it was that his bowl of cream, with an oaten cake, was regularly set down for the family *Urisk*, and clothes were occasionally added. The *Urisk* of Glaschoil, a small farm about a mile to the west of Ben Venue, having, it is said, been neglected one night in these attentions, performed indeed his task, but was heard at daybreak to utter a horrible shrieking yell, and took his departure never to return. The *Urisks* were supposed to be dispersed over the Highlands, each residing in his own wild recess, but the solemn stated assemblies (whether annual or more frequent is not said) were regularly held in this cave of Ben Venue.

Sir Walter Scott, in his notes to the "Lady of the Lake," says:—*Cori-nan-Uriskin*.—"This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Ben Venue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed by birch trees mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the *Cori*, or Den of the Wild or Shaggy Men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr

Alexander Campbell, may have originally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the Urisk, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian Satyr. The Urisk seems not to have inherited with the form the petulance of the silvan deity of the classics—his occupation, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's lubber fiend, or of the Scottish brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance.**

Milton in his "L'Allegro" writes—

" The drudging goblin swet
To earn his cream bowl set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thrashed the corn
That ten day labourers could not end.
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And stretched out all the chimney length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And, crop full, out of doors he flings
Ere the first cock his matin sings."

According to tradition, the Urisks of Ben Venue had their headquarters for ages on the banks of the Lake of Menteith, near the extreme south-east end of the lake. Here there are a number of rounded wooded hillocks, one of which, the largest, is to this day called "Cnoc-na-Bocan," *i.e.*, the Bogle's Knowe, having, it is said, mysterious subterranean passages, off which there were several gorgeous grottoes and spacious glittering apartments, with a curiously contrived entrance at the base of the south side. This place is credited with being for long the cherished abode of all the Urisk tribes of the

* The Urisks, I think, were the remnants of the Druids, driven into the wilds and persecuted by a rival religion, the Fingalian. Pan was the Head of the Satyrs, or "first of the Hidden Ones;" he was also named Capricornus, the "Goat-horned" Adam, as the original of Pan, was worshipped as a god in the ancient Babylonian Church, of which the Druidical was a branch. The Urisks would be clothed in sheep or goat skins, hence their "hairy appearance," and having "a figure between a goat and a man."

lands of fair Menteith. Tradition adds, that in those long bygone days the Earls of Menteith had a mysterious red book, the opening of which was sure to be followed by some preternatural event. This wonderful red book may now be seen in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. One of them one day happened to open this strange book, and immediately a band of the Urisks crowded into his presence, demanding some employment from him. At first the Earl was puzzled, and quite at a loss what work to give them to do. At length, however, he fixed on making a road from the shore to the middle of the lake. The Urisks at once began their prescribed task to make the road, and the beautiful narrow peninsula of Arnmauk, which stretches from the south shore inward in the direction of the islands, and finely adorned with its grove of dark green firs, was the result. By and by, observing the rapid progress made by the toiling Urisks with their work, the Earl became alarmed for the security of his castle on the Island of Tulla, on seeing the new road approaching to within a few hundred yards of his stronghold, and gave peremptory orders not to proceed an inch farther. Instead of road-making, he set them to make some ropes of sand for him. They tried their best with their new task, which completely baffled their ingenuity, and they gave it up in despair. Indignant at the hopeless task given them to do, the Urisks resolved to leave the place for ever. The Earl, however, in grateful acknowledgment of the great work they had done for him in forming the charming peninsula of Arnmauk, and wishing to remain on friendly terms, gave them a charter or free grant of Ben Venue, on the side of Loch Katrine. I have not been able to procure a copy of said charter, but if all old tales could be fully relied upon it ran somewhat as follows:—"I, Roderick Graham, Earl of Menteith, sitting in my castle on the Island of Tulla, hereby give the Urisks of Menteith, their lawful heirs and successors,

a right to the lands and rocks of Ben Venue from this day till to-morrow, and so on for ever.—MENTEITH." All accounts handed down of these mysterious hairy people clearly show that they were at anyrate splendid workers, and many a farmer throughout the Highlands was much indebted to his Urisk for thrashing his corn with the "shadowy flail" when thrashing mills were unknown.

There is a fairly good road up along the north shore of Loch Katrine all the way to Glengyle House, the ancient seat of many successive chiefs of the Clan M'Gregor. The house stands at the extreme north-west point of the loch at the foot of Glengyle, and is intimately associated with the exploits and misfortunes of the M'Gregors. It was built in 1728, the previous house having been burned to the ground in 1716 by the Duke of Montrose in a raid on the Laird of Glengyle and his noted kinsman, Rob Roy. At Portnellan, near the head of the loch, on the north shore, close to the brink of the loch, stands the ancient burial-place of the Clan M'Gregor, which is still held in great veneration by the Clan. The head of the loch is adorned with three picturesque wooded islands, which greatly enhance the beauty of the landscape. It was on one of these islands, it is said, that Rob Roy confined the Duke of Montrose's factor, Graham of Killearn, who, with a band of the Duke's tenantry, had been sent north to try and seize Rob Roy by surprise; but instead of Rob being taken prisoner, as was intended, the factor was unceremoniously seized by a few of Rob Roy's sturdy kilted followers, and confined for several days on the Black Island.

Loch Katrine in its upper part, or as first seen by a traveller approaching it from Loch Lomond, does not present such picturesque or romantic scenery as at its eastern end; but there is a rude grandeur, a lonely sublimity about it which at least inspires awe and fills the mind with pleasing melancholy. When we look on the utter desolateness which

spreads around, the bluff headlands which project their weather-beaten fronts into the loch, the noble outline of the lofty mountains, the bare and rugged rocks with which they are covered, the deep ravines traversed by the numerous streams which flow down their sides, the heath-clad moors that intervene, and the contrasted stillness and purity of the transparent lake, we feel that it is altogether highly characteristic Highland scenery. This upper end of the loch is within that extensive district which was anciently the country of the brave, unconquerable Clan Alpine or M'Gregor. Loch Katrine is of serpentine form, and extends for about ten miles in length, with a comparatively uniform breadth of a mile more or less from Stronachlachar to the Silver Strand, and lies at an elevation of 364 feet above the sea. The course of the steamer from pier to pier is rather over eight miles. Opposite Stronachlachar the loch takes a sudden bend to the north-west, directly in a line with the opening of Glengyle, gradually contracting to a narrow point where it receives the waters of the Glengyle river, its principal feeder. The deepest sounding hitherto got by Mr Gale, chief engineer of the Loch Katrine Water Works, is 480 feet.

The loch is well stocked all over with trout, and occasionally a monster pike is got. The trout vary very much in size compared with those of Lochs Achray and Vennachar lower down, and are not nearly of such fine quality as the Lochs Chon and Ard trout. The fishing has greatly improved since the level of the loch was raised four feet by the operations of the Glasgow Water Works. The Rev. Patrick Graham, D.D., a most reliable authority, and who was repeatedly complimented by Sir Walter Scott for the correctness of his information ament various matters relating to this district, says:—"With respect to the fish produced in our lakes and rivers, it is singular that in so

circumscribed a district their qualities, and even their species, should vary so much in situations so little removed from each other. In Loch Lubnaig alone, so far as is known, the *Salmo Alpinus*, or char, is to be found. In Loch Lomond alone, the *Salmo Lirarellus* the gwiniad, or powan, occurs. Perches of a large size are found in the Lake of Menteith and in the river Forth, but in none of the other lakes except Loch Lomond. Loch Katrine abounds in species of small trout of a black colour, very lean and insipid. It is probable that their leanness arises from their vast numbers, joined to the scarcity of proper food. There was, till very lately, neither pike nor minnow in the lake. Some years ago the writer of these pages suggested to a gentleman who has a property upon its shores to convey some pike from a neighbouring lake. He has done so, and some of them have been lately seen which have arrived at a large size. They will soon, it is presumed, reduce the overstocked population to its proper level; one may then expect to find good trout in Loch Katrine. The Lakes of Menteith, Loch Ard, Loch Chon, and Loch Arcelet have pike and trout and eels of a large size. In Loch Ard, fish of 36 lbs. weight have been caught. The trout of Loch Ard and Loch Chon are of the same quality as those of Loch Leven; the flesh is red and of a high flavour. In Loch Chon trout of 5 lbs. weight have been caught."

Long before any steamer was put on Loch Katrine there was a regular ferry-boat (the "Water Witch") which started from the Trossachs end every morning during the summer season at 9 o'clock, returning in the afternoon. In those days the principal pier or landing-place at the head of the loch was at Coalbarns, situated in a deep indented bay some distance south of the pier at Stronachlachar, and nearer Loch Lomond. The "Water Witch" was owned by a small company concern, and the books were always balanced and

profits equally divided at the end of the season. Besides the regular boat, which had accommodation for twenty-five passengers, there were a number of smaller boats kept at either end of the loch for the convenience of any "big" folks or gentry, who might prefer to hire a private craft for the voyage. There being then no regular road between Coalbarns and Inversnaid, the boatmen usually had to carry the passengers' luggage that distance—fully five miles—on their backs. The passengers had either to walk or ride on ponies, a number of which were always in waiting at the respective landing-places, saddled and ready for the convenience of either ladies or gentlemen. I have been often told that there were no fewer than thirty or more of these hardy, sure-footed, useful animals then kept about the place. I believe about the only dwelling then at Coalbarns consisted of a small thatched cottage with a "but and a ben," for many years occupied by a Mr M'Gowan, who by-and-bye, finding travellers increasing at such a marvellous rate, and no refreshment of any kind to be had at Coalbarns, procured a license to sell a dram of *usige beatha*, but no extra dry champagne, sparkling hock, or wines of any sort. There being no opposition "shop" nearer than the Trossachs, Clachan of Aberfoyle, or Inversnaid, the new innkeeper carried on a brisk and increasing business, and many a small siolag of his hielan' peat-reek flavoured *usiege beatha* was served to weary, drouthy pedestrian tourists, after climbing up the long "stey brae" along the bleak, dreary, Glenarclat from Inversnaid to Coalbarns. Mr M'Gowan was succeeded in the little inn by Mr Ferguson, father of the well-known and respected present landlord of the now palatial and well-found hotel of Stronachlachar, or rather Stronachlachaig, which I believe to be the more correct name. A good many years ago the Duke of Montrose formed an excellent road from Inversnaid to the head of Loch Katrine, and built a new

hotel at Stronachlachar. This hotel being erected pretty close to the margin of the lake, it was found that when the level of the loch would be raised an additional five feet in connection with the large extension scheme of the Loch Katrine Water Works, the hotel and pier would be partly submerged. A few years ago the Commissioners of the Loch Katrine Water Works had to build a new hotel a short way farther to the south, and nearer Coalbarns. This large hotel occupies a splendid site upon an elevated plateau, probably thirty or forty feet above the level of the loch, which it overlooks. Passengers on landing from the steamer ascend by a long flight of steps or stair to the hotel, which commands a wide, varied, and magnificent lookout.

The history of the first steamer put on Loch Katrine is a somewhat remarkable one, and might afford ample material for a graphic historian to fill a volume. A small iron steamer of eight horse-power was started on the loch early in the summer of 1843, named the "Gipsy." I have found great difficulty in procuring almost any special or reliable information about her. I have conversed with several elderly people about Callander and district, who told me that they distinctly remembered witnessing said steamer being conveyed through Callander on a large cradle-waggon, drawn by either ten or twelve strong horses, but were quite unable to give any particulars whatever about her, as to where she was built, or who owned her, and had no very clear idea as to the date or year they had seen her being conveyed through the village. However, one day I happened to meet a well-known and respected farmer's better-half who resides in the neighbourhood of Callander, and whose maiden name is Stewart. I asked her if she remembered seeing the little steamer being conveyed up along the Trossachs road past their farm. She at once told me that she remembered

the circumstance perfectly, and that if I would call up any day at their house she would be glad to show me a full and graphic account of the chequered voyage of the steamer from Stirling to Loch Katrine in black and white. I told her that I would be glad to see and get a reading of the document. I found said document to consist of a long and amusing poem or ballad of some five hundred lines, descriptive of the adventures and curious mishaps of the steamer in course of her transit from Stirling to Loch Katrine, written by a late brother of the lady's, who was home from his college duties at the time the little steamer was passing up through the district on her singular overland maiden voyage, which the young student had evidently watched with keen interest and curiosity. He appears to have been a youth of much promise, but died in early life. He left several pieces of Gaelic poetry, &c., of considerable merit in manuscript, but which have never yet appeared in print. These manuscripts are now in the possession of, and fondly treasured by, his respected sister already referred to, now an elderly dame, but still very active, hale, and hearty.

As the young student's lengthy ballad is almost the only account I could procure of the little steamer "Gipsy" from the start on her maiden voyage from Stirling till her somewhat tragic final fate on Loch Katrine, I will cull some lines from it which may interest some of the folks of the Callander and Trossachs district—

“ 'Twas some droll chap said, in a whim,
 ‘ I'll get a boat to go by steam,
 Which to Loch Katrine I'll send,
 To run from Coalbarns to Lochend.’
 A job, began at Stirling shore,
 The like was never seen before.
 The boat had thirty miles or more
 From there to sail upon dry land,
 And how this could be ta'en in hand
 Tis difficult to understand ;

But somehow, by ingenious arts,
They got the boat put up on carts.
'Twas drawn by able horses ten,
Surrounded by a host of men,
And thus at length set out with glee—
They little dreaded a stormy sea.

Then on they went through thick and thin,
And seldom was there heard sic din—
The noise and rattling o' the wheels,
The clattering o' the horses' heels,
And others cracking loud with whips
Put terror in the horses' hips,
And steam from the poor brutes did rise
That darken'd the surrounding skies.
The country people were amazed
When at the rising clouds they gazed,
And all those sounds confused together
Made them afraid of stormy weather.
The wisest men were made to wonder,
And many thought that it was thunder ;
Others thought the earth did quake,
And swore they felt all round them shake.
At length this tedious day was spent
As into Callander they went,
Which would be put in consternation
As 'twas never in since its creation,
Had not the people known before
That such a ship should come ashore
About the village on that night,
So all turned out to see the sight,
The wonderful amphibious ship
That upon this its trial trip
Had sailed from Stirling on dry land,
And now cast anchor in their strand.'

On the following morning everything was being prepared for an early start from Callander, after a night's rest and a substantial morning feed, all fully expecting to reach Lochend in course of the day ; but alack !

“The best laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft agley,”

for it was some nine or ten days later ere the “Gipsy” finished her eventful, chequered journey, a considerable crowd conveying the cavalcade from the village. For the first

mile or so everything went on like clockwork till, between the toll-house and Kilmahog Bridge, one of the waggon wheels sank deep into the road, which stopped farther progress. By-and-bye a number of carriages, gigs, carts, &c., from opposite directions had approached the steamer, but could not proceed any farther—

“ Until the boat be set aside,
 Because the road there is not wide.
 Then every woman, child, and man
 From Kilmahog they quickly ran,
 From dickies drivers down descended,
 And every one assistance lended.
 At length with one great mighty tug,
 They got the wheel out of the bog ;
 The steamer then being set asteer,
 The blocked-up road soon was clear.”

The next serious hitch occurred a short way beyond Coilantogle farmhouse, where two of the waggon wheels sank to the axletree, and thus stopped all farther progress for the day, indeed for several days. All the men and horses returned to Callander to spend the night there, two men being left to watch the “Gipsy” in case some tarry-fingered passing tramps might run “awa wi’ her.” Several of the men proceeded to Stirling to tell what happened in the west, and there

“ They gathered men, fifteen or twenty,
 And stout, strong horses they got plenty,
 And likewise two or three cart loads
 Of wooden planks to mend the roads,
 And props of every size and sort
 The tottering bridges to support,
 And many a chain, and rope, and tether
 They had when all was got together ;
 But as they Callander came near
 The sun began to disappear
 Behind Ben Ledi’s lofty height,
 Where gloomy crags proclaimed the night.

In fact, it caused a great commotion,
 Gave rise to many a curious notion.
 Many who knew not what it was
 Thought some supporter of the cause

Had sent the people up to work
About the non-intrusion kirk ;
Their lifted-up imagination
Told them the wood was a donation !”

After being detained for several days near Coilantogle, with the now increased assistance of men and horses from Stirling the steamer was on the move once more, but with great caution, every suspicious part of the road being carefully laid with wooden planks. The next hitch occurred near the Brig o’ Turk, where another night was spent, but early next morning the journey was continued up along the Trossachs’ gloomy pass.

“ And as they thus along did drive
They thought the lofty crags around alive,
For every syllable they spoke
Was soon repeated by a rock !
’Twas strange that rocks, pure Highland bred,
Each word as broad and Lowland said
As if they had received their birth
About the Forth’s deep winding firth !”

When within less than half a mile from their destination, they met the most serious mishap they had hitherto encountered, several of the waggon wheels having sunk deep into the road. To crown the disaster, several of the fresh horses, not being accustomed to such queer work and in such a queer place, surrounded as they were with precipitous, ragged, speaking rocks, and curiously-shaped overhanging trees, with the bright heavens overhead, suddenly became obstreperous and unmanageable, reared and plunged, and flung up their heels. At length about half their number tore up their “gude graith” into pieces, galloped off helter-skelter, and disappeared into the eerie, bosky territory of the Trossachs, and it was a couple of days ere the last of them was found.

“ And halters, belly-bands, and traces
Were here and there soon torn in pieces.
Some of the horses quietly stood,
But others galloped through the wood.
One man for nothing else did care
If he got hold of his wild grey mare.”

To cut the story short, the "Gipsy," after her long and perilous voyage from Stirling, was at length launched on Loch Katrine midst the loud, prolonged, and hearty cheers of the assembled throng, which was re-echoed from isle to isle, and from crag to crag, athwart huge, hoary Ben Venue's rugged front high above,

" Then with the boat they bade farewell,
And hast'ned home their news to tell,"

leaving behind them the crew appointed to sail the steamer, consisting of captain, mate, engineer, and stoker. The craft being complete in every particular before she left Stirling, and there being a stock of coke and coals previously stored close to the pier, in a short time steam was got up, and the "Gipsy" was soon paddling slowly up the loch and round Ellen's Isle, and back to the landing-place.

It can readily be surmised that all the boatmen about the place, and more especially the crew of the regular boat, the "Water Witch," viewed the daring intruder on the lake with no friendly eye; but they wisely kept their thoughts to "thirsels." The following morning the "Water Witch" was at her usual place, ready to start, as was her wont, prompt at 9 A.M., with her crew of eight exceptionally strong, active Highlanders, all in the prime and full vigour of noble manhood. There were a goodly number of passengers ready to embark, and of course there was a keen competition between the respective boats to get the largest number of passengers, who for a time swithered whether to patronise the old or the new boat.

" Some chose the one, and some the other ;
By seventeen the old was chosen,
The new by only half-a-dozen.
And having got their boats untied,
They left the harbour side by side,
But indications of a race
Were seen in every rower's face.

Though yet the others did not dream
That oars would ever beat the steam,
They gave their engine all its power,
Determined to be half an hour
At least, or may be more,
Before the "Water Witch" at Coalbarn shore.
The rowers were in number eight,
Who, without any needless weight,
Such as a bonnet, coat, or vest,
With railway speed made for the west ;
And as with might their oars they drew
Their little vessel onward flew,
And when they got to Ellen's Isle
The panting steamer half a mile
Behind them coming, as they spied.
Then thought upon their oars with pride ;
With cheerful glee they tell their news
Their passengers for to amuse ;
They carefully point out each spot
Made famous by Sir Walter Scott—
The birch and hazel-cover'd crag
At which the nimble-footed stag
Amidst the thicket safely hid,
Did of Fitz-James's hounds get rid.
They show the rugged cliff where lay
The ashes of his gallant grey,
And where Fitz-James beheld the maid
As through the wood he lonely strayed,
And pointed out the snow-white beach
And Ellen's Isle with ready speech ;
But all along they kept in mind
The vessel that they left behind ;
Their long light oars elastic spring
As from their blades the spray they fling,
And backward far they well could trace
Their course upon the lake's smooth face ;
And in its mirror well were seen
The mountains high and forest green ;
The crags and cliffs of Ben Venue
Appeared in th' distant view,
And many grim-faced rugged rocks,
With heather breasts and hazel locks ;
And soon they reached their landing-place,
Having by two miles gained the race.

Together for a week or more
The vessels ply from shore to shore,
Until a great, mysterious change
Took place, which none could think but strange
One morning, as they reached the quay,
The steamer nowhere could they see.

This filled them with great surprise,
 They scarcely could believe their eyes.
 Thinking 'twas hidden for a trick
 They searched along each bay and creek,
 And soon they sought the lake all round,
 But still the boat could not be found,
 And in this corner of the nation
 It's now the theme of conversation.
 'Tis vain for me to waste my ink
 By writing what the people think,
 Or rumours that are set afloat
 As to the exit of the boat ;
 But this seems probable to me—
 And who knows the case may not be ?—
 That in a fit of dark despair
 It drown'd itself, and left all care !”

Although there was only one reliable witness—as far as is known—the case was as clear as noonday, that during the sombre watches of the night the “Gipsy” had been unfastened from her moorings at the well-sheltered landing-place, towed across to the “Pool” at the base of Ben Venue—said to be the deepest part of the loch—and there scuttled and sunk. Singularly enough, to this day it has never been very clearly ascertained who were the perpetrators of this dark midnight daring deed. It is an open secret that not a few strongly suspected the crew of the old “Water Witch” had some hand in the matter, while others fancied that the wild hairy Urisks of Ben Venue—who, if all old tales be quite true, used to commit some “fearfu’” criminal deeds in the district in days of yore—might be the culprits. For a time the sinking of the steamer was the all-engrossing topic in the district. The Procurator-Fiscal, with some assistants, paid several visits to the place, but failed to procure any really reliable information. The boatmen, of course, knew nothing about the mater. The only individual—a well-known farmer on the loch side—had only a simple story to tell, namely, that he had been at a lamb fair at Callander the previous day, and had stayed rather late with some old cronies he had met at the fair, and as he reached the Brig o’

Turk on his way home daylight was beginning to dawn, and before he reached Loch Katrine it was clear daylight. On passing the pier he at once missed the steamer from her usual position at the landing-place, but on casting a look around he saw the "Gipsy" in the big bay near the south shore, and fancied that she looked deeper in the water than usual. The lake was as smooth as a sheet of glass. He had stood only some five or ten minutes to see if any of the crew were on board, when he saw her give a sudden lurch, throw up her stem in the air, and disappear, stern foremost, leaving an eddying circle and some floating bubbles to show for a few moments the spot where the ill-fated steamer had disappeared, and probably ere she had reached her final bed at the bottom of the lake, at a depth of seventy odd fathoms of water, the surface of the lake was as smooth and placid as the rest, leaving not the slightest trace of the spot.

By-and-bye several of the Loch Katrine boatmen were summoned to appear before the Sheriff Court at Dunblane in connection with the sinking of the steamer "Gipsy." Most of the men could converse in tolerably good English with their passengers on the "Water Witch," although with a strong Highland accent, which many Englishers and tourists generally are rather fond of hearing than otherwise. I have even seen many people who did not understand a single word of Gaelic listen to a boatman sing a Gaelic song, such as—

" Ho', mo Mhàri ladhach,
'S' tu mo Mhàri bhinn ;
Ho', mo Mhàri ladhach,
'S' tu mo Mhàri ghrinn ;
Ho', mo Mhàri ladhach,
'S' tu mo Mhàri bhinn ;
Mo Mhàri bhòidheach lurach,
Rugadh anus na Glinn.

" B' òg bha mis' 'us Màri
'M fàsaichean Ghlinn—Smeòil,
'N uair chuir macan Bhénuis,
Saighead ghéur 'n am fheòil ;

Tharruing sinn ri chéile
 Ann an éud cho beò,
 'S nach robh air an t-saoghal,
 A thug gaol cho mòr,"

with evident keen delight and appreciation. Singular to relate, when the boatmen entered the Court-house at Dunblane it was discovered that they had "verra leetle English whatever." The Sheriff had to employ an interpreter, but after several prolonged cross-examinations the Judge, and all the glib-tongued lawyers engaged in the case, were fairly baffled, and could make nothing of them. Whether the authorities ever contemplated instituting legal proceedings against the Urisks of Ben Venue in regard to the sinking of the "Gipsy" I am not very sure. Probably they would find some difficulty to get any beagle "bodie" to undertake to venture on the somewhat dangerous proceeding of serving a summons in person on the savage, hairy, lubbard fiends in their weird abode in the goblins' gloomy den on Loch Katrine side. So at length the case, which had excited such intense interest in the locality, had to be dropped.

I believe that there are at least three of the crew of the old "Water Witch" still to the fore, and all over 90 years of age. One resides in Callander, one at the Brig o' Turk, and the other, Para-Mhor (big Peter), on Loch Lomond side. I had occasion quite recently to call on the one at Callander (M'Intyre). In course of a long crack, I took the liberty of asking him if he had assisted to knock a hole in the bottom of the steamer "Gipsy" on Loch Katrine. Being in bed, he looked up at me, as much as to say, that's an old story now; then added, "Better let sleepin' dogs lie, sir."

The next, or second steamer, was put on Loch Katrine by the Loch Lomond Steamboat Company, an iron vessel of 30 gross tonnage and 15 nominal horse power, built by Denny Brothers, Dumbarton, and engined by Wingate, Glasgow, and named the "Rob Roy." She steamed up from Dumbarton

to Inversnaid, the project being to take her across to Coalbarns on a cradle waggon. It was found, however, that the vessel (which was 70 feet in length) could not be so taken to her destination, and had to be taken to pieces at Inversnaid and carted across the hill, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, to Coalbarns, and rebuilt on Loch Katrine side, and launched there early in the summer of 1846. "While the steamer was being rebuilt, Lord and Lady Willoughby interdicted her owners from plying her on Loch Katrine, as they claimed the exclusive right to such privilege, and the case was entered in the Court of Session. The Duke of Montrose and Mr Macgregor of Glengyle, who had lands abutting the loch, gave the Directors the right to navigate its waters 'on the faith of their common title to do so,' and agreed to appear in the process along with the Company. The Lord Ordinary recalled the interdict at a subsequent hearing of parties in Court, and ordered the case to be debated. After a good deal of litigation between the conflicting parties, a settlement was arrived at on 8th April 1847, on the following basis:—'First, a contract and agreement between the Company and Lord and Lady Willoughby's tenant in the Trossachs Inn, for herself and successors in the inn, whereby an interest in the steamboat on Loch Catrine, to the extent of a half, should be conveyed to them by the Company on payment of its ascertained value, and under certain conditions as to the future management of the joint navigation, which should be known by the separate name of Loch Catrine Steamboat Company, and specially that the Company so to be formed should be bound, as an elementary stipulation of their existence, to ply the steamer on Loch Catrine at such hours as would be suitable to those fixed and observed by this Company for the sailing of their steamers on Loch Lomond. And, secondly, a joint minute, to be signed by all the parties to the existing litigation, in order to have the judicial authority of the Court of Session interponed to it,

whereby the Duke of Montrose and Mr Macgregor of Glengyle on the one hand, and Lord and Lady Willoughby on the other, not only should recognise the said deed of agreement between the Company and the tenant of the Trossachs Inn, but also should grant to them an exclusive right to navigate Loch Catrine for ten years after Whitsunday next, and bind themselves or their respective tenants not to ply boats in opposition to the Company except as regards his Grace's tenant in Coalbarns and Lady Willoughby's tenant in Trossachs Inn, both of whom should be allowed to keep small boats for hire as heretofore, but not to start them within half an hour before or half an hour after the sailing of the steamer.'

"On the 9th November 1854, it was reported to a meeting of the Directors, held at Dumbarton, that there had been meetings and correspondence with Mr Macgregor, Lord Willoughby's tenant in the Trossachs Inn, and Messrs Blair and Ferguson, the Duke of Montrose's tenants of Inversnaid and Coalbarns, as to the necessity of having a new steamer built for Loch Katrine, the present steamer being neither suitable nor safe. The meeting, therefore, in order to ascertain the state of the steamer, agreed that Mr Robertson, the Government inspector of steam vessels, should be requested to inspect her and furnish a report. After a good deal of deliberation between the interested parties, it was finally decided, on 5th April 1855, that a new steamer be built, and that a contract should be entered into with Mr Alexander Denny, ship-builder, Dumbarton, for the building and finishing and placing the steamer on the loch ready for traffic by the end of June next, for the slump sum of £2,350." This steamer "Rob Roy," second of the name, still plies on the loch, and has been for many years under the command of Captain Munro, and a more pleasant craft to sail in is hardly conceivable. As time went on differences arose between

some of the joint proprietors of the steamer, and led up to her being advertised for sale, which the Loch Lomond Steamboat Company interdicted. After a protracted correspondence, His Grace the Duke of Montrose, of date 2nd February 1859, offered to give the Loch Lomond Steamboat Company the sum of £1,200 if they sold their interest in it to him, for the purpose of avoiding litigation. This offer was, at a special meeting of the Loch Lomond Steamboat Company, held at Dumbarton on 1st March 1858, accepted, and thus ended the connection of the Loch Lomond Steamboat Company with the Loch Katrine steamboat traffic.* The steamer "Rob Roy" then became the joint property of the tenants of the three respective hotels, viz.—Trossachs, Stronachlachar, and Inversnaid. It may be mentioned that the first "Rob Roy" was sold to the contractor who had the contract for the section of the water works next the loch for the purpose of conveying material along the shore to the mouth of the tunnel at Calagart. She now lies at the bottom of the loch, not very far from the ill-fated "Gipsy," but considerably nearer the shore, in comparatively shallow water, and on a clear calm day can be distinctly seen from a boat rowing across the spot.

For upwards of thirty years this beautiful Perthshire loch has been the principal source of the Glasgow water supply. By the Glasgow Water Commissioners Act of 1855, power was given to raise Loch Katrine four feet above and draw it down three feet below the previous summer level, thus giving a total available depth of seven feet for the purpose of the water works. The works were commenced in the spring of 1856, and on the 14th October 1859 Her Majesty the

* I am indebted to Mr Donald Macleod, of Dumbarton, author of "History of Castle and Town of Dumbarton," "Poets and Poetry of the Lennox," &c., for some particulars of the two "Rob Roy" steamers referred to.

Queen and the late Prince Consort were present at the ceremony of opening the works, and the Queen herself turned the handle of the sluice which first admitted water to the aqueduct. The water was introduced into the city on 28th December, and by March 1860 the supply was general throughout the city. The aqueduct, from its commencement at Loch Katrine to the Mugdock Reservoir, is about 26 miles, 13 of which are tunnel, $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles are iron piping across deep valleys, and the other 9 miles are open cuttings and bridges. The discharge of the aqueduct, calculated from the most reliable observations which were available at the date of the construction of the works, was expected to be 50,000,000 gallons from midnight to midnight. It has been found, however, that the aqueduct cannot be made to convey more than from 41 to 42 million gallons per day, and consequently the limit of the Loch Katrine water supply was reached several years ago, and the inhabitants of St Mungo are already in some measure put on short allowance of water, and the scarcity will become much more seriously felt long before any additional supply can be obtained. A new Act of Parliament was procured in the month of July 1885 to extend the works by constructing a duplicate but a much larger aqueduct from Loch Katrine to a new service reservoir adjoining the old one at Mugdock. The new aqueduct runs parallel with the old one nearly all the way, and some 30 or 40 yards apart. The work has been carried on for several years with different relays of workmen, day and night, but it will be some years yet before the work is completed. One of the most difficult sections of the work—including a tunnel of some 6975 feet in length and 36 feet in circumference, from the head of Loch Chon to Loch Katrine, and in some parts 500 feet below the surface—has not yet been commenced. The extension of the works is calculated to cost over a million sterling.



A Day on Loch Lubnaig.

HAVING arranged to have a day's fishing on Loch Lubnaig, I engaged one of the most experienced of the Callander boatmen, named Paurig, or Peter MacChessach, a very cracky, pawky, elderly chiel, and a thorough native of Callander, but whether a descendant of the celebrated Saint MacChessach, who flourished in that district long, long ago, I am not prepared to affirm. There are many cherished memorials of the said Saint still to the fore about Callander, but probably one of the best known and prized of these is Tom MacChessach, a rounded, green, conical mound, surmounted by a lofty flagstaff—though the flag is very seldom hoisted. This ancient monument occupies a beautiful site on the banks of the classic Teith, close to the old bridge of Callander, and is said to have been erected by a tribe of Shi-ichs, *i.e.*, fairies, for long residents of the ancient and romantic Crags of Callander, assisted by a band of strong, active water-kelpies from the Teith, in fond remembrance of the good Saint MacChessach.

We started one fine morning from Callander, and after a drive of three miles and a "bittock" (a bittock, as a rule, is charged a mile in a hire) up through the charming and romantic Pass of Leny, we reached the foot of the loch, and there found a boat, belonging to one of the farmers on the loch side, ready for us, just where the river Leny leaves Loch Lubnaig, its parent lake.

"Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer ;

Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith."

The prospect from this point is singularly grand, stern, and wild. The lake seems completely surrounded by lofty mountains, which press closely upon the waters of the lake. Those on the south side are exceedingly bold, consisting almost wholly of grey, distorted, ragged crags, rising up tier above tier in fantastic grandeur. The scene was then greatly enhanced by the slanting beams of the glorious ascending sun glinting and playing amidst the gloomy corries and dark ravines high up the mountain side, the stupendous Craig-a-Choinlaig, which rises up all but perpendicular from the margin of the lake to the height of 800 or 900 feet, throwing its frowning, gloomy shadow over the placid lake far below. Higher up is seen the rounded summit of Ben Ledi, towering to the height of 2875 feet above the level of the sea. On the east side of the lake may be seen the fine grazing farm and shining white farmhouse of Annie, the "Tombea" of the "Lady of the Lake," and where in bygone days stood the classic "Chapel of St Bride."

" Ben Ledi saw the cross of fire,
 It glanced like lightning up Strathyre ;
 O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
 Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew ;
 The tear that gather'd in his eye,
 He left the mountain breeze to dry ;
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with green,
 The Chapel of St Bride was seen.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the Chapel of St Bride ;
 Her troth 'Tombea's Mary' gave
 To Norman, heir of Armandave."

The farm of Ardhullary adjoins the Annie farm a few miles higher up the loch side. The farmhouse stands out

prominently on the brow of a green-clad knoll surrounded by some old trees, well sheltered in the lee of Ardhullary Beg and Ardhullary Mor, and commanding a fine view of the lake, Ben Ledi, &c.

Towards the close of a charming summer day, at a point immediately below the farmhouse of Ardhullary, where a path strikes off the main road to the right leading through a deep ravine to the summit of the ridge, thence down the other side along Glenample to Loch Earn, the Earl of Menteith, accompanied by two attendants, one of whom was the Earl of Montrose in disguise, and travelling under the assumed name of "Anderson," met Dugald Dalgetty, the famous cavalier of "A Legend of Montrose," while on their way to attend a secret meeting of Highland chieftains to be held at Darlinvarach Castle (Advoirlich House) on Loch Earnside. They had not advanced more than half-way up the lake, and the young gentleman was pointing out to his attendants the spot where their intended road turned northwards, and, leaving the loch, ascended a ravine to the right hand, when they discovered a single horseman coming down the shore as if to meet them. The gleam of the sunbeams upon his head-piece and corslet showed that he was in armour, and the purpose of the other travellers required that he should not pass unquestioned. "We must know who he is," said the young gentleman, "and whither he is going." And, putting spurs to his horse, he rode forward as fast as the rugged state of the road would permit, followed by his two attendants, until he reached the point where the road along the side of the lake was intersected by that which descended from the ravine, securing thus against the possibility of the stranger eluding them by turning into the latter road before they came up with him.

The single horseman had mended his pace, when he first observed the three riders advance rapidly towards him; but



when he saw them halt and form a front which completely occupied the path, he checked his horse and advanced with great deliberation, so that each party had an opportunity to take a full survey of each other. The solitary stranger was mounted upon an able horse, fit for military service and for the great weight which he had to carry, and his rider occupied his dempique or war-saddle with an air that showed it was his familiar seat. He had a bright burnished head-piece with a plume of feathers, together with a cuirass thick enough to resist a musket ball, with a back-piece of lighter material. These defensive arms he wore over a buff-jerkin, along with a pair of gauntlets or steel gloves, the tops of which reached up to his elbow, and which, like the rest of his armour, were of bright steel. At the front of his military saddle hung a case of pistols far beyond the ordinary size, nearly two feet in length, and carrying bullets of twenty to the pound. A buff-belt, with a broad silver buckle, sustained on one side a long, straight, double-edged broadsword, with a strong guard, and a blade calculated either to strike or push. On the right side hung a dagger of about eighteen inches in length; a shoulder-belt sustained at his back a musketoon or blunderbuss, and was crossed by a bandlier containing his charges of ammunition. Thigh-pieces of steel, then termed taslets, met the tops of his huge jack-boots, and completed the equipage of a well-armed trooper of the period.

The appearance of the horseman himself corresponded with his military equipage, to which he had the air of having been long inured. At the distance of about thirty yards he halted and stood fast, raising himself on his stirrups as if to reconnoitre and ascertain the purpose of the opposite party, and brought his musketoon under his right arm ready for use if occasion should require it. In everything but number he had the advantage of those who seemed inclined to interrupt his passage.

The leader of the party was indeed well mounted, and clad in a buff coat, richly embroidered, the half military dress of the period.

When they stood at gaze for about a minute, the younger gentleman gave the challenge which was then common in the mouth of strangers who met in such circumstances, "For whom are you?"

"Tell me first," answered the soldier, "for whom are you? —the strongest party should speak first."

"We are for God and King Charles," answered the first speaker. "Now, tell your faction; you know ours."

"I am for God and my standard," answered the single horseman.

"And for which standard?" replied the chief of the other party, "Cavalier or Roundhead, King or Convention?"

". . . . May I be permitted to ask, then," said Lord Menteith, "to whom I have the good fortune to stand quarter master?"

"Truly, my lord," said the trooper, "my name is Dalgetty —Dugald Dalgetty—Ritt-master Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, at your honourable service to command."

Here Dalgetty, with his famous steed, "Gustavus," engaged to serve in the Earl of Montrose's army, and during the exciting campaign that immediately followed he proved himself a brave and distinguished soldier. At the close of the fierce and bloody battle of Inverlochy, where the Earl of Montrose gained a great victory over his bitter and relentless enemy, the Earl of Argyle and his forces, it was while in hot pursuit of the flying remnants of Argyle's army that "Gustavus," Dalgetty's noble charger, was shot through the head, and fell down dead, by a bullet intended for the person of the rider. At this moment Montrose himself galloped up to the spot, and addressed Dalgetty thus—

"Major Dalgetty, kneel down."

“Kneel?” said Dalgetty, “I have not been accustomed to obey that word, saving when it is given from the pulpit.”

“Nevertheless,” repeated Montrose, “kneel down in the name of King Charles and of his representative!”

When Dalgetty reluctantly obeyed, Montrose struck him slightly on the neck with the flat of his sword, saying, “In reward for the gallant services you have rendered this day, and in the name of our sovereign, King Charles, I dub thee Knight; be brave, loyal, and fortunate. And now, Sir Dugald Dalgetty, mount and do your duty.”

“But what shall I mount?” said the new-made chevalier. “Poor ‘Gustavus’ sleeps in the bed of honour like his immortal namesake; and I am made a Knight just when I have not a horse to ride upon.”

“That shall not be said,” answered Montrose, dismounting. “I make you a present of my own; only, I pray you, resume the duty you discharge so well.”

The farmhouse of Ardhullary is classical as the sequestered retreat in which the celebrated traveller, Bruce of Kinnaird, secluded himself while composing his travels or work on Abyssinia. These two fine grazing farms have been tenanted as far back as I can remember by the same two worthy farmers, both the same name (Robert M'Laren), each of whom have been for long much respected leading elders in two different churches at Callander. The only other house on that side of the loch is the farmhouse of Ruinacraig, situated on the bank of the lake about a mile above Ardhullary. The only solitary house to be seen on the opposite shore is the farmhouse of Laggan, which stands near the head of the loch.

From the great height and bold rugged appearance of the mountains amidst which this lake lies, the scenery around is in many respects very striking and picturesque. On a calm summer evening, when the sun first peeps over the brow of

the hill, gilding the eastern side of the lake, undisturbed save by the bubbling leap of the trout, or perhaps the splash of the kingly salmon, and dark boundary of rocks thrown into shadow by the retiring day, makes as fine an alternation of the soft and the rugged as can well be seen. This beautiful Perthshire lake, which Sir Walter Scott pronounced "an enchanting sheet of water!" contains salmon, varied-sized trout, and some char, and would be one of the best trout-fishing lochs in the district were it not so excessively fished. I hardly know any loch that is more constantly fished, both from the shore and boats, and more especially during the summer season, when Callander and farmhouses in the vicinity are crowded with visitors. The day I fished it there were other four boats out, and I observed several parties fishing from the side. Occasionally, however, pretty fair baskets are made.

In course of the day, while drifting round Ardhullary point, we met one of the Strathyre boats, with only one rod and a well-known "Nineveh" boatman named Domhnul MacLaurin, a very "dacent, douce, honest chiel," who, when a good bit younger than he is now, used to be familiarly known as the "minister's man." When the two boats were about opposite each other, the two boatmen had a bit friendly chat in Gaelic, their mother tongue, and which they can speak far more fluently than English. After exchanging several remarks, Peter asked Donald "if they had got many?" "Oh, no," quo' Donald, "they're afu' dour the day, they're no risin' at all, we have got only one small trout; have ye got anything?" "Oh, yes," quo' Peter, "we have done very well, we got a gran' take on the 'sheet;' we have killed a dozen and nine fine trout, a good many of them over a pound." I overheard Donald translating Peter's glowing account of our take on the "sheet" to the gentleman in the boat, who evidently had not understood a single word of what had

passed between the two "hielan'" boatmen, and seemed surprised on hearing of our success on the "sheet," and very probably jumped to the conclusion that he would require to change his flies. I may here explain that opposite Ruinacraig a considerable stretch of the lake is comparatively shallow water, probably not more than from six to nine feet deep, and which the boatmen generally call the "sheet." Occasionally, when the trout are in good trim for catchin' flies, very good takes are got on the "sheet," and, as a rule, the heaviest fish to be found on the loch. Although I understood perfectly every syllable of the confab between the two boatmen, I did not say a single word until we had drifted a good bit away from the other boat, when, in the most serious and impressive tone I could assume I said, "Dear me, Peter, I was quite shocked to hear you deliberately telling such a tremendous big fib" (we had only two small trout in our basket at the time). "Oh, well, sir," quo' Peter, "it was just as well to tell a big 'ane' when I was at it." On landing at the foot of the loch pretty late in the afternoon, Peter emptied the contents of our basket on the green sward, and seemed quite proud to find that we had two dozen and seven trout, and over a dozen of the lot very good-sized fish, and in prime condition.

Loch Lubnaig, *i.e.*, the crooked lake, is close on five miles in length, half of which forms very nearly a right angle with either end; the lower half lies about due north and south, the upper end beyond Ardhullary Point—where it makes a sudden bend—north-west. It has an average breadth of probably rather more than half a mile; the main and only feeder, with the exception of some small rills, is the Balvaig River, the northern head stream of the Teith, which drains the districts of Strathyre and Balquhiddier. The lake lies at an elevation of about 393 feet above mean high water at Glasgow, being 33 feet above the level of Loch Katrine, with a water area of 574 acres. The drainage area of Loch

Lubnaig and Balquhiddel valleys, to the outlet of Loch Lubnaig, is about 40,600 acres, or about double that of Loch Katrine, and the waters of the respective lakes are pretty much alike in quality.

The gravitation water supply of Callander is taken from the River Leny at a point fully a quarter of a mile after it leaves Loch Lubnaig, its parent lake. Probably there are few, if any, burghs or towns in the three kingdoms blessed with such an abundant supply of excellent pure water as the burgh of Callander, the supply being equal to 147 gallons per day for each individual of the normal population within the boundary of the water service, and without the slightest prospect of the supply being in any way diminished. The water supply of Glasgow, which is generally reckoned to compare favourably with any other city in this country, is only equal to about 35 gallons per head per day. The construction of the Callander Water Works (in 1872) was exceedingly simple and inexpensive, the cost, including rather more than a mile of drains made throughout the burgh, being only £4,000. Nothing in the form of a reservoir was required, the higher end of the main pipe for conveying the water to the town being simply introduced into a big pool at a point exactly opposite the third milestone from Callander. A wire rose or grating is fixed round the mouth of the pipe in order to prevent silly trout or salmon entering it by mistake. The water rate, inclusive of a certain annual sum paid from the rates towards the reduction of a loan, is only 6d. per £1. As an instance of the rapid extension of Callander, in 1873, the year after the gravitation water was introduced, the rental of the burgh was only £4,738, whereas it now stands at £8,865.

In the year 1846 the old Glasgow Water Company, after duly consulting the most eminent engineers of the day, obtained an Act of Parliament to take 40,000,000 gallons of

water per day from Loch Lubnaig for the supply of the city of Glasgow, but the Glasgow Corporation having acquired the Company's works, the scheme was abandoned.

When the Loch Katrine water supply is exhausted—an event which, I believe, will take place at a much less distant date than is generally supposed—it is almost certain that the next additional supply will be procured from either Loch Lubnaig or the Balquhiddel Lakes. The difference of level between the foot of Loch Lubnaig and the head of Loch Doine being only eight or nine feet, by raising Loch Lubnaig fifteen or twenty feet, which can easily be done, the whole valley of Strathyre would be formed into one continuous lake, extending to fourteen or fifteen miles in length, including Lochs Voil and Doine. The carrying out of this scheme, however, would result in the total submersion and overthrow of the ancient "city" of Nineveh (in Strathyre), and although "sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their left hand and their right hand may not be found therein," yet, in order to spare Nineveh, a lake of considerable extent—at least as large as Loch Earn—might easily be formed by throwing an embankment across the course of the river Balvaig at a point fully a mile above Nineveh, at a gap where the river leaves the level strath of Balquhiddel and enters Strathyre. As the elevation of this lake would be from 45 to 50 feet above the level of Loch Katrine, its waters could be drained by an aqueduct into that loch, and double the quantity of water presently stored there.

On the 31st July last (1885) the Royal Assent was given to a Bill promoted by the Corporation of Glasgow, authorising a large extension of the Loch Katrine Water Works. At a meeting of the Town Council, held on the 16th July last, when the annual report of the Water Commissioners was submitted in the minutes, one of the Councillors (Preceptor Wilson), in moving the adoption of the minutes, congratu

lated the Commissioners and the citizens of Glasgow on the fact that the Water Bill had passed the House of Commons and was about to receive the Royal Assent. He then proceeded to give a brief history of the first Water Bill, and towards the end of his speech he is reported to have made the following statement:—"One more remark I would like to make as to a misapprehension which existed with reference to the quantity of water taken from Loch Katrine. We have never taken from Loch Katrine more than 40 million gallons a day, though we were empowered by the Bill to take 50 million gallons per day. It would therefore be a long time before we require to make any extension either to Loch Arklet or Loch Katrine. We can take 10 million gallons additional per day before we require to raise Loch Katrine." In making such a statement, the worthy Councillor betrayed an unpardonable want of knowledge on the part of a Glasgow Town Councillor anent the subject he was referring to, unless he made the statement for the purpose of misleading his fellow-citizens as to the actual state of the water supply. For what does it signify though the Commissioners had power by the first Bill to draw a hundred million gallons a day, instead of ten million additional gallons per day, from Loch Katrine before any extension is required; if it is a well ascertained fact that there is actually no available means for conveying a larger quantity from Loch Katrine to Glasgow than from 40 to 42 million gallons per day, which, according to undoubted evidence taken very recently before a Committee of the House of Commons, is the utmost quantity the present aqueduct can be made to discharge? Had Councillor Wilson referred to a very able and most interesting report prepared by Mr Gale, the worthy engineer of the water works, anent the proposed extension of the Loch Katrine Water Works, and submitted to the Town Council about a year ago, he would find the following

significant passage—"The discharge of the aqueduct, calculated from the most reliable observations which were available at the construction of the works, was expected to be 50 million gallons per day. It has been found, however, that recent observations by Continental engineers have confirmed our experience here that the roughness of the rock sides of the aqueduct has a very retarding influence upon the velocity of the water, and from all the observations I have been able to make, it appears that the aqueduct cannot be made to discharge more than 42 million gallons per day; and to pass even that quantity, the sides of the short cast-iron trough bridges in the upper part of the aqueduct will have to be raised. Assuming that the increase of one million gallons per day each year will continue in the future, the quantity required this year will be 39 million gallons per day, and the limit of 42 million gallons will be reached in three years from this date, or in 1887. An additional supply of water for the city is therefore required, and the necessity is urgent." This is a very different account of the state of the Glasgow water supply, and a much more reliable one than the absurd and misleading statement made by Councillor Wilson. According to Mr Gale's able report, the limit of the Loch Katrine water supply will be reached in two years hence. The new Bill empowers the Commissioners to construct a duplicate aqueduct from the service reservoirs to Loch Katrine, but the completion of such a gigantic and difficult undertaking will take a much longer period than two years. So there can be little doubt that the citizens of Glasgow will be put on short allowance of water long before any additional supply can be got, at any rate from Loch Katrine.

As to Councillor Wilson's congratulations at the passing of the new Water Bill, I make bold to say that a very large proportion of the inhabitants of Glasgow were entirely ignorant of such a Bill being promoted by the city authorities.

Probably no Bill connected with Glasgow involving such a large amount of expenditure has ever been smuggled through Parliament as this new Water Bill has been, without the knowledge or sanction of the inhabitants. When the Bill came before Sir A. Otway, Chairman of Committees of the House of Commons, he was evidently astonished on seeing a Bill involving such an outlay being quietly passed through Parliament without opposition of any sort. From a series of pertinent questions he put to the public officials representing Glasgow present—namely, Mr Wakeford, Parliamentary agent; Dr Marwick, Town Clerk; and Mr Gale, Engineer to the Water Trust, I will select the two following:—Chairman—Of course this scheme will be expensive to the people of Glasgow; I hope they are to have full value for their money. How has the opinion of the inhabitants of Glasgow been expressed or made known? Mr Wakeford—The Bill is promoted by the Town Council of Glasgow. There have been no meetings of ratepayers, but the scheme is known to everybody. Chairman—But as a matter of fact the ratepayers have not had an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the expenditure of one million sterling.

As to the proposed extension of Loch Katrine Water Works—to construct a second aqueduct alongside the present one at such an enormous cost, will, I believe, be found when too late to be a great blunder, because, for one thing, not a single additional gallon of water can be added to the present supply except by simply raising the level of the loch a few feet, a process that cannot very well be repeated. No doubt the Bill authorises the Commissioners to draw a certain quantity of water from Loch Arklet at a large cost, but if this portion of the proposed extension is ever carried into effect, it will for a certainty result in completely changing the quality and purity of the Loch Katrine water. Probably there is not another mountain lake to be found within a radius of 50 miles

around Glasgow that contains such a dark-coloured and nasty mossy-tasted water as Loch Arklet. All the small rills that fall into it from their first source flow through peat moss, and the loch itself is surrounded by moss hags. It is a well-known fact that water coloured by running through peat moss is extremely difficult to clarify, even by the most careful process of filtration.

Mr Gale, in his report, holds out the prospect that when the Loch Katrine supply is exhausted an inexhaustible supply can be procured either from Loch Lubnaig or the Balquhidder lakes. But why not go to that source at once, instead of constructing a second aqueduct of such large dimensions—the 13 or 14 miles of tunnel is proposed to be 36 feet in circumference. The loch lies at a higher elevation than Loch Katrine, and the water is equally as pure and the quantity much larger, and the distance very little more. The line of aqueduct would be through a much less wild and rugged district, with good roads for conveying materials, &c.





A Day on Loch Earn.

AN old fisher friend, who is well acquainted in the district, wishing to have a day's fishing on Loch Earn, and having bespoke a boat and boatman from the Lochearnhead Hotel, I was glad to join him. We left Callander one morning early in June by the 9 o'clock train, and after a ride of some twelve miles by the Callander and Oban Railway, reached the Lochearnhead Station, and there found a tidy 'bus from the hotel. After a pleasant drive of about two miles, passing Edinchip House, the seat of Lady L. H. Macgregor, finely situated upon a sunny hillside embosomed amid surrounding woods on our left, we reached the hotel, and found our appointed boatman—a very respectable, intelligent-looking young man—waiting for us at the front of the house. As the day looked very promising, we started for the loch at once. We had arranged to cross along the head of the loch, and fish down the south shore, where we used to make splendid baskets a good many years ago. But finding a fresh breeze on the loch blowing from the south-west, we drifted for four or five miles down the north shore.

Loch Earn is one of the most charming of our Highland lakes. It extends for rather more than seven miles in length, with an average breadth of close on one mile and a half, and throughout is very deep, in some parts over one hundred fathoms. The lake lies in a remarkably straight line due east and west, with numerous bosky promontories projecting into the lake, and gracefully sweeping semicircular

creeks and bays fringed with varied-tinted overhanging woods. The lofty mountains by which the lake is engirt are seen almost to meet at the east or lower end, where two high mountains rise up with a very steep ascent—one on either side of St Fillans—Ben Durn on the south and Ben Bhodochan on the north side, each crowned with a prominent sharp-peaked cairn, which, from a distance, look like two sentinels guarding the narrow pass below.

The finely-situated scattered village of Lochearnhead stands round the mouth or lower end of Glenogle, *i.e.*, the wild glen, or Kyber Pass, as it has been termed by a Royal author, and which is one of the wildest, weird defiles to be seen in almost any part of Scotland. The Callander and Oban Railway is seen winding up along the west side of the glen at an elevation of some 500 feet above the village. The stream Ogle, which takes its rise near the summit level between glens Ogle and Dochart, flows down the bed of the glen, passing through the centre of the village, and falls into Loch Earn immediately in front of the hotel.

A short way down the loehside on the south shore stands Edinample Castle, an ancient castellated structure with a round tower bulging out from two opposite corners, occupying a fine site on a raised terrace at the foot of Glenample, surrounded by splendid hoary trees of large growth, and overlooking Loch Earn. The castle walls are very thick and strongly built, and the stairs throughout the house, to the very top of the building, are of very hard stone. It forms part of the Breadalbane estate. This old castle, with a fine farm and shootings attached, was for long occupied by the late Captain George Campbell, brother to Captain William Campbell of Boreland, near Killin, and until her death a few years since, by his respected and esteemed widow—who, in her youthful days, was one of the finest-looking ladies to be seen in the district. Her own maiden name was also

Campbell, and she was related to the late Marquis of Breadalbane.

Immediately behind the castle is seen the Edinample waterfalls. Here the river Ample, which takes its rise at the head of Glenample, only a short distance from Loch Lubnaig, after a run of five or six miles bounds over a rugged rock in two perpendicular streams on either side of a narrow interposing fragment of projecting rock. The waters unite about midway, and slanting forward complete the descent by a second vertical leap, the whole being probably from 50 to 60 feet high, and forming a very fine waterfall. Airy weeping birches, &c., crown the grim, lofty cliffs above the falls, and immediately behind these may be seen the crumbling walls of an ancient burying vault belonging to the Campbells of Monzie. From the falls the river flows along a dark, gloomy ravine passing close to the castle. The back walls of the house are within a few yards of the brink of an overhanging precipice, which forms one side of the deep glen. After passing the castle and splendid gardens, the Ample emerges from its gloomy gorge, and, after a short run, fringed on either side by a narrow belting of tall trees, at the extreme point of a jutting promontory, falls into Loch Earn.

About a couple of miles east from Edinample, on the same side of the lake, stands Ardvoirlich House, the "Darnlinvarach Castle" of Sir Walter Scott's "Legend of Montrose," the seat of an ancient and well-known Perthshire family, the Stewarts of Ardvoirlich. The house is finely-situated at the foot of Glenvoirlich, on the banks of Loch Earn, which it overlooks, surrounded and partly screened from view by a clump of splendid old trees of large growth. Immediately behind the mansion house Ben Voirlich is seen, rising up to a height of 3,500 feet above sea level, its sharp, wedge-shaped summit cleaving the clouds. The lofty Ben—on whose crest

we often stood long ago—is partly surrounded by the famous deer forest of Glenartney.

“The stag at eve had drunk his fill
Where danced the moon on Monan’s rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney’s hazel shade.”

The Glenartney deer forest was the scene of the well-known and terribly tragic incident narrated by Sir Walter Scott in his “Legend of Montrose.” It was on the evening after their arrival at Darnlinvarach Castle that Lord Menteith volunteered to tell a story to a few of his comrades in arms, including Anderson (Earl Montrose), Captain Dalgetty, &c.

“If you care to hear a long story,” said Lord Menteith, “at this time of night, I can tell you the circumstance of Allan’s birth, which accounts so well with his singular character.”

“A long story, my lord,” said Captain Dalgetty, “is, next to a good evening draught and a warm night-cap, the best shoeing-horn for drawing on a sound sleep. And since your lordship is pleased to take the trouble to tell it, I shall rest your patient auditor.”

“Anderson,” said Lord Menteith, “and you, Sibald, are dying to hear of this strange man, too, and I believe I must indulge your curiosity, that you may know how to behave to him in time of need. You had better step to the fire, then.”

Having thus assembled an audience about him,

“The father,” said Lord Menteith, “of the two brothers, Angus and Allan M’Aulay, was a gentleman of consideration and family, being chief of a Highland clan of good account, though not numerous; his lady, the mother of these young men, was a gentlewoman of good family, if I may be permitted to say so of one nearly connected with my own. Her brother, an honourable and spirited young man, obtained from King James VI. a grant of forestry and other privileges over a royal chase adjacent to this castle, and in exercising

and defending these rights, he was so unfortunate as to involve himself in a quarrel with some of our Highland freebooters or caterans, of whom, I think, Captain Dalgetty, you must have heard."

"And that I have, my lord," said the Captain, exerting himself to answer the appeal.

"The clan," said Lord Menteith, "with whom the maternal uncle of the M'Aulays had been placed in feud was a small sept of banditti, called, from their houseless state and their incessantly wandering among the mountains and glens, the 'Children of the Mist.' They are a fierce and hardy people, with all the irritability and wild and vengeful passions proper to men who have never known the restraint of civilised society. A party of them lay in wait for the unfortunate warden of the forest, surprised him while hunting alone and unattended, and slew him with every circumstance of inventive cruelty. They cut off his head, and resolved in a bravado to exhibit it at the castle of his brother-in-law. The laird was absent, and the lady reluctantly received as guests men against whom perhaps she was afraid to shut her gates. Refreshments were placed before the Children of the Mist, who took an opportunity to take the head of their victim from the plaid in which it was wrapped, placed it on the table, put a piece of bread between the lifeless jaws, bidding them do their office now since many a good meal they had eaten at that table. The lady, who had been absent for some household purpose, entered at this moment, and upon beholding her brother's head fled like an arrow out of the house into the woods, uttering shriek upon shriek. The ruffians, satisfied with this savage triumph, withdrew. The terrified menials, after overcoming the alarm to which they had been subjected, sought their unfortunate mistress in every direction, but she was nowhere to be found."

On the following Sunday after committing their villainous and shocking tragedy midst the lonely solitude of the Glenartney forest, the Children of the Mist (the Clan Alpine) held a meeting within the sacred precincts of the Parish Church of Balquhiddel, and there, standing around the amputated head of their unfortunate victim, made a solemn vow (Clan Alpine's vow) that each member of the clan would protect to the death the murderer of John Drummond Ernoch, the king's deer forester. Sir Alex. Boswell's well-known and spirited poem, "Clan Alpine's Vow," was founded—as stated by the author—upon the following quotation, taken verbatim from an abstract of the proceedings of the Privy Council of Scotland for the year 1589:—

"Edinburgh, 4th February 1589.

"The same day the Lords of Secret Council being credible Informed of ye cruel and mischievous proceedings of ye wicked Clan-Grigor so lang continueing in blood, slaughters, herships, manifest refts and stouths committed upon his Hieness' peaceable and good subjects Inhabiting ye Countries ewest the brays of ye Highlands thir mony years bygone, but specially heir after ye cruel murder of ùmql Jo. Drummond of Drummoneyryuch his majesties proper tennant and ane of his fosters of Glenartney committed upon ye day of last byepast be certain of ye said clan. be ye council and determination of ye haill avow. and to defend ye authors yrof quoever wald persew for revenge of ye same, qll ye said Jo. was occupied in seeking venison to his Hieness at command of Pat. Lord Drummondstewart of stratherneand principal forrester of Glenartney; the Queen his majesties dearest spouse. being yn shortlie looked for to arrive in this Realm. Likeas after ye Murder ye authors yrof cutted off ye said ùmql Jo. Drummond's head. and carried the same to the Laird of M'Grigor, who, and the hail surname of M'Grigor purposely conveyned upon the next sunday yrafter at the Kirk of Buchquhiddel; where they caused ye said ùmql John's head be pnted to ym. and yr avowing ye said murder to have been committed by yr communion. council. and determination laid yr hands upon the pow. and in eithnik and barbarous manner swear to defend ye authors of ye said murder in maist proud contempt of our sovrn Lord and his äutie aud in evil example to others wicked Lymmarris to doe ye like give ye sall be suffered to remain unpunished."

Then follows a commission to the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, &c., &c., "to search for and apprehend

Alaster M'Grigor of Glenstre and all others of the said Clan M'Grigor. or ye assistors culpable of the said odious murther. or of thift. reset of thift. herships. sornings qrever they may be apprehended. And if they refuse to be taken or flees to strengths and houses, to pursue and assege them with fire and sword. And this Commission to endure for the space of 3 years."

The beautiful Highland village of St Fillans is situated at the east end of the lake, and consists of some fifty odd houses. A number of old cottages towards the west end have of late years been replaced by handsome good-sized villas. About one-half of the village is built on the margin of the lake, while the other half is on the banks of the river Earn. The Drummond Arms Hotel (Mr Davie, proprietor) stands about the centre of the village, the new-born Earn leaving its parent lake just in front of the house.

This charming and picturesque Highland village was for long widely-known throughout broad Scotland as the meeting-place of the St Fillans Highland Society, comprehending among its members a large number of the principal landed proprietors and gentry in the Highlands of Perthshire. The late Marquis of Breadalbane was one of its warmest and most enthusiastic supporters and patrons. He regularly attended its meetings, splendidly attired in full Highland costume, in which he appeared to great advantage, he being an exceptionally well-built and fine-looking young man, and very fond of the Highland garb in his younger days.

The meetings were usually held annually, about the end of August, when the members attended arrayed in full Highland costume.

The scene of the manly sports and trials of strength on these occasions was a beautiful, level, grassy lawn fronting the village on the opposite or south side of the Earn, at the base of a green-clad eminence. In the centre of the lawn a

stage was erected, on which a variety of athletic exercises were exhibited. A portion of the level space surrounding the stage was railed in, and furnished with seats for the accommodation of the judges, the members and visitors of distinction, a large number of whom from all parts of Scotland were usually admiring spectators. The lawn was about two-thirds enclosed by steep ascending green slopes in the form of an amphitheatre, where the large concourse of onlookers took their station, overlooking the whole scene like the spectators in the galleries of a theatre. The games usually commenced with a competition of pipers; athletic competitions followed, such as putting the stone, throwing the hammer, tossing the caber, leaping, and racing both on foot and in boats on the lake. After the games were over, the members marched in procession, with perhaps twenty pipers at their head, to the hall of the Society in the village, where the members dined together.

These noble and manly sports in their palmy days drew together the flower of the inhabitants of the Perthshire Highlands. Probably there was no other district in Scotland at that period—sixty or seventy years ago—that could produce a regiment of such splendid looking young men. It is a well-known fact that when King George the Fourth visited Scotland the Breadalbane Highlanders were greatly admired by the King and his suite, and, we believe, were universally admitted to be the finest turnout of young men—most of them above six feet—that was seen in the Scottish capital on that great occasion. When this array, with thousands from all parts of Scotland, assembled on this beautiful and romantic spot, the scene might vie with the feudal tournaments or the classic games of Olympus. But, alas! the pageant is gone, and the large majority of the brawny athletes who were then widely known throughout broad Scotland are now no more. Three uncles to the writer

of these pages—Gilbert, John, and Donald Brown, natives of Lochtayside, Breadalbane, all of whom were splendid types of well-formed, stalwart, athletic Highlanders—were for years amongst the most successful competitors at these annual tournaments held at St Fillans. Gilbert was for a time the champion of Perthshire at tossing the caber. John was the best of the three brothers at throwing the putting-stone, and Donald excelled as a graceful dancer, for which he gained several medals. Duncan, the youngest of four brothers, is still to the fore, and although he has now passed the 90th mile-stone on life's journey, is still able to enjoy his usual daily strolls.

The St Fillans Highland Society Hall, erected in 1819, now forms one of the principal apartments of the Drummond Arms Hotel. In the front wall of the house may still be seen, or could till very recently, an oval-shaped, white polished marble stone built in the wall, on which were inscribed—"St Fillans Highland Society Hall, 1819."

The village derived its name from Saint Fillans, who is supposed to have flourished in the seventh century. He is said to have erected three churches—one at Killin, one at Strathfillan, and another at Dunfillan. St Fillan was King Robert Bruce's favourite saint, and one of his arms was borne upon a shrine by the Abbot of Inchaffray at the battle of Bannockburn. A short way east from the village, situated on the banks of the Earn, is seen Dunfillan or St Fillan's Hill, on the brow of which is the celebrated "Holy Well" of St Fillan.

" Harp of the North ! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string.
O minstrel harp, still must thine accents sleep ?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring ;
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep ?

O wake once more ! how rude soe'er the hand
 That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray ;
 O wake once more ! though scarce my skill command
 Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay :
 Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
 And all unworthy of thy nobler strain ;
 Yet if one heart thro' higher at its sway,
 The wizard note has not been touched in vain,
 Then silent be no more ! Enchantress, wake again !”

Until a comparatively recent date this famous well of St Fillan was reckoned to possess healing virtue of miraculous power, and crowds of ailing mortals from all parts of the country were taken to St Fillan's "Holy Well" on Dunfillan to be cured of their varied ailments.

A very singular circumstance connected with Loch Earn is the fact, that though a large number of salmon enter the river Earn every season from the Tay, and ascend to the highest reaches of the river, yet not one ever enters the lake—at least I am not aware of any having been either seen or caught in the loch for the last fifty years. As no falls or special obstructions whatever occur throughout the river's course, the reason why the king of the finny tribe chooses not to enter Loch Earn, while large shoals every season enter Loch Tay, which lies parallel, and only eight or nine miles further north, has for long been a puzzle to many, and may probably be a somewhat difficult problem to solve. Possibly the absence of any stream falling into the loch with good spawning beds, which they can ascend during the spawning season, may be one cause that prevents salmon frequenting Loch Earn. Loch Earn in this respect differs from all the other Perthshire salmon lochs. Loch Tay has two fine large head streams, the Lochy and Dochart, each with splendid spawning beds, and an open run of close upon 30 miles up the rivers Dochart and Fillan, whereas none of the five principal streams that fall into Loch Earn—namely, the Ogle and Kendrum, both comparatively small streams, which no

salmon would enter—falls into the lake at its head. The Ample and Voirlich on the south, and Beich on the north side, have a sufficient volume of water to allow salmon to ascend during the spawning season. The Ample is the largest of these five streams, but no fish can ascend the Ample Falls.

Although fairly well stocked with varied-sized yellow trout—occasionally some very big thumpers are caught—Loch Earn is a very fickle, uncertain fishing loch; some days, even under the most favourable and promising circumstances, yielding almost nothing; while on other days, less promising, surprising baskets are sometimes made. In June 1869 I saw two splendid yellow trout, finely marked, and weighing rather over 7 and 8 lbs. respectively, killed on Loch Earn by Major Armstrong. Excellent sport is often got on the River Earn. A good many years ago Mr John Bright, while on a visit to the late William Graham, Esq. (who was for some time M.P. for Glasgow), at Strathallan Castle, one day killed no fewer than eleven salmon to his own rod on the Strathallan water—a feat but rarely accomplished on any of the best salmon rivers of Scotland.

There are few lochs that can be so conveniently and comfortably fished as Loch Earn. Any one wishing to have a day's fishing can leave Edinburgh or Glasgow by an early train and be on the loch by about ten o'clock, fish up to six in the afternoon, and get back same evening before ten o'clock at night. There is a large and very comfortable hotel at either end, which stand close to the loch side—no driving necessary, as is the case with most of the Highland lochs—and, as a rule, good boats and experienced boatmen can always be depended upon.

During her stay at Invertrossachs House, on the banks of Loch Vennachar, in September 1869, Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by several members of her family and suite,

extended their drive one day as far as Lochearnhead Hotel (Mr Dayton, proprietor, now Mr Maisey), where they were received by Sir Malcolm and Lady Helen MacGregor of Edinchip, had tea, and remained for a considerable time. This was Her Majesty's second visit to Lochearnhead, having passed there during her first visit along with the Prince Consort and suite to Scotland in September 1842. The Royal travellers halted at this hotel to change horses when on their way from Taymouth to Drummond Castle.





A Day on Loch Voil,

WITH DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES OF BALQUHIDDER
AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.

HAVING permission from the late David Carnegie, Esq. of Stronvar, for a day's fishing for self and a friend on Loch Voil, but knowing that not a single boatman could be had at Balquhidder, we engaged a well-known Callander boatman named Coll, who we knew had been employed for several years as water-bailie or watcher on the Balquhidder waters, and knew all the best fishing creeks and bays on both Lochs Voil and Doine. A more efficient and pleasant cracky boatman one could not desire.

We left Callander one morning early in June by the nine o'clock train, and after a ride of eleven or twelve miles on the Callander and Oban Railway, we reached Kingshouse Station. Here we found a "trap," which we had previously engaged, in waiting for us, a very low-set four-wheeler, with a smart, cream-coloured Highland pony—driver, a "halflin" youth, who looked more like a rustic "herd laddie" than a coach driver. He seemed, however, particularly anxious—though we pretended for a time not to see his drift—to let us clearly understand that the driver's fee was not included in the agreed-upon hire. We found that the reckoned mileage from the station to several places up the valley of Balquhidder is rather indefinite; unfortunately, there are no milestones placed along the wayside to enable strangers

who may wish to drive to have an approximate idea of the cost of a hire, in order to visit some of the scenes once familiar to the fleet footsteps of the bold Rob Roy MacGregor, and the spot where, at the close of a long and stirring life, his mortal remains were laid in the quiet, sequestered churchyard of his native parish of Balquhidder.

On leaving the station the road ascends for some distance, thence winds along the base of the green, verdant hills of Auchtoo, which rise with a very steep ascent on the right. A number of bracken-thatched primitive-looking cottages are passed at short intervals close to the roadside on the left, which are occupied by small farmers or crofters. Their sloping strips of cultivated land are bounded by extensive flat meadows, through which the river Balvaig is seen winding along with a very sluggish flow, and making many curious loops and bends, as if "switherin'" whether to steer its farther course for Loch Lubnaig or Loch Earn, its natural shed. Nearly all the numerous chains of rivers and lakes throughout the Highlands of Perthshire, from Lochs Chon and Ard, the farthest south, to Loch Rannoch on the north, run parallel due east and west—at least very nearly so; and every rill that takes its rise within the boundary of the county flows into the German Ocean, with the single exception of the river Falloch, which finds its way to the Atlantic. The only hitch in this uniformity of the lakes and rivers is Loch Lubnaig, which lies nearly north and south, and the river Balvaig, which, instead of flowing eastward into Loch Earn, which lies due east and west, and directly in a line with the shed and lakes of Balquhidder, escapes through a gap between the spurs of two opposite hill ridges, and flows about due south.

“ Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquhidder, speeds the midnight blaze;
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,

Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below ;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course ;
Thence southward turn'd its rapid road,
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad."

It would not be at all a difficult undertaking to fill up this gap, and send the waters of the Balvaig eastwards into Loch Earn.

About a mile from the railway station the sombre family vault or mausoleum of the MacGregors of Achtoo and Edinchip is passed a short way below the road on the left. The late Sir John MacGregor of MacGregor Murray, Bart., who was a distinguished Gaelic scholar, zealous and unwearied in his exertions to collect and preserve the ancient poetry of the Highland bards, was buried in this mausoleum. He held the rank of Colonel in the army, and raised a famed regiment of infantry called the Clan Alpine's, which was commanded by his brother, Colonel Alexander MacGregor Murray, who was also buried in this family burial-place.

The late Sir Malcolm MacGregor, Bart. of Edinchip, &c., was the much-respected and worthy chief of the renowned ancient Clan Alpine or Gregor, and as a commander for many years in the British Navy upheld the honour of his clan and the dignity of his Queen and country, and reflected credit on his brave and distinguished ancestry. He entered the navy in 1847, and rose to the rank of captain. He served in the Russian War, and had the Crimean medal and clasp and the Turkish War medal. In 1869 he received the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society for having with great bravery saved the life of a seaman in Lagos Roads in 1868. Sir Malcolm was, I believe, the last member of his clan whose remains were consigned to their final resting-place in this

quiet, sequestered mausoleum in Balquhidder. His funeral was the last in the Balquhidder district at which the bagpipes were played. His eldest son—young Sir Malcolm, as he is usually called by his tenants and the Balquhidder folk—was born on 3rd August 1873, and entered Her Majesty's Royal Navy in April 1889. He inherits the picturesque Highland estate of his forefathers in Balquhidder, and succeeds his worthy father as chief of the ancient and historic Clan Alpine or Gregor.

After a smart drive of about two miles we arrived at the Clachan or Kirkton of Balquhidder, which is beautifully situated on the north side of the valley at the lower end of Loch Voil. Here we came to a halt in front of a neat, tidy, rustic slated cottage, embowered in beautiful flowers and creepers of varied hues and colours, and occupied by William Dewar, Mr Carnegie's head gamekeeper, who has held the same post for over 50 years, which implies by no means a bad certificate in favour of both master and servant. Mr Dewar, although he has now reached about midway between four-score and ninety years, still looks hale and hearty, and though not quite so lithe and supple as he once was for climbing the surrounding hills in search of foxes, eagles, fougarts, &c., the relentless devourers of his precious game, he daily attends less arduous duties connected with his post.

Here we discharged our young "coachie," but postponed paying him his expected fee till he returned for us at six o'clock in the afternoon to drive us back to the station in order to join the train for the south. The respected old keeper had a boat at a rustic little pier, trig and trim, ready for us, and in less than an hour and a half after leaving Callander we were afloat and sailing up Loch Voil. Mr Carnegie kept one boat exclusively for the use of strangers who procured permission to fish on the loch. It was a first-rate boat, and kept in tip-top order.

Probably there is no other loch—at least in central Scotland—so seldom or so little fished as Loch Voil, and consequently it is well stocked with beautiful yellow trout, finely marked, and of excellent quality. Every year a number of salmon find their way up through the rugged, shelving Pass of Leny, Loch Lubnaig, and the Balvaig to Lochs Voil and Doine, *i.e.*, the deep loch. The two lakes are joined by a deep, still-flowing river, a few hundred yards in length. During the spawning season salmon ascend the river Lochlarig for several miles above Loch Doine. The Lochlarig takes its rise at the extreme west end of the valley and parish of Balquhidder, and falls into Loch Doine at its head. At a certain spot close to where the river takes its rise any one with two legs of ordinary length can stand with one foot in Perthshire, the other in Stirlingshire, and the point of his hazel cromag in Dumbartonshire.

These two beautiful Balquhidder lakes—their combined length being from five to six miles, with an average breadth of about half a mile—are situated near the south-western boundary of the county of Perth, lie nearly due east and west, run parallel, and are about equi-distant from Loch Katrine on the south and Loch Dochart on the north, at an elevation of about 400 feet above sea level. Loch Voil comprises a water area of close on 570 acres, and Loch Doine 130 acres. The two lochs, which form the bright centre of the grand valley, are fringed in many places, especially towards the lower end, with overhanging, varied-tinted woods, and enclosed on either side by lofty mountains. In the range which forms the north side occurs a series of conspicuous lofty summits, including Craig-an-Righ—*i.e.*, the King's Rock—Beinn-a-Chroin, Stob-Chon, Stob-Garb, Beimtulachan, Cruach-Ardran, Benmore, and Benain—*i.e.*, Mountain of the Birds. It has long been a disputed point whether Benain or Beinnen is in Balquhidder or Killin parish. It is

nearly the same height and stands close to Benmore, which is sometimes described as the double-peaked Benmorc, the two summits being separated by only one deep indented gully. These two lofty peaks are seen very prominently from almost any point in the wide district of Breadalbane, and are introduced into the background of nearly all the large paintings of Taymouth Castle, Benlawers, &c., that we have seen. A very good view of Benain may be had from the railway station at Kingshouse.

On the north shore, near the head of the loch, a huge curiously-formed stone may be seen, which no doubt had either toppled down from the face of the lofty, precipitous crags high above some time long ago, or had been carried from some distant part of the globe in the firm grasp of an iceberg, and laid gently down where it now rests. It slopes up from the edge of the water on the shore side, and on the opposite side, fronting the loch, goes plumb down for ten or twelve feet into the water, with a comparatively flat space on the top, and is called "Clach-an-Righ"—*i.e.*, the King's Stone. It derived its name from a remarkable incident in the chequered career of King Robert the Bruce, in which he made a narrow escape with his life. After his disastrous defeat by Alastair MacDougal of Lorn at the fiercely-fought battle of Dal Righ—*i.e.*, the King's Field—on the banks of the river Fillan, a short way below Tyndrum, Bruce with his brave but now shattered army retreated down the south side slopes of Strathfillan, hotly pursued by his bitter and relentless enemy, the victorious chief of Lorn and his elated followers. On reaching Portnellan, situated on the south shore of Loch Dochart, Bruce with his followers left the main road leading down to Glendochart, &c., and turned to the right, proceeding up along a deep, clefted, narrow defile formed on the left by the remarkably steep ascending side of the lofty Benmore and Benain, and on the opposite side by

Stob-Chon, Stob-Garb, &c., and leading across this long, lofty mountain chain to the Braes of Balquhiddy, a distance of some seven or eight miles. Arriving at Inverlochlarig, on the Balquhiddy side of the hill, the king in some way got separated from the remnant of his faithful followers, and was closely and eagerly pressed by a small advanced band of the Lorn men, and in all probability would have been overtaken, surrounded by overwhelming odds, and slain without mercy on the spot. But on reaching the margin of Loch Voil the sorely-pressed fugitive king had just time to mount Clach-an-Righ referred to. On gaining this splendid vantage position, secure from being surrounded or attacked from behind, he instantly drew his long claymore and boldly faced his foes, and with one sweeping, slanting, well-aimed blow severed the head from the body of the foremost of his eager pursuers, which rolled off the stone into the lake with a splash. For a time the brave, heroic warrior king kept his pursuers at bay, till at length a number of the king's trusty friends and faithful followers suddenly appeared on the scene, and at once attacked the now thinned little band of the Lorn men in the rear, and put them all to the sword.

Immediately after this terrible bloody tragedy enacted in front of Clach-an-Righ on the lonely shore of Loch Voil, Bruce, every moment expecting a reinforcement of his eager pursuers, and probably led by his bitter and enraged enemy, the chief of Lorn himself, to arrive on the scene, prudently took refuge in a curiously-formed, well-known cave in the face of a precipitous rock on the north side of the lake directly above Clach-an-Righ, where he remained concealed for some time. This rock, and the estate on which it is situated, is still called Craighuigh, or the more correct name, Craig-an-Righ—*i.e.*, the King's Rock.

Balquhiddy has for long been known as the Clan Gregor country. Their possessions were anciently very extensive,

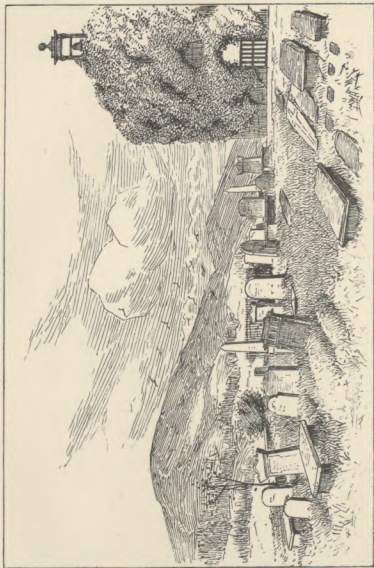
reaching from Taymouth to the head of Glenlyon, including Glendochart, Glenorchy, &c. As a Celtic race they have been greatly distinguished for an indomitable spirit of bold independence, for heavy misfortunes, long-continued persecutions, and rendered desperate under the affliction during long years of terrible cruelty and grievous wrongs. Acts of Privy Council were issued from time to time against the devoted clan, and the Privy Council agreed to give a specified sum for any head of a MacGregor that might be brought to Edinburgh in virtue of these bloodthirsty edicts, and we may well be allowed to express the feelings of determined resistance and high-handed revenge in which they sometimes indulged in the words of the well-known and familiar song, "The Macgregors' Gathering."

"The moon's on the lake, and the mist's on the brae,
And the clan has a name that is nameless by day;
Our signal for fight, which from monarchs we drew,
Must be heard but by night in our vengeful halloo!
Then halloo, halloo, halloo, Gregarach!

If they rob us of name, and pursue us with beagles,
Give their roof to the flame and their flesh to the eagles—
Then gather, gather, gather, Gregarach!
While there's leaves in the forest, and foam on the river,
MacGregor, despite them, shall flourish for ever!

Glenorchy's proud mountains, Kilchurn and her tow'rs,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer are ours;
We're landless! landless! landless! Gregarach.
Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,
O'er the tops of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,
And the rocks of Craig-Royston like icicles melt,
E'er our wrongs be forgot or our vengeance unfelt—
Then halloo, halloo, halloo, Gregarach!"

Balquhiddier was more than any other the parish of the famous Rob Roy. It was his native parish, at which he was born at Inverlochlarig about the year 1660, and died about 1738 in his house at the head of Loch Voil, and his mouldering dust now rests in the graveyard around the old



OLD CHURCH AND ROB ROY'S GRAVE, BALQUHIDDER.

historic Parish Church of Balquhiddier, the grim, gruesome scene of the "Clan Alpine's Vow."

"Till then the vow of Clan Alpine
In Kirk of Balquhiddier,
With wild deeds of their daring, shall
Be mentioned together."

Sir Alexander Boswell, in his spirited poem entitled "Clan Alpine's Vow," thus describes the principal scene:—

(The amputated head of Drummond of Drummondernoch, chief keeper of the royal deer forest of Glenartney, is placed on a small table in front of the altar, covered with the banner of the clan, and the chief advances to the table near the altar)—

"And pausing on the banner gazed,
Then cried in scorn, his finger raised—
'This was the boon of Scotland's king,'
And with a quick and angry fling,
Tossing the pageant screen away,
The dead man's head before him lay.
Unmoved, he scann'd the visage o'er—
The clotted locks were dark with gore;
The features with convulsion grim,
The eyes contorted, sunk and dim;
But unappall'd, in angry mood,
With low ring brow, unmoved stood,
Upon the head his bared right hand
He laid, the other grasped his brand,
Then kneeling cried—'To heaven I swear
This deed of death I own and share
As truly, fully mine as though
This, my right hand, had dealt the blow.
Come, then, our foemen—one, come all,
If to revenge this caitiff's fall
One blade is bared, one bow is drawn,
Mine everlasting peace I pawn,
To claim from them or claim from him
In retribution limb for limb;
In sudden fray or open strife
This steel shall render life for life.'
He ceas'd, and at his bending nod
The clansmen to the altar trod.
And not a whisper breath'd around,
And nought was heard of mortal sound,
Save from the clanking arms they bore
That rattled on the marble floor;

And each, as he approach'd in haste,
 Upon the scalp his right hand placed,
 With livid lip and gather'd brow
 Each uttered in his turn the vow.
 Fierce Malcolm watch'd the passing scene,
 And search'd through with glances keen,
 Then dash'd a tear drop from his eye,
 Unbid it came, he knew not why.
 Exulting high, he tow'ring stood,
 'Kinsmen,' he cried, 'of Alpine's blood,
 And worthy of Clan Alpine's name,
 Unstain'd by cowardice and shame,'
 'E'en do, and spare nocht' in time of ill
 Shall be Clan Alpine's legend still."

Rob Roy's family burial-place is within a few yards of the ivy-clad eastern gable of the old church—now a most interesting and picturesque ruin—and consists of three flat-laid native stones, but when placed there is not very well known. The stone with a carved sword upon it was for long pointed out as the grave of Rob Roy, but it is now generally understood to cover the remains of his brave and heroic wife, Helen. The corresponding stone on the other side is the tomb of his eldest son, Coll, and his youngest son, Rob Og, *i.e.*, Young Rob, and the centre one the once celebrated Rob Roy MacGregor's grave, with figures rudely carved on it—a fir tree crossed by a sword supporting a crown, denoting the relationship proclaimed by the MacGregors with the Royal line of Stuart. There is a tradition that while on his death-bed he was told that a person with whom he had for long been at enmity proposed to visit him. "Raise me from my bed," said the invalid; "throw my tartan plaid around me, and bring me my claymore, dirk, and pistols. It shall never be said that a foeman saw Rob Roy MacGregor defenceless and unarmed." His foeman—conjectured to be one of the MacLarens—entered and paid his compliments, inquiring after the health of his formidable neighbour. Rob Roy maintained a cold, haughty civility during their short conference, and as soon as he had left the house—"Now," he

said, "all is over; let the piper play '*Cha till, cha till, cha till, me tuillidh*'"—i.e., "I return no more"—and he is said to have expired before the dirge was finished.

True it is, no doubt, that might was very much the right in Rob Roy's days, but it is evident from what we know of him that he used his might, maybe in a rough and ready way, only where and when he had some kind of right. It is said that in a noble and generous spirit he took from the rich and gave to the poor. Hence Wordsworth's beautiful lines in praise of our bold and benevolent Highland countryman:—

"Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart,
And wondrous length and strength of arm;
Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
Or keep his friends from harm.

And had it been thy lot to live
With us who now behold the light,
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,
And battled for the right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand,
And all the oppress'd who wanted strength
Had thine at their command.

All kinds and creatures stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit;
'Tis God's appointment who must away,
And who is to submit.

Since then, said Robin, right is plain,
And longest life is but a day,
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I'll take the shortest way.

And thus among the rocks he lived,
Through summer's heat and winter's snow;
The eagle he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below."

His funeral was the largest ever seen in Balquhider or any part of the Perthshire Highlands, being attended by all the nobility and gentry of the country except the Duke of Athole. The funeral procession was accompanied by a number of

pipers playing the Macgregor lament—" *Cha till, cha till, cha till, me tuille.*"

The view from the old churchyard, which stands on an elevated knoll on the north side of the valley, though not very extensive, is simply exquisite. From behind the church the mountain rises up with a very steep ascent in terraced crags. A mountain stream of considerable volume comes careering down the face of the hill, forming a long series of beautiful cascades, and thence with a rapid run passes down the west side of the ancient churchyard with an ever-varying, never-ending murmuring coronach. Immediately below, along the base of a brae, stands the tidy picturesque little Clachan or Kirkton of Balquhidder, consisting of only four dwellings, including a farmhouse and steading. One of the three cottages was at one time occupied by James MacGregor, the most historic of Rob Roy's sons. A short way beyond the clachan Loch Voil, fringed with beautiful overhanging foliage on either side, is seen stretching for several miles away westwards, with the green, verdant, classic Braes of Balquhidder towering in the distance.

" Let us go, lassie, go
 To the Braes of Balquhidder,
 Where the blaeberries grow
 'Mang the bonnie Highland heather ;
 Where the deer and the roe
 Lightly bounding together,
 Sport a lang summer day
 On the Braes of Balquhidder."

Stronvar House, the country seat of James Carnegie, Esq. of Stronvar, stands on an elevated tableland on the south side of the loch, which it overlooks. The Balvaig leaves its parent lake just immediately below the clachan, and is seen winding hither and thither through flat verdant meadows, with a very gentle flow eastwards for a couple of miles, then takes a sudden turn southward, and, after a run of a few miles, falls into Loch Lubuaig. A special and prominent

feature in the landscape is the lofty, sharp, conical peak—as viewed from this standpoint—of Ben Voirlich, which towers above its surrounding heights. Glenbuckie is seen stretching away southward in the direction of the Trossachs, Loch Katrine, &c.

The old church itself presents a most interesting and highly picturesque ruin, and I daresay that a large majority of those who pay a visit to it every season leave the place under the impression that the church has been in ruins for at least several hundred years, whereas it is only some fifty years ago since it was abandoned as a place of worship. The writer of these pages when a stripling boy use to attend public worship in the old kirk regularly every Sunday for several years. The late David Carnegie, Esq. of Stronvar, who erected the new church solely at his own expense, used every means that skill and ingenuity could devise to give the abandoned church the appearance of an old ruin, and his efforts were crowned with singular success. Only the foundation stones of the west gable and part of the north side walls were left, but the south wall and east gable, with its unique, quaint, little belfry still stands intact, and faced all over with a thick coating of luxuriant ivy. The old bell, which was placed there more than two hundred years ago, and worked with a common rope, which is partly hid through the week amongst the ivy, is still used regularly every Sunday morning, and its ring is still as clear and sound as ever. It was originally put up by the Rev. Robert Kirk, at that time the respected minister of the parish, but who was afterwards translated to the parish of Aberfoyle, where he died in 1688, at the early age of 42. His gravestone, which may be seen near the east end of the old parish church of Aberfoyle, bears this inscription:—

“ROBERTUS KIRK, A.M., Linguæ Hiberniæ (c) a bumen, opiit, &c.”

The old bell has the following inscription on it:—

“M. ROBERT KIRK, for Balquidder Chvrch, 1684. Love and Live. Live and Love.”

The Rev. Mr Kirk's wife died at the age of 25, and was buried in the Balquidder kirkyard. Her gravestone, a large, oblong, flat-laid stone, may be seen near the west side of the burying-ground, on which is the following inscription:—

ISABEL CAMBLL,

SPOUSE TO MR ROBERT KIRK, MINISTER.

DIED 25 DECEMBER 1680.

SHE HAD TWO SONS. COLIN AND WILLIAM.

HER AGE 25.

Stones weep tho' eyes were dry :
 Choicest flowers soonest die.
 Their sun oft sets at noon,
 Whose fruit is ripe in June.
 Then tears of joy be thine,
 Since earth must soon resign
 To God what is divine.

Nasei est ægrotare. vivere est sæpe mori et mori est vivere.

LOVE AND LIVE.

Inside the ruined walls of the church, at the north-east corner, near the principal entrance door, the family burial-place of the Stewarts of Glenbuckie, a well-known old Balquidder family, may be seen. Situated at the south-west corner of the floor of the old church may be seen the plain, unostentatious burial-place of the Stronvar family, marked by a simple polished granite tablet built in the south wall of the church. Beneath a plot of green grassy, level sward rest the mortal remains of the late David Carnegie, Esq., his wife, and a son. Mr Carnegie was an excellent

landlord, and a most liberal contributor to every good and deserving scheme or object connected with Balquhidder and district.

In the middle of the floor of the church, immediately in front of the altar, or in more recent times the pulpit, which stood in the middle of the church against the south-side wall, there is a large flat-laid stone slab called "Clach-Aenais," beneath which rests, it is said, the mouldering dust of St Angus, who, according to tradition, was the first Christian missionary to this part of the country. He was one of the twelve disciples, who were akin to himself in character and the companions of his council, who accompanied Columba on leaving Ireland, his native country, for Scotland. They sailed from Ireland, according to Bede, in the year 565, and first landed on Scottish soil at Kilmorie on the Point of Knap, which forks out into the sea between the entrance to Lochs Sween and Coalisport, and situated in South Knapdale, Argyleshire. Here they erected three chapels or churches—one at Kilmorie, the mother church of Knapdale; one at Cove; and the third at Keills, in North Knapdale. Although roofless and in ruins for many centuries, these three respective churches still stand almost intact, and to all appearance may remain so for centuries yet to come. Columba, on leaving Keills with his followers, sailed for Iona, where he reared his widely-famed seminary. He received a grant of either part or whole of the island which was henceforth to be rendered illustrious by the association of his name.

Columba, on leaving this place, left one of his disciples—Saint Cormac—in charge of the mission he had established in this part of Argyleshire. "St Cormac, after a long life spent in acts of piety and devotion, died and was buried on Ellain Mhor, situated in the Sound of Jura. His tomb consists of a small oblong building elevated about three feet above the ground, and, notwithstanding its great antiquity, is

still in a wonderful state of preservation, and seemingly uninjured by old Father Time.”}

St Angus, as tradition bears, found his way to Balquhidder, where he died, and his tombstone lay undisturbed for ages where it now is ; but it was removed at one period for a time to the outside of the church, in order to put a stop to a superstitious use that had been made of it. Young men or women stood or knelt on it during the ceremony of marriage and baptism, and their doing so was believed to have some mysterious mystic virtue. However, at a comparatively recent date the stone was again replaced in its old position within the church walls. It appears to consist of imperishable material, and still looks as fresh as when laid there, probably more than a thousand years ago, without the slightest indication of decay. There is a life-size figure of a man arrayed in full ecclesiastical robes rudely carved upon it, and although for ages the stone formed part of the floor of the church, and consequently must have been more or less worn, and under certain lights may not be so readily noticed, but when the sun shines after a shower of rain the figure is distinctly seen at a glance.

The ruins are so far sheltered from the fierce blasts of the north in the lee of a row of sycamore trees of large growth, and evidently of great age. I had occasion to be at Balquhidder quite recently, and in presence, and with the assistance, of the respected minister of the parish, I found one of those trees, the farthest west, to measure fully seventeen feet in circumference a couple of feet or so above the ground.

The new church—a very substantial, chaste edifice—stands a little to the north of the old one, at the base of a rounded sloping mound or hillock called Tom-nan-Aingeal—the Hillock of Fire—the sacred fire of the Druids having been preserved there anterior to the Christian era. “It became

afterwards of repute as a sacred spot on which angels descended; and on its sloping sides the thousands that gathered there to the tent-preaching at the communion seasons listened with devout attention to the Gaelic services which were there conducted by many able and eloquent preachers of the Word." This little mound was held in great repute for other and most reprehensible purposes, for which take the following instance:—In a Court held at Killin, one Donald Taillour accuses a neighbour woman of the name of M'Lane of bewitching him. She had brought a "pockful of earth from Tom-nan-Aingeal, Balquhidder, to his house, since which his gear has not 'luckit' with him, and his corn grew not." The Judge, sensible man, acquitted the woman for the time, but strictly forbade the use of the pock of earth again, "seeing it inclines to no good but to an evil custom."

On the 3rd September 1869, Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by several members of her family, paid a visit to Balquhidder, and spent a considerable time in the old churchyard examining the quaint ruins of the old church. She gazed with evident keen interest on Rob Roy's plain, simple gravestone. The view from this ancient burying-place is one of the most charming and picturesque that can well be imagined, and anyone who may have an opportunity should pay it a visit.

In bygone days there was a population of from three to four hundred in the upper valley or Braes of Balquhidder, with a meal, a lint mill, and a smiddy, but very few are to be found there now. From Kirkton to the extreme west end of the parish there are only a few solitary farmhouses, widely apart, to be seen along either side of the long strath, and few valleys in central Scotland present such an air of solitude and remoteness from the busy, noisy haunts of men. The green, verdant braes proper only commence beyond the head of Loch Voil, stretching away westwards.

The principal proprietors of Balquhidder are Lady Helen MacGregor of Edinchip, &c. ; J. B. Baillie-Hamilton, Esq. of Arnprior and Cambusmore ; James Carnegie, Esq. of Stronvar ; Mr MacDonald of Craighuie ; and the Earl of Moray.

Of the many natives of Balquhidder, besides Rob Roy and other members, of the clan who were and are distinguished soldiers in the service of their country, and who have risen to distinction in various walks of life—including Colin Maclaren, the eminent mathematician and philosopher ; and his son John, admitted advocate in 1756, and raised to the bench in 1788 by the title of Lord Dreghorn—I daresay Dugald Buchanan, the Gaelic poet and hymn writer, a native of the parish, will be longest and most affectionately remembered by his Gaelic-speaking countrymen.

The following poetical verses were composed by Mr Robert Fergusson, a native of Balquhidder, and a poet of considerable merit. Mr Fergusson was born at East Stronvar in the year 1819, but his parents with their family removed shortly afterwards to Glenbuckie, where young Robert spent his bright and happy boyhood days midst the grand classic mountain scenery of Balquhidder. It may be mentioned that Mr Fergusson was chiefly instrumental in getting a monument erected to the memory of his "brither" bard, Dugald Buchanan, at Strathyre, where Buchanan was born. Another is at Kinloch-Rannoch, where he died. The Balquhidder bard is an enthusiastic Highlander, and a member of council (as well as originator) of the Clan Fergusson Society of Glasgow, and ex-President of Stirling Highlanders' Association. His spry, jaunty, spare figure, with a plaid of his clan tartan thrown gracefully "o'er his shoother," is familiarly known on the streets of Stirling—where he now resides—and might readily be mistaken for the famous Professor Blackie. Besides being a poet of no mean

merit, Mr Fergusson is also an excellent singer of Gaelic songs, and when singing one of his favourite love songs in the expressive and pathetic language of his native tongue, such as—

MO NIGHEAN DONN BHOIDHEACH.

Seisd—Horo, mo nighean donn bhoidheach,
Hi ri, mo nighean donn bhoidheach,
Mo chaileag laghach, bhoidheach,
Cha phosainn ach thu.

A Pheigi dhonn nam blàth-shul,
Gur trom a thug mi gràdh dhuit ;
Tha d'iomhaigh, ghaoil, 'us d'ailleachd,
A ghnàth tigh'nn fo m'uidh.

Cha cheil mi air an t-saoghal
Gu bheil mo mhian 's mo ghaol ort ;
'S ged chaidh mi uait air faondradh,
Cha chaochail mo rùn.

'Nuair bha mi ann ad làthair,
Bu shona bha mo laithean—
A' sealbhach adh do mhànrain,
'Us àille do ghnùis.

'Sann tha mo rùn 's na beanntaibh,
Far bheil mo ribhinn ghreannar,
Mar ròs am fàsach shamhraidh,
An gleann fad'o shuil.

—at a public concert or a social gathering of Highlanders, his performance is usually rapturously applauded and appreciated. But although this pathetic Balquhiddier bard can compose a very flowery sentimental love song to one or other of his old sweethearts of his younger days, a *chaileag laghach* “nae doot,” it is sad to relate, he still remains a poor, forlorn, uncared-for, middle-aged “batchy.” However, it's never too late to mend, and better late than never.

MY NATIVE LAND.

“Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself has said—
This is my own, my native land.”

My native land I visit oft,
To view the scenes of early days,

To tread again my native heath
 Again to sing my native lays.

When famed Balquhiddier Braes I see,
 What mem'ries waken at the sight ;
 Again there rise the days gone by,
 When youth's gay morn was fair and bright.

The fairy nooks beside the burn,
 The giant stones round which I played ;
 The heather hills and flowery dells,
 The moors and meads through which I strayed ;

The winding road adown the glen,
 By which I trotted to the school ;
 The oakwood knoll, the **Drochaid mhor*,
 The †*Eilean-dubh* and bathing pool ;

The river Balvaig from Loch Voil,
 That slowly winds along the strath ;
 The gurgling, rumbling mountain stream,
 The steep and rugged mountain path ;

Benvoirlich towering in the east,
 And Beinean, guardian of the Braes,
 With other hills of lesser note
 Their hoary summits upward raise.

All these and more are much the same,
 But those that *were*, O where are they ?
 Where now the old familiar friends
 That used to greet me by the way ?

The friendly grasp, the welcome smile,
 Will cheer my homeward steps no more ;
 How cold is now the place that was
 So warm and bright in days of yore.

And so the man of many years
 Will find his native land grow cold ;
 It will not, cannot be to him
 What once it was in times of old.

Yet here and there, there still are found
 The leal, the loving, and the true,
 Who kindly cheer their aged friends
 Whose travelling days are growing few.

But there's a land, a better land,
 The fairer land of light and love,
 Where death and parting are unknown—
 The blessed Fatherland above.

* Big Bridge. ; Black Island.



A Day on Loch Dochart.

AN old and valued friend, Mr M., a keen fisher, with whom I had spent many pleasant holidays at his snug, well-kept, small estate, not a hundred miles from Ochiltree, in Ayrshire, his native county, being anxious to see some of the famous rivers and lakes of Perthshire, of which he had often heard such glowing accounts, all "hotchin'" with trout and salmon, I readily agreed to join him in a short trip to the north.

Having arranged to meet at the Buchanan Street Station, Glasgow, we started by the 9.15 A.M. train, and after a ride of 68 miles we arrived at the Luib Station, on the Oban Railway, and were soon in comfortable quarters at the Luib Hotel, situated at the head of Glendochart, and close to the banks of the celebrated salmon river Dochart.

Delighted I gaze on the glorious Dochart,
Rolling o'er rocks and thro' meads on its way,
Each pool-wiel and stream hotchin' wi' salmon,
From its rise at Ben More to its fall in Loch Tay.

An immense number of salmon ascend the river about the end of May and June, and may be seen in dozens sporting and plunging in all their favourite pools.

The Luib Hotel, with a pretty large farm attached, has been for long occupied by a respected family of brothers and sisters named M'Callum, who still retain a good deal of the good old-fashioned style about them. They keep an excellent stock of Highland cattle, which in several districts through-

out the Highlands, I regret to note, is now almost entirely supplanted by Ayrshire and other breeds, but chiefly Ayrshire. I somehow fancy when I see these poor, skinny, thin, short-haired, "cauldribe" beasts—some of them, more especially in the early part of the season, looking just as if a dirty "reekit-fleekit" old hide had been thrown loosely over a "rickle o' banes"—browsing on the Highland hills among the blooming heather, that they are interlopers, and have no business to be there. My friend, Mr M., and I have had many tough arguments as to the respective merits of Ayrshire and Highland cattle—and sometimes several other things "forbye" the cattle, including "maybe" bonnie lassies, &c. I am a great admirer of Highland cattle—*i.e.*, the real pure-bred, which for beauty of symmetry and noble, graceful appearance, are, in my opinion, quite unrivalled by any other class of animals that I know.

While taking a stroll in the evening, Mr M. was greatly taken up with the Luib cattle, more especially with a lot of calves—square-built, fine, sturdy-looking, little fellows; short, well-set legs, deep neck and shoulders, and covered with a good thick coat of long, glossy, curly hair and flowing mane, varied shades of colour, one or two light dun or nearly pure white, some brown, red, black, &c., perfect models of their kind. When Mr M. first saw a group of these romping and capering round a big stone on a knowe, he fancied they were some species of Highland deer, and was greatly amused on seeing one or two of them run to their "mither" to get a "suckey," when they pop down on their knees, waggin' their little bushy tails in the air, and "noos and thans" give their mother a bit smart dad, dad, dad with their curly pow. Such a thing is, I believe, quite unknown in Ayrshire, where, as a rule, instead of being fed with their mother's milk, the poor calves are frequently reared on thin whey and sour-dook, sprinkled with a little meal or mixed with some oilcake and

such "fashionless" cheat-the-belly stuffs, and may be seen in small lonely groups about the farmhouses separate from their mother and the other cattle, with their little baggy bellies, and a dull, dazed, spiritless, half-starved look about them.

On getting back to the hotel we took a turn through the garden. Probably there is not a better or neater kept garden in all Perthshire. It produces a splendid crop of various kinds of fruit and vegetables, &c. One of the brothers—Dougal, I believe—takes entire charge of the garden, in which he takes great interest, and, besides being an excellent gardener, Dougal has been for long famed as one of the best salmon fishers in the district. Having resided all his days on the banks of the glorious Dochart, he has had every opportunity of plying his favourite sport, and during the fishing season is often very successful, never thinks of putting up his rod except on a favourable day, always on the *qui vive* for a good "tid," with clear speckled sky above and a good stiff breeze. From long experience and study of the weather he seems to know to a "T" when the big fellows are likely to be in a good mood for "catchin' flees," and sets off at once for the river, accompanied by his faithful and constant fishing companion, his favourite Scotch terrier "Cuilaig," which I have often seen eagerly watch with unflagging interest his master's every throw, and when he gets a fish on "Cuilaig" gets into a state of the greatest excitement and fuss, running up and down along the bank of the river as fast as his little feet can carry him, now and then making a dash to the edge of the water as if going to plunge into the river to seize the salmon, but doesn't, although sometimes in his eagerness he overbalances himself and pops in heels-over-head and gets a "dook." When the fish is landed "Cuilaig" jumps frantically round about him, shaking himself violently, pretending to be worrying the salmon, although he only touches him with the tip of his nose. When all's over with the poor salmon,

“Cuilaig,” with head and tail erect, struts about looking quite “big,” as much as to say, “I think I deserve all the credit.”

While spending some days at Luib a few years ago, I was fishing one day along with Dougal, and seeing him with a fish on at a place where the bank of the river was very steep, I at once ran down to assist him to “gaff” the salmon, but my proffered assistance was briefly but politely refused. I suppose he was afraid to trust me with such an important job. I looked on, however, with keen interest to see the calm, collected, philosophic Dougal and his little, active, excited assistant “Cuilaig” land the salmon, which was very neatly accomplished in less than half an hour, a few hundred yards lower down the stream. Dougal usually carries his neat little gaff—which unscrews in pieces—in his pocket, and while playing his fish, he somehow or other manages to screw it together and have it hanging by his side ready when the proper time arrives to cleek his salmon.

The following morning our turnout drove round to the hotel door prompt at the hour appointed—eight o'clock—a delightful morning, with every prospect of a favourable day. We at once took our seats, and the pair of bays spanked proudly along the road for the loch, some four or five miles distant.

Shortly after leaving the hotel we passed the shooting lodge of Suie, occupied for many years by A. H. Brown, Esq., of Liverpool. On the opposite side of the river we see the white, tidy, two-storey farmhouse of Innishewan, nicely situated on a sunny knoll surrounded by some rows of trees. Innishewan has been occupied for many years by a worthy and respected gentleman farmer, Mr Macniven, a famous fisher, who probably has gained more medals and prizes at fishing competitions than any one in the district. A short way farther on we pass a very interesting ruin standing on a

knowe at our left, which the driver of the old stage-coach (John Campbell) use to point out to his passengers as *one* of the places where Rob Roy was born.

Part of the walls and one of the gables are still standing entire, the jambs of the fireplaces both on the lower and upper storeys are as fresh and square as ever. From this point of our drive the view is very fine; to the right is seen the winding, rolling Dochart, and along the shed of the river we get a glimpse of some of the mountain-peaks of Argyleshire. Before us, a little to the left, Benmore and Beinein tower to the clouds,

“ And on the stream their shadow throw
Which sweetly winds far below.”

The green hill slopes are dotted over with sheep and lambs nibbling away at their morning meal, kitchened with blabs of sparkling dew, and higher up the mountain side we hear the “cootie moorcock’s coothy craw.” We next cross the narrow bridge that spans the rapid mountain stream which takes its rise far up in the wild deep gully that separates Benmore and Beinein, or the head of Corriechaorich, an extensive semi-circular corrie partly formed by the south slopes of Benmore, and

“ Comes wimplin’ doon the glen wi’ toddlin’ din,
Or foaming strong in hasty stems frae linn to linn,”

and falling into the Dochart at the head of “Rob Roy’s pool,” a famous salmon pool named after the outlaw. We next pass the entrance to Loch Dochart House, the seat of E. G. Place, Esq., surrounded and partly hid from view by green woods, on the opposite side of the river. A short way farther on we get our first peep of Loch Eure, a pretty little lake joined to Loch Dochart by a quarter mile or so of river—the *new-born Dochart*—which here flows very still, and in some parts is very deep.

The road for some distance skirts Loch Eure, and we soon

reach the place where the Luib boats are kept, and there and then discharged our staid, aged coachie, Ian (old John M'Callum), and his pair of bays with the long toozie tails, found our boatman, Alastair, waiting for us, the boat in tip-top trim, and in a jiffey had our rods up and afloat.

After a few short drifts on Loch Eure, securing a few nice small-sized trout, we steered up the river for Loch Dochart, where we had fair sport, and the trout larger and in better condition than those we killed on the lower lake. The favourite fly was a light teal-wing, rough towsy body, with bright scarlet tips. Some days I have seen a very peculiarly dressed fly—a pretty long hook, with bare blue body, and a small dark split wing—do remarkably well on this loch. We were favoured with a splendid day, fine tartan sky above, and a fine soft westerly breeze, with a nice pirl on the water.

Shortly after mid-day we landed on the island to take lunch and examine the old castle. The island is situated about the centre of the lake, embosomed in foliage, and has a very picturesque appearance. There stands upon it the ruins of Loch Dochart Castle, said to be the earliest residence of the Campbells of Glenfalloch, and the first place of refuge to which Bruce fled after his defeat at Methven, near Perth.

Mr M. was quite charmed with the grand panoramic prospect from the old castle. Straight in front of us to the south is seen the lofty Benmore, clad in Nature's mantle of green, with its fine rounded conical summit rising almost sheer up from the lake to the height of 3,845 feet above sea level, his twin "brither" Beinan close beside him. About a mile south-west we see Inverardran House, situated in a cosy dell at the base of some lofty mountains, well sheltered and partly screened from view by surrounding woods—one of the prettiest spots in the locality. A short way west of Inverardran we see the Crianlarich Railway Station, and close to it the Crianlarich Hotel—Stewart, proprietor—where fishers



LOCH DOCHART CASTLE.

(From a photograph by J. Valentine, Dundee.)

visiting Loch Dochart, the Fillan, &c., can have comfortable accommodation. The road to Glenfalloch, Loch Lomond, &c., forks off from the main road at the hotel. Looking westward, we get a bird's-eye view of Strathfillan, and, at the head of the valley beyond, Tyndrum and Clifton, the boundary line between the counties of Perth and Argyle, and in the distance some of the Argyleshire mountains.

From several parts of the lake a remarkable echo occurs, and especially from the island, to which a singularly distinct double echo is returned from the "Deil's Prison" and the grim, precipitous, rocky shore on the north side of the lake, and often affords much amusement and merriment to parties visiting the island.

After spending an hour or so very pleasantly on the rock-bound little islet examining the old ruins and gazing with intense interest and delight on the still but bold and impressive surrounding scenery, which vividly recalled to one of our party some fondly-cherished reminiscences of bygone days, we returned to Loch Eure, where we fished for several hours; and at the close of our day on Loch Dochart we had capital baskets, and the trout, although not very large, were in fine condition.





An Exciting and Prolonged Tussle with a Big Salmon on the Dochart.

ON the following morning Mr M. and self drove up to within a short distance of Loch Dochart House, where the road skirts the river, and at once put up our rods and prepared for action.

Mr M., after looking carefully through his stock of flies, selected a favourite "Jock Scott," which had formerly done good service. Having omitted to take any of my salmon flies with me, I put on one which Dougal M'Callum kindly selected for me before we started in the morning from his large and varied stock—one of the finest dressed flies I had ever seen, and which I carefully keep as a pattern. It was a charming day, cool and pleasant, with occasional warm blinks of sunshine, the winged clouds flying swiftly overhead, and a good breeze causing a fine ripple on the water. The river was pretty big, with a tinge of brown, and in first-rate ply for fishing. While getting our rods, &c., in proper trim at the head of a big wiel, a very large salmon made a tremendous plunge about the middle of the pool. Mr M. immediately tried several casts across the spot, but no offer; several half-pound trout incline to nibble, but we are in no mood for such customers.

No sea trout or grilse ever frequent the Dochart, and a 20-pounder is considered a small fish, the average being 23

to 24 lbs. When opposite Auchessan farmhouse I killed a fine yellow trout about $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. On making up to Mr M. he told me that he had raised two salmon, but both rising short he had hooked neither of them. Proceeding down the river we soon reached the famous Rock Pool, so called from a large rock standing upright, high above the water, in the centre of the river, near the head of the pool, the water rushing rapidly down either side of it. This being a favourite salmon cast, I wanted my friend Mr M. to try his luck, knowing that he was very eager, and would willingly give a good round sum to land a Loch Tay salmon on the romantic green banks of the noble Dochart. After carefully examining his fly and tackle, he let out a good long line, and at his third throw his "Jock Scott," dancing like a gay butterfly wafted along with the breeze, lighted about a dozen yards or so below the rock, opposite an overhanging bush on the far side of the river, close to an eddy with bits of white foam "bobbin'" round and round. A sudden swirl is seen, and off goes the big reel with a sharp brrr, Mr M.'s 18-foot rod bending like a willow wand, for he believes in giving his hook a "guid grip." After a few moments' pause, I suppose deliberating what to do, the salmon rushed like a "wee" steamer down the pool for forty or fifty yards, and made a splendid leap clean out of the water, making a tremendous walloping plunge in the air, his silvery sides glittering for a moment in the slanting rays of a blazing sun, coming down with a heavy splash, and immediately dashed back up the pool till he reached his starting-point, then crossed the pool, showing his broad tail once or twice above the water, then up towards the rock, evidently bent on ascending the stream. I now saw at a glance with some concern that Mr M.'s long experience and skill at handling his rod and limbs are to be put to a severe test, for, should the salmon succeed in passing up the far side of the rock, I

fear nothing can save the line from being broken on the perpendicular rock. Mr M. tried his best to keep him on the near side, keeping a stiff strain on his line, but making a false step his line got a little slack, and in a twinkling the salmon's head gets the proper angle for the far side, and the far side he takes. I really thought we had seen the last of him, but Mr M. taking in at a glance the critical situation, at once rushed up the steep grassy bank, holding the point of his rod well up until he reached a sufficient altitude to enable him to guide his fish safely round the rugged rock. After ascending a good bit above the rock, the salmon finding the water getting shallower, wheeled about and darted down the stream like an arrow—but on the near side of the rock—to the middle of the pool, and, after a few plunges, made straight for going up the far side of the rock a second time. Mr M. again sprang up the bank, but, unfortunately, slipped and fell heavily, rolling over, with both hands grasping the butt of his rod. I at once ran to his assistance and seized the rod. Fortunately the reel handle was free and plenty of line. I ran up to the top of the bank, and was glad to find that the wild captive was still at the end of the line, and taking a rest in a small deep pool in front of a big stone. Mr M. now slowly ascended the bank, his face all aglow, and his bald shining pow covered with big beads of sweat, which were trickling down his cheeks and over his nose (he's gey an' fat); when he fell, his tallish pot hat came off, and rolled down the steep bank into the river. Lighting with the crown up, it was caught in a rapid swirl, and was soon drifting down the stream, bristling with several sets of small gaudy flies of every hue and colour, bobbing up and down in the breeze. Alastair, who was carrying the gaff, ran down the river side to try and catch the hat; which, after a great deal of trouble, he managed to do, a considerable way down the stream. I observed that the back of Mr M.'s right hand

was badly cut and bleeding freely. His hand, which was firmly grasping the rod when he fell, had come against some sharp stones, but I don't think he was aware of it till the *finish*. He wanted me to take charge of the rod for a little, as he felt somewhat shaky after his nasty tumble, but I refused point blank to have anything to do with either his rod or furious, unmanageable fish, well knowing that if through any mishap or blunder I lost the salmon I would never hear the end of it. Seeing I was so decided on the point, he took his rod, and fortunately he was allowed to cool down a little, the salmon still lying quietly in the deep little hole. By-and-bye he gave him a slight tug, as much as to say "I am ready for you now, my boy," but the sulky rascal would not stir. Mr M. soon began to get impatient, shifting up and down, and tried him from different standpoints. At last he asked me to throw a stone into the pool. So, selecting a good round pellet, and going as near as I could manage above, I pitched the stone some two yards from the tight line. In an instant the fish sprang out, and bolted down the stream like fury, making somersaults in the air on his way down, and seeming wilder than ever, and determined to make a bold effort to regain his freedom ; then turned like a swallow, showing his broad tail, and commenced to go steadily down the stream now tail foremost. Alastair, who had just returned with the "drookit" hat, seeing the salmon about to leave the deep well and making for the shallower rapids below, got quite excited, crying lustily to Mr M. to "haud" on, but the most pithy parts of his directions being uttered rapidly in Gaelic were seemingly unheeded by Mr M., who was running down the river side after his fish, but seeing some scraggy trees quite close to the edge of the water a short way before him he tried hard to keep his captive on the up side of them ; but no, he proceeded steadily down the stream. Mr M. was obliged to dash into the river among some rough

stones and the rapid current, and had one or two ugly tumbles ; but getting fairly clear of the trees and bushes, he got on to the green bank, which was comparatively even and level. By-and-bye the salmon reached a pretty deep circular pool, where he halted, and now began to show evident signs of distress, moving about slowly near the surface, and a bit of his tail above the water, and turning over on his side. Alastair, who had eagerly followed the tide of the tussle, approached with gaff in hand, and watched his first chance to cleek the salmon. Being now quite tired out, Mr M. had no difficulty in guiding him near the spot where Alastair was posted, who in a few minutes gaffed him very neatly, and ran with him ashore on the gaff and laid him down on the green sward—a perfect beauty, newly run, weighing 30 odd pounds—where he was minutely surveyed, and greatly admired by his proud captor, who at the close of the protracted tussle presented a comical-looking picture, his clothes all bedraggled and wet, with some ugly rents in his nether garments, and still bareheaded, his “physiog” covered over with frightful-looking bloody marks from having repeatedly wiped the perspiration off his face with his bleeding hand. Probably many of his most intimate friends would not have known him, and very likely might have taken him for a madman and fled in terror.

By-and-bye we proceeded down the river, and tried a few casts on the best pools, until we reached the march dyke between Benmore and Suie, but not a single offer. We immediately steered for the hotel, and although fatigued and very tired, we were in good trim for dinner, after a pretty hard day’s sport on the Dochart—

Oh ! the glorious rolling Dochart ;
I love thee more and more
Each time I tread thy grassy banks
And bag my *Bradán Mor*.



A Week's Salmon Fishing on Loch Tay.

LEAVING Glasgow by an early train on a Wednesday, accompanied by an old friend, Mr Mac——, we arrived at the Ben Lawers Hotel in course of the afternoon in good time for dinner. On the following morning (Thursday) we set off pretty early for the loch, fished all day, but had no sport, not even a single tug.

Friday.—In less than an hour after leaving the pier a big fellow made a sudden grab at my brown minnow, and bolted with it. After a short but rapid run of some 30 yards or so, he made a splendid leap 8 or 9 feet clean out of the water to see what was what, making a beautiful somersault in the air, coming down with a tremendous splash, and darted down, down, down, for about 150 feet, and there lay like a stone for nearly an hour. Whether he was at the bottom of the loch or not I am not quite sure. I tugged and pulled as hard as I could safely venture on the strength of my line, but the sulky rascal would not mudge. I overheard one of the boatmen say in Gaelic to his neighbour, "*Air—chinnte ise Mucmhora—Mhor tha aige an duine*" (Surely it's a big whale the Duinusal has got on). He then had no idea that "Rob Roy" could "speak" the Gaelic, and had a surprise in store for him and some crows to pluck with him on that score before we parted. It was no time, however, to begin to pluck crows while I had a big salmon on, with line tight, rod bent like a hook, and a something not easily described

coming up the line and along the rod to my very heart, which was "thumpin'" pit-pat at my throat, expecting every moment my sullen captive to make a sudden spring. By-and-bye he began to move, but for some time kept deep down in the water, gradually coming up zig-zag near the surface, and after a few runs and plunges gave in, and was soon secure in the boat. He weighed $29\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. My friend, Mr Mac——, returned in the evening with two fine fish—18 lbs. and 24 lbs.

Saturday.—After fishing for several hours without any sport, a sudden gale sprung up, and we immediately steered for home. While struggling against the rolling waves to reach Lawers Bay, Mr Mac——, who happened to be a good bit farther down the loch, hooked a pretty large fish, but I had little or no hope that he would be able to secure him in such a storm. The two sturdy boatmen had great difficulty to keep the boat from drifting with the wind. Mac——, however, held on bravely, and after half-an-hour or so's hard struggle with his salmon and the fierce angry waves, the fish was pretty well tired out. One of the boatmen, with great difficulty and no small danger, as the boat was pitching terribly, seized the gaff, and, with steady eye and brawny arm, eagerly watched for the first chance to cleek the salmon, but had to wait for some time. At length, while the fish was passing the stern of the boat on the crest of a rolling wave, Donncha cleeked him very neatly, but, the boat giving a sudden lurch, the gaff broke—fortunately the salmon was well hooked, but the dilemma was how to secure him. Mac—— at once ordered the boatmen to keep the boat's nose steady to the gale, and allow it gradually to drift to the most sheltered creek on the shore, which, on reaching, Mac—— leapt out amidst the breakers and got safely on *terra firma*. Leaving the boatmen to look after the safety of the boat, he scrambled slowly along the rough rugged shore for some distance, till he

reached a comparatively smooth sandy bit, where he resolved at all hazards to land his big salmon, and, to his great joy and no small surprise, managed to do so with much less trouble than he had anticipated. Having got him brought gradually nearer the shore, and being sorely wounded and quite exhausted after such a prolonged and severe struggle for bare life with his determined and now excited captor, the salmon turned over on his side, was caught by a big wave, carried swiftly along on its curling crest, and left by the quickly receding wave high and dry, bleeding and gasping, on the white pebbly shore, as fine a specimen of a salmon as I have ever seen—a perfect model—weighing 28 lbs. odds.

Monday—Very stormy; blowing a regular hurricane the whole day. No boats ventured out except on the preserved water at Kenmore, which is finely sheltered from the north-east wind by Drummond Hill, clothed from base to its very summit by a magnificent forest. While waiting patiently for a lull in the storm to enable us to venture out to some of the most sheltered bays, Mr Mac——, who is a most enthusiastic Highlander, and frequently acts as one of the judges at some of the Highland games in the far north, proposed to the boatmen to have some sports. The day being rather cold, and nothing doing, they all readily agreed. After some preliminary arrangements—selecting ground, a putting-stone, &c.—Mac—— was duly appointed sole judge of the competition. Just as everything was about to commence, an unlooked-for incident occurred, causing some merriment, and lending additional effect and novelty to our proceedings. A piper was heard approaching along the shore playing “The Campbells are coming, hoorah, hoorah,” and playing it remarkably well. At several parts along the rocky bosky shore there is a singularly distinct echo, and the varied shrill tones of the bagpipe, blended with the echo and the noise of the big waves, clear as crystal, dashing and spending their

wild fury on the white gravelly beach, had a peculiarly fine effect, and one was apt to imagine that instead of one there were a dozen pipers coming. The piper—a red-haired, “toosy-lookin’ tyke” (a tinker)—when nearing us struck up the well-known and favourite air in the district, “We’re a’ Breadalbane’s Highland men.” Whether the roving tinker was really a Breadalbane man or no I am not quite sure, but I know that the large majority at the meeting were Breadalbane men. I had noticed the gipsy encampment close on the margin of the lake several times while rowing past, and was amused seeing the youngsters, half naked, playing on the beach, apparently as happy as “wee” crickets. I was rather proud to see my head boatman, Donncha Mor, a very good specimen of a Highlander, carry off the first prize for putting the stone—some of his best throws would have surprised even a Donald Dinnie. My second man would have come in for the first prize for jumping, but unfortunately in his last great effort—a splendid jump—he lost his equilibrium, and fell heavily backwards, with a hard thud on the soft spongy lawn. To my surprise the judge, instead of measuring to the mark made by Callum’s heels, measured to the mark left by the part of his body which first touched mother earth in his fall. I pled hard that he was fairly entitled to the first prize, but the stern, unrelenting “Hielan’” judge would not alter his decision one iota. Callum, however, was duly awarded first prize for being the neatest and best-dressed “Hielanman” in “hame-made claes.” Mr Mac——’s head boatman, Seumas, got the first prize for the jumping. The next competition, a foot-race, was by far the most exciting of all—length of the race about 150 yards, up a pretty steep brae, round a big stone, and back to the winning post, at which stood the judge. After a very keen and hard-contested struggle—the ringing cheers of the onlookers adding to the excitement and fun—Mac——’s second

man, Eain, the youngest of all the competitors, won the race. Having no time to get up gold medals for the occasion, the judge distributed a number of very neat, handy, useful silver medals, including one to the piper.

On Tuesday, a beautiful calm day, Mac—— killed a fine new-run salmon in Ardtalnaig Bay, 22 lbs. I had one about 23 lbs. On Wednesday I had a fine fish about 24 lbs.; Mac blank.

Loch Tay, or, in Gaelic, *Loch Tatha*—*i.e.*, peaceful or still lake—

Loch a tatha nam bradan tha tighinn o'n fhairge du drabasta tonn
Siad gu dearg bhallach tarra-gheall, iteach, gorm, bhallach lom
Siad aleum ris gu colgarr, glacadh chuilaig air bharrubh nan tonn
Tha iad lion'ar's gach linne, s'iad a cladh air a'ghrinneats an fhonn.

is about 16 miles in length, by a mile and a half to two miles broad at its broadest parts, and throughout very, very deep. It never freezes, even during the most intense frost; sometimes after a severe and long-continued frost an immense quantity of ice is carried down from the higher reaches by the rivers Lochy and Dochart, and hurled pell-mell into the lake, but not a vestige of it is ever seen to leave it at its lower end. Its waters are remarkably pure and clear, and from end to end exceptionally free of any growing weeds or floating refuse of any sort whatever; this adds greatly to the pleasure of fishing on it, either for trout or salmon—

“ Nor fen nor sedge
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge,
Abrupt and sheer the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink;
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land;
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view.”

This magnificent Perthshire lake is unrivalled in Great Britain for the number and excellence of its salmon. The Loch Tay salmon, as a rule, are unusually large; fish as

heavy as 50 pounds have been killed on this loch with the rod ; 30 to 35 pounds is not at all an uncommon fish. It is quite the exception to meet with any salmon in Loch Tay under 18 to 20 pounds ; many of them fight fiercely, and give rare sport.

The glorious expanse of water, the grand surrounding scenery, and the exciting nature of the sport, combine to make salmon fishing on Loch Tay one of the greatest treats a keen angler can meet with. Some seasons no fewer than from 800 to 900 salmon have been taken by the rod, with an average weight of within a fraction of 22 pounds.

The lake lies about the centre of Scotland, almost equidistant from John o' Groats and the Mull o' Galloway. The west end of the lake is as near as may be the same distance from the Atlantic as the east end is from the German Ocean.

The lake is adorned with two islets. Ellain-na-Breappan is situated about six miles from the Killin end, and near the north shore. The other, which is much larger, stands near the east end of the lake. This beautiful and picturesque islet is invested with historical associations of special interest. On it stands the ruins of an ancient Priory, founded in 1122 by Alexander I., and where repose the remains of Sibilla, daughter of Henry I. of England, and consort of Alexander I. of Scotland. The Priory was committed to the care of a band of Monks, but on account—as tradition bears—of the gross misconduct of one of their number, they were all expelled from the place. The last residents of the island, according to Sir Walter Scott, were a number of nuns, who left their island retreat regularly once a year—12th June—to enjoy a holiday. They landed at Port-na-Ban—*i.e.*, the port of the women—situated on the south shore of the lake, about a mile from Kenmore. The ancient stone pier, which extends a good bit into the lake, is still to the fore. A large number of people from the surrounding districts used to

assemble and see the nuns land and march in procession to the village. A fair is to this day held at Kenmore on the same day of the month—12th June—under the name Feill-na-Ban-Naomh—*i.e.*, the fair of the holy women.

At a later period of its history this island presented quite a different and more stirring scene. When the bravery of Montrose carried everything before him in defence of the Royal cause, which was then on its wane in England, a numerous body of Campbells, against whom the rigour of Montrose was chiefly directed, took possession of this island, where they fortified themselves among the old ruins. Montrose, however, took and garrisoned it; and it continued in the hands of the Loyalists till 1654, when General Monk retook it.

It may be mentioned here, as a portion of history connected with this district, that Donald IV. of Scotland, who came to the throne in 632, was accidentally drowned in Loch Tay, having gone there, as it is said, to the salmon fishing.—*Old Chron. of Scotland.*

Loch Tay is probably the oldest in tourist chronology of all the famed Highland lakes. It appears to have been visited, admired, and sketched long before the "Lady of the Lake" was written, and while Loch Katrine was comparatively unknown.

The Queen and Prince Albert's first visit to Scotland was paid chiefly to the late Marquis of Breadalbane, at Taymouth Castle, where they arrived on the 7th September 1842, and met with a reception which for magnificence and grandeur they never again witnessed in any part of the three kingdoms on any similar occasion.

The late Marquis was held in great respect and esteem by the Queen and the late Prince Consort, and I have no doubt the favourable and pleasant impressions of their visit to Taymouth laid the foundation of their great and marked

partiality to the Highlands of Scotland and the Highland people ever afterwards. On leaving Taymouth they sailed up Loch Tay to Killin, a distance of about 17 miles, probably the longest voyage they ever enjoyed in a small rowing boat. The following short extract is from the Queen's book, "Our Life in the Highlands":—

"Saturday, September 10, 1842.

"We walked to the dairy and back—a fine bright morning; the weather the two preceding days had been very unfortunate. I drove a little way with Lady Breadalbane, the others walking, and then got out, and each of us planted two trees, a fir and an oak. We got in again, and drove with the whole party down to the lake, where we embarked. Lady Breadalbane, the Duchess of Sutherland, and Lady Elizabeth went by land, but all the others went in boats. With us were Lord Breadalbane and the Duchess of Norfolk and Duchess of Buccleuch; and two pipers sat on the bow and played very often. I have since been reading in "The Lady of the Lake," and this passage reminds me of our voyage:—

"See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters down and sweep
The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
As, running through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain."

"Our row of 16 miles up Loch Tay to Auchmore, a cottage of Lord Breadalbane's near the end of the lake, was the prettiest thing imaginable. We saw the splendid scenery to such great advantage on both sides; Ben Lawers, with some small waterfalls descending its sides, amid other high mountains wooded here and there, with Kenmore in the distance; the view looking back as the loch winds was most beautiful. The boatmen sang two Gaelic boat-songs, very wild and singular; the language so guttural and yet so soft. Captain MacDougall, who steered, and who is the head of the MacDougalls, showed us the real 'Brooch of Lorne,' which was taken by his ancestor from Robert Bruce in a battle. The situation of Auchmore is exquisite, the trees growing so beautifully down from the top of the mountains quite into the water and the mountains all round make it an enchanting spot. We landed and lunched in the cottage, which is a very nice little place. The day was very fine; the Highlanders were there again. We left Auchmore at twenty minutes past three, having arrived there at a quarter before three. The kindness and attention to us of Lord and of Lady Breadalbane (who is very delicate) were unbounded. We passed Killin, where there is a mountain stream running over large stones and forming waterfalls."

"I revisited Taymouth last autumn, on the 3rd October, from Dunkeld (incognito), with Louise, the Dowager Duchess of Athole,

and Miss MacGregor. As we could not have driven through the grounds without asking permission, and as we did not wish to be known, we decided upon not attempting to do so, and contented ourselves with getting out at a gate close to a small fort, into which we were led by an old woman from the gardener's house, near to which we stopped, and who had no idea who we were.

"We got out and looked from this height down upon the house below, the mist having cleared away sufficiently to show us everything; and then unknown, quite in private, I gazed—not without deep emotion—on the scene of our reception twenty-four years ago by dear Lord Breadalbane in a princely style, not to be equalled in grandeur and poetic effect.

"Albert and I were then only twenty-three, young and happy. How many are gone that were with us then!

"I was thankful to have seen it again. It seemed unaltered.—1866."

Loch Tay is now of easy access by rail either to Killin or, *via* Perth, to Aberfeldy, thence by coach (six miles) to Kenmore, and by steamer to Killin. Formerly some three miles at each end were preserved by the Earl of Breadalbane, sole proprietor of the lake and surrounding district, but now the whole of it is thrown open to (rod) fishers. Excellent boats and accommodation may be had at the Killin Hotel, Maisay; Bridge of Lochy, Cameron; Ben Lawers, Stewart; Ardeonaig, Campbell; Kenmore, Knight. Boatmen, as a rule, are thoroughly experienced and very intelligent, obliging, stout, active men. The salmon fishing opens on the 15th of January, and closes end of May. June and July are the two best months for trout fishing on

The Queen of Scotia's classic lakes,
The widely-famed Loch Tay;
Fountain source of Britain's monarch stream,
The clear, majestic, winding Tay.



A Day on Loch Kennard,

WITH A DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF GRANTULLY AND
STRATHTAY.

WHILE on a visit last summer to some friends who had taken a summer residence finely situated high up on a hillside about a mile from Grantully Railway Station, I arranged to have a day's fishing on Loch Kennard, which I had never fished or even seen before. Some days previously I engaged a ghillie to accompany me to the loch—a smart, active, good-looking “chiel” still in his teens—named Seumas Caimbeul, son of a respectable farmer in the place. The landlord of the Grantully Hotel was reluctant—indeed, refused—to let us have a conveyance, owing to the roughness and steepness of the road. However, a well-known farmer in the neighbourhood kindly offered me his own “carriage” for the day, which I gladly accepted. It is not at all necessary for my story to tell how many wheels the said carriage had, nor the exact number of horses yoked to it to pull self and ghillie up the long stey brae to the loch. Having got everything, including my favourite 14 feet rod, with which I have fished for over thirty years, put in proper order, one fine bright bracing morning we made an early start for the loch. We drove for some distance along the Aberfeldy road, which runs parallel to and overlooks the lordly Tay from Logierait all the way to Kenmore.

“ Along the pure translucent Tay
Delighted now we hold our way ;

Of Scotia's clear, romantic streams,
That sweetly soothe the poet's dreams,
None glides through scenes so richly gay,
Or boldly wild, as wandering Tay."

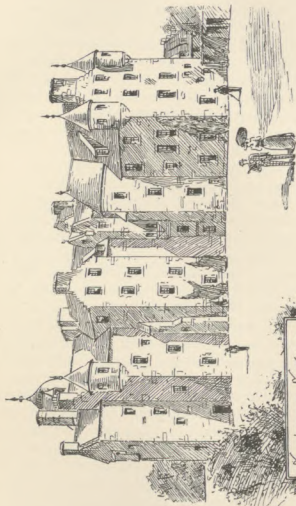
We passed a goodly number of tidy-looking, slated farm-houses and steadings lying nearly in a straight line along the sloping hillside on our left. The houses stand about equidistant from each other, and the respective farms are probably about 100 acres, and extend from the river for a mile or so up the hillside to the dark heather-clad moor above, a large stretch of which is let as a sheep walk to a different farmer. As a rule, each farmer keeps about the same number of cows—five or six, about the ugliest mongrel-looking brutes I remember ever seeing anywhere before—some with curious, seraggy, unshapely horns; some with one horn growing downwards and the other upwards; and some without any horns at all, their head adornment being a pair of big broad rounded "lugs," which they seem to keep in perpetual motion, pretty long legs, and big bones with unco little flesh on them. Most of the farmers in this district have about double the number of calves that they have of cows. It would appear that in addition to the calves of their own breeding the farmers buy others in the spring to rear, for which, I have been credibly informed, they pay the fabulous price of £3 or more when only a week or two old. I am not quite certain as to present prices, but a very few years ago I bought one hundred two-year-old Highland stots, reared in the island of Skye, splendid-looking animals, and of the purest Highland breed, at less money than the farmers here pay for calves a few days old. I observed that most of the farmers, crofters, and even cottars keep a few goats about the house, usually tethered, and evidently good milkers, but very few sheep, the largest lot I noticed on one farm being about a dozen.

A marked feature of the district is the great scarcity of

water, notwithstanding that the largest river in the three kingdoms flows through it. In ordinary dry weather one may travel along the banks of the Tay on the road from Balnaguard to Aberfeldy—a distance of some seven or eight miles—and hardly see a single rill of running water. During the summer season, as a rule, several of the farmers have to cart water for their cattle, &c., from the Tay. Although the current season (1890) was by no means an extra dry one, I observed some of the farmers with a very primitive-looking water-barrel, fixed with chains in a box-cart, driving water up a long, steep brae, with two horses yoked single file, for their cattle grazing in the fields. Most of the farmers have a deep sunk well outside their steadings, from which they draw, as a rule, excellent and comparatively soft clear water, but during extra dry weather they require it all for domestic purposes.

As an instance of the scarcity of water in this district, until quite recently not a drop of water was to be had at the Grantully Railway Station since the line was opened. Such a state of matters on the part of any Railway Company, to say the least, was most disgraceful, and they should have been compelled by the Board of Health to pay more attention to the comfort and convenience of their passengers. This long-felt want of water at the station has, however, at last been supplied by gravitation from some springs high up on the opposite side of the Tay on the Pitcastle estate, and is conveyed in iron pipes across the river along the Tullypowrie Bridge to the station. The writer happened to see the tap turned on for the first time, on the 18th August last (1890), which I have no doubt will be duly appreciated as a special boon by thirsty travellers.

Proceeding some two miles west of the railway station, Grantully Castle, built in the seventeenth century, and which belonged to the late Sir A. Douglas Stuart, Bart. of



GRANTULLY CASTLE

Murthly, &c., and now to his successor, Mr Fotheringham of Fotheringham, is passed within a gunshot of the road on the left, surrounded and partially screened from view by stately hoary trees of various sorts, but chiefly elms. From each of two contiguous sides of a large oblong building a tall, square, narrow addition projects at right angles. An extinguisher turret surmounts the two free corners of the main building, and a sort of round tower, or section of one, containing the main staircase, bulges out behind, and, projecting high above the Castle, terminates in a pointed roof. The great novelist and poet states that this building bears a close resemblance to the house of Tully-Veolan, the picturesque abode of the old Baron of Bradwardine. Large additions have recently been made to the Castle, which is to be occupied by Lady Steuart.

A short way beyond the old Castle the road for the loch forks off the main road to the left, and after ascending about half a mile the ancient church and churchyard of Grantully—the last resting-place of the district's dead—are passed close to the road on the right. This ancient place of worship stands on the summit of a high rounded knoll, under the shelter of some large hoary ash trees, and the adjoining burying-ground slopes down towards the road. The history of this old chapel appears to be lost or obscured in the mists of antiquity, but, with its unique and curiously panelled painted ceiling, it must have held many successive generations within its walls. The place is full of dead men's bones, and is now fast falling into decay. On either side of the entrance door there is a large flat-laid stone slab without an inscription of any sort. Beneath the one on the left rests the mortal remains of the late Lady William Steuart of Grantully and Murthly, and beneath the other lies the remains of her only son, the late Major Steuart, who died when comparatively young.

Some thirty odd years ago the congregation of the

Grantully Church—which was falling into decay—resolved to build a new one, but were not unanimous as to where the church was to be built. One party wished it erected close beside the old one; another party, chiefly those who resided on the north side of the Tay, wished it placed near the river, so they carried the day, and the church—a plain but commodious edifice—stands close to the roadside and the river, which it overlooks, and within a short distance of a public ferry across the Tay. This building is now to be superseded by a handsome church erected by Lady Steuart in memory of her husband, the late Sir Douglas Steuart. There are three other places of worship in the district, namely—a Free, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic, situated at Tullypowrie, a couple of miles lower down the strath.

At Tullypowrie, right opposite, and within a short distance of the railway station, the Tay is spanned by a handsome iron bridge, erected in 1868, at a cost of about £1,200. It is a very substantial three-span girder iron bridge, with stone piers, and has proved a great boon to the inhabitants of the district on both sides of the river Tay. Here there is a Post and Telegraph Office, excellent hotel, two large handsome-looking shops, where one can have almost any article from a needle to an anchor, and at very moderate rates indeed. I had occasion to call at one of these shops one day, and told one of the lads at the counter that I wanted two or three common nails about two inches long. “We don’t sell less than a quarter of a pound, sir,” quo’ he. “Oh, indeed,” I said, “and what’s the cost of that quantity?” “Just a ha’pney, sir.” “Oh, well,” I said, “I’ll just take the lot, although I require only a few to mend a rustic garden seat on which I occasionally enjoy a pipe. If I keep them for seven years probably I may find a use for the rest some other time.” There are also a considerable number of fine large villas, but chiefly on the north side of

the river. At the north end of the bridge there is a white marble slab built in the wall forming the abutment of the bridge, on which may be seen the following inscription:—

IN MEMORY OF
CHARLES BROCKBANK

(OF BIRMINGHAM),

WHO WAS DROWNED HERE,

28TH JUL. 1873.

HIS BODY LIES BURIED AT SETTLE-IN-GRAVEN.

Mr Brockbank, an active partner in the firm of Carrick & Brockbank, Manchester and Birmingham—a fine-looking young man, then in the full prime and vigour of early manhood, accompanied by a companion—Mr Gibbins—left Birmingham on a Friday to spend a fortnight's holidays in Scotland. Being fond of boating, they took their favourite canoes along with them, arriving at Killin on a Friday evening, and on the following morning launched their tiny crafts on the smooth, gentle-flowing river Lochy, just a few yards from the Killin Hotel door, and proceeded down the river and Loch Tay, each paddling his own canoe down to Kenmore, where they remained over the Sunday, and on the following morning continued their perilous voyage down the Tay, which was then in flood. By far the roughest and most rapid-running part of the Tay from where it leaves its parent lake at Kenmore till it mingles with the briny waters of the German Ocean in the Firth of Tay below Perth, occurs at Tullypowrie. For close on a mile above and a short way below the bridge the river's channel is very rough and rocky, and the flow of the river in several parts very rapid. Above the falls there is a mill lade formed for conveying water for a meal and sawmill lower down. On approaching the mill dam the daring, foolhardy voyagers to their dismay saw the foaming, roaring rapids right before them. Mr Gibbins at

once steered his little craft into the mill lade, and escaped from his impending danger. Brockbank very foolishly ventured in his frail little bark over the damhead, and in a few moments was seen tossing about like a cork, and being carried swiftly down the foaming rapids and out of sight of his companion. Some people who were crossing the bridge first saw the canoe coming tumbling down the currents, and then its late occupant, who was a powerful swimmer, making a brave struggle for dear life. At length, when pretty near the bridge, he was dashed by the force of the raging current against a jutting rock shelf, and then suddenly disappeared, and was never seen alive again. His body was found the following day in a deep pool a good bit below the bridge. The canoe was also found lower down, and, singular to relate, it was comparatively little damaged.

A few hundred yards beyond the old chapel of Grantully the road for the loch takes a bend to the left, and thence is carried nearly in a straight line for several miles up the face of the hill. After proceeding half a mile or so, and looking back, the panoramic landscape presented to our gaze is one of the most magnificent that can well be imagined, and probably not to be surpassed from any other spot in broad Scotland. Looking away to the north-east, we see the sharp-peaked Ben Vrackie, 3,800 feet, and straight opposite Farragon, 2,559 feet; and in a line with it, running eastwards, a long range of curiously-formed summits or smaller Farragons, almost identical in outline with their bigger "brither" at the west end of the range. A short way farther to the north-west, Schiehallion (3,547 feet)—*i.e.*, the hill of the Daoine-shi, or the Fairies' Hill. If all the tales one hears related by old natives of Rannoch could be fully relied on, Schiehallion in days of yore used to be a favourite resort of the fairy folks, and more especially once a year, when all the various tribes throughout Glenlyon, Rannoch,

Strathtummel, &c., congregated. Here they used to assemble in large numbers to hold their annual convocation, presided over by the beautiful and accomplished Queen Mab, gorgeously arrayed in her favourite green silk robes, with her abundant crop of beautiful golden-yellow hair waving in long ringlets over her shoulders down to her waist. It is said that there are a long series of mysterious caves, extending from one side of the mountain to the other. Farther round to the west the huge form of Ben Lawers, or Beinn Latha Ur—*i.e.*, the Mountain of the New Day—is seen towering up above his brother Bens to the height of over 4,000 feet above sea level, and crowned with a fine cairn, which is distinctly seen by the unaided eye. Nearer hand, and quite separated from the Ben Lawers range, stands Drummond Hill, clothed with a splendid forest to its very summit. Behind Drummond Hill lies the ancient hamlet of Fortingall and Garth, &c., and beyond, in a direct line with our standpoint, a long stretch of Glenlyon is seen—one of the longest and most beautiful glens in Scotland. Nearer hand, fully a mile off, we get a splendid bird's-eye view of the flourishing town of Aberfeldy, finely situated on rising ground on the south side slopes of the grand open valley of the Tay. It stands within a deep loop or circular bend of the river, which here forms nearly half a circle. The Urlar or Moness burn runs right through the centre of the town, and joins the Tay at the extreme point of the circular bend. Aberfeldy well deserves its reputation as a health resort, with its fine woodland walks, fine views of the grand Highland mountains, bracing air, and the constant murmuring sough of the majestic Tay as it sweeps along in its downward career. Owing to the light, gravelly nature of the soil throughout the district the rainfall soon disappears.

Singular enough that with such exceptionally grand surroundings Aberfeldy should be best and most widely

known for what it has not, and quite evidently never had, namely—the “birks” of Burns’ well-known lyric—

“The braes ascend like lofty wa’s,
The foaming stream deep-roaring fa’s;
O’erhung wi’ fragrant spreading shaws—
The birks of Aberfeldy.”

The Ayrshire Bard of world-wide fame must have drawn upon his imagination when he visited Aberfeldy. Beyond the town a peep of the winding Tay is seen here and there glittering in the slanting rays of the ascending sun.

“I stood upon the hills when heaven’s wide arch
Was glorious with the sun’s returning march;
The veil of cloud was lifted, and below
Glowed the rich valley and the river’s flow.

If thou would’st read a lesson that would keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears.”

Straight opposite Aberfeldy, on the north side of the Tay, is the Rock of Weem, a lofty range of rocky hills rising up in successive tiers of almost perpendicular precipices to the height of nearly 700 feet above the level of the vale below. To the west of Weem, stretching away north-west towards Taymouth and Coshieville, is seen the picturesque and fertile vale of Appin-Dull, or Appin of Dull, well known for the varied beauty of its scenery, the fertility of its soil, and also for the frequent mention made of it in ancient song and story. To the east of Weem lies the charming valley of Strathtay, which extends from Weem on the west to the point of the gusset formed by the junction of the Tummel and the Tay below Logierait on the east, a distance of about ten miles, in the form of a magnificent crescent, forming, as near as may be, half a circle, and seen at one sweeping glance. Its sloping sides extend for about a mile from the banks of the river up to the heath-clad moors above, and consist of waving corn-fields

and other crops, presenting the appearance as if a long web of large-checked tartan of varied tints of colour—green predominating—was laid along the hillside. It is beautifully wooded, and adorned with numerous gentlemen's seats, including Cluny House—Mr C. T. Lucas; Edradynate—Mr J. Stewart Robertson; Derculich—Mr D. F. Dempster; Findynatc—Mr D. Macpherson; Pitcastle—Mr J. Guthrie Lornie (Sir Stewart Macnaghten being the shooting tenant for the season); Ballechin—Mr John Stewart; and others.

Resuming our drive we proceed up through a dark heather-clad moor, without a tree or a bush of any sort to be seen in any direction. In some parts along either side of the road the hillside is thickly strewn with light grey stone boulders, which reminded me of the barren hill slopes of Harris, although not quite so bleak and wild, and, with the exception of the bleating of some sheep and lambs, and now and then the clear ringing wh-i-r-r-r-v-o-c-k-o-c-k-o-c-k-o-c-k of the moor fowl, which appeared to be very plentiful, perfect stillness reigned as we drove slowly up the face of the mountain. At length on gaining the summit of a sharp hill-ridge, suddenly, as by the wave of a magician's mysterious wand, the scene is completely changed. Instead of the dark dreary moor through which we had driven, we gaze almost sheer down upon the placid, silent lake, lying in a sort of circular basin some two or three hundred feet below. It was partially screened from our view by a belting of plantation round the edge, then arrayed in its gayest summer garb. Above and through the fringe of trees the waters of the lake were seen shining and glittering in the slanting beams of the ascending sun, presenting the appearance of some precious sparkling gem amidst the surrounding dark dreary desert. From the top of the hill ridge referred to the road winds zig-zag down a very steep declivity for a few hundred yards to the margin of the lake. Kennard Lodge is a somewhat

unique-looking building of two storeys, but covers a very considerable space. It measures about 200 feet in length, and stands at the head of a beautiful bay, and within 30 yards or so from the margin of the lake, with a charming green lawn in front. The house is completely sheltered from "a' the airts the win' can blow." Immediately behind it a precipitous rocky face rises almost sheer up to the height of several hundred feet above the level of the lake, and crowned with tall, tapering larchwood. Directly in front of the house there is a very neat, handy pier, where several boats are usually kept. The one I had for the day was by far the best and most comfortable boat for fishing on a loch I had ever seen anywhere. It measured 16 feet 6 inches in length, by 6 feet 3 inches broad, with an extra broad beam and flat bottom, and drifts broadside on, even with a stiff breeze, as steady as a rock. It had a seat some two feet from the stern, but easily shifted, and level with the gunwale, on which one could sit, if so inclined, quite comfortably while fishing. As any practical, experienced angler who may wish to secure a good basket on a loch knows very well that his success depends in no small degree on his having an experienced boatman, I must confess that I had some misgivings as to how my newly-engaged ghillie, who, I may say, I had never seen till I engaged him, would do. However, to my agreeable surprise, I soon found that Seumas was a capital rower, knew thoroughly how to manage a boat, and a more efficient boatman I could not desire to have. Trout are very plentiful in the loch, but rather small and soft, and do not show much fight.

Fishers are often credited with telling "awfu' big whoppers" about their takes, and more especially as to the tremendous big fellows they had on, nearly as long as their arm, but owing to some defects in the tackle—generally the gut is blamed—the fish gets off just as they were prepared to

land him. To be quite honest and truthful, my take for the day on Loch Kennard was "naething to brag o', just an even two dozen," and none of them at all very big. However, I was not at all concerned to have a heavy basket, as I went chiefly to see the loch and its unique and curious surroundings, and very probably may never see it again. The loch, I daresay, will be close on three miles round the edge; its shape or formation is not unlike an ace of clubs, and it lies at an altitude of about 1,400 feet above sea level. It is a beautiful sheet of water, and fringed round and round with overhanging woods of various sorts, but chiefly larch and Scotch firs. The lake is adorned with a beautiful circular little island, on which stands the thick ruined walls of some ancient building, and surrounded by some stunted hoary trees; but I am unable to give the slightest vestige of its history. There are other two smaller lochs within the bounds of the Loch Kennard shootings—viz., Loch Scoly and Loch Grantully—each holding lots of small-sized trout. Although the three lochs lie in a pretty straight line, and about equidistant from each other, the stream leaving each flows in different directions. The one from Grantully Loch enters the Tay a few hundred yards above the Tullypowrie bridge; the one from Loch Scoly joins the Tay at Balnaguard; and the one from Loch Kennard, after a run of a good many miles along the vale of Strathbraan, enters the Tay a short way above Dunkeld. A somewhat peculiar feature connected with Loch Grantully is that there are no burns or rills of any sort seen running into it, and it is said to be very deep. It slopes for a short distance from the shore, then goes suddenly plumb down to a great depth. A peat road skirts the edge along one side of the loch.

Some years ago, during an unusually hot, dry summer, and when driving home the peats, one of the farmer's horses, ca'd Charlie, feeling thirsty, stepped abruptly off the road into

the loch to have a guid lang waught o' Adam's wine stowed in his big paunch to slocken his thirst, and maybe to cool his nether limbs, wha kens. Suddenly, as if by magic, he disappeared, empty cart and all, but whether he went to the bottom or no I really couldn't say. However, horses, as a rule, are fairly good swimmers, so by-and-bye the strong-headed unfortunate Charlie popped up his head above the surface of the water, spurting and spluttering out through his nose some surplus water he had swallowed. After a terrible struggle for bare life he managed to secure a partial footing on the brink of the treacherous hole, but stuck there firm and fast, being unable to drag the cart after him. The news of the unusual catastrophe at the loch soon spread like wildfire amongst the farmers along the hillside lower down, and in a jiffy a goodly number proceeded with hasty strides in the direction of the loch. After a long and laborious effort with strong ropes, &c., they managed to drag the unfortunate, bedraggled, forfouchen Charlie, cart and all, ashore. Curiously enough, although engaged by the same farmer carting home peats for several seasons afterwards, Charlie was never known to have the least inclination to have a drink from Grantully Loch again.

About a mile and a half north-east from Grantully Loch there is a very curious and remarkable tree, Croadh-Bheadh—*i.e.*, the birch tree. It grows out of a crevice in the face of an overhanging precipice of considerable height, and is evidently of great age. Several aged natives who are over ninety have told me that they don't know the slightest difference on the Croadh-Bheadh since they were youngsters. For three or four feet from the rock it grows out horizontally, and then divides into two large branches. One continues in a line with the parent trunk; the other takes a sudden bend straight upwards to a considerable height, with outspread branches, and seems quite fresh and vigorous. About

midway from the rock to where it divides into two branches the trunk measures six feet seven inches in girth, and the two branches three feet six inches and three feet nine inches respectively. The spread of its roots is something remarkable; they creep and spread like network along the surface of the rock above, beneath a thin coating of moss and heather. I traced some branches of roots as far as from 50 to 60 feet from the brink of the rock or the trunk. We found some difficulty in measuring it. We first got a nail fixed into the trunk over the top, then put a loop on the end of a long piece of twine, and after putting the loop on the nail, dropped the string on one side to the ground, then tied a stone to the end and pitched the stone the reverse way over the horizontal trunk, and in this way got the exact measure to a "T." As it stands solitary exactly in the sky-line as seen from the vale below, it is seen standing out very prominently for a long distance up and down the strath.

If all old tales be true, it would appear that some time—a good while ago—a notorious lawbreaker, whose name I have not been able to ascertain, had been brought to trial and found guilty of some heinous misdeeds, and sentenced to be hanged on Tom-na-Croich—*i.e.*, Gallow Hill, above Logierait. While confined in the old jail of Logierait till the day fixed for his execution, he determined if possible to make his escape, and one dark night he tore up into strips the few scanty blankets, made of "guid teuch tarry 'oo'," on his hard couch, which he tied firmly together, and let himself down by the blanket rope to the ground at the back of the prison, and at once took to his heels; and in order to avoid his being pursued and captured he boldly plunged into the swollen Tay, and swam across; thence continued his flight past Balnaguard and up along the deep, eerie gulley down which flows the Balnaguard burn, and continued his midnight journey through the dark heathery moor of Grantully,

until he reached the Croabh-Bheadha, 'neath which in a recess he hid himself, where, it is said, he was supplied with food for a time by a soft, tender-hearted female Brownie.

The Comte de Paris is the present lessee of the Loch Kennard shootings, which forms part of the Grantully property, and is generally reckoned one of the best grouse moors in Perthshire. He has also the extensive adjoining shootings of Moness, on the Breadalbane estate. The Comte, who is a keen sportsman and a crack shot, appears to be much respected by all the folks, of every creed and station, in the Grantully and Aberfeldy districts. He must spend and spread a pretty large sum of money about the place every year. Besides a numerous retinue of officials and servants at Kennard Lodge—chiefly men—he employs a large number of people, including keepers, watchmen, ghillies, &c., in connection with the moors, and more especially during the shooting season. Some days he has from 70 to 80 persons, and over 20 horses and ponies, engaged some days on the moors, which he hires from the neighbouring farmers. The farmers get 6s. per day for each horse and a herd laddie or halflin to lead the horse through the hills, for the convenience and comfort of any sportsman who may choose, if so inclined, to have a ride amongst the bonnie blooming heather when feeling tired tramping after the scampering pointers. It is an open secret that some of the comparatively small neighbouring farmers, including hires for their horses, earn more money in the Comte's employment than pays the rent of their farms. The youngest boys receive 3s. 6d. per day wages, and a good substantial lunch at one o'clock—as much good cold roast beef and bread of various sorts as they can stow under their belts. When “driving” begins all the disengaged youths from Weem to Balnaguard are usually engaged for “driving” the grouse. Besides grouse there are a considerable number

of black game, and the plantation around Loch Kennard is a favourite haunt of the capercaillie.

The capercaillie or wood grouse is an indigenous British bird, and the largest of the grouse kind. The last surviving members of the original stock would seem to have become extinct in Scotland at the end of the 18th century. From 1828 various attempts at re-introduction were made, and in 1837 one was successful. In that year 29 birds were sent from Sweden by Mr Lloyd, of field sport renown, to the late Marquis of Breadalbane, Taymouth Castle. From here they spread rapidly to the neighbouring counties, but Perthshire still remains the centre where the species is most abundant, especially Taymouth, Loch Tayside, Auchmore, and around Killin. "At the first sign of awakening life, and after the long northern winter, an important time in the life history of the capercaillie begins. Before sunrise, and at sundown each day, the males station themselves on the loftiest pines, and commence their pairing notes. These calls are loud, and are uttered long from some spot or glade in the forest. At this time the plumage of the adult male is resplendent in metallic lustre, and as he struts his glowing colours are seen to the best advantage. Stationed on some pine bough, he stretches his neck, spreads his fanlike tail, and jerks his body forward. Then the deep indescribable notes ring through the forest, and are heard at a great distance. The females hasten to the spot, responding with a deep, guttural guck, guck, guck. At those sounds his voice becomes subdued, the notes run into each other, until, proud of his accomplishment, he throws back his head, closes his eyes, and ends with a prolonged g-u-c-ko. He then descends to the ground and struts among the females. And now he indulges in the most fanciful attitudes—bows, droops his wings, and appears twice his natural size. During the whole of this time he keeps turning round and round, and utters a smothered

gurgle in his throat. These amorous proceedings are not always left undisturbed, for other males, hearing the commotion, hasten to the spot to select their share of the spoil. In the breeding season combats not unfrequently occur, whilst the hens stand by as passive spectators. The vanquished bird usually makes off through the under-growth, whilst the victor marches away with his harem. In these battles the beaten birds are usually young males of the previous year, and as each of the old ones has its 'playing ground' it rarely invades that of its neighbour. The old males reserve to themselves 'rides' of the forest, and in these they may be found year after year. During the breeding season the birds remain much upon the ground, and whilst leading about his harem the male is exceedingly fierce. At this time so much is this trait developed that they have been known to rush out of the underwood and attack passers by."

The Comtesse—a smart, active-looking lady—shoulders her favourite fowling-piece, and goes out to the moors regularly—wet or dry all the same. She has her own keepers, set of dogs, ghillies, ponies, &c. ; and at the close of the day's sport her bag, I have been told, often compares favourably with any of the other sportsmen, frequently numbering twelve to fifteen guns. Saturday, the 24th of August 1890, being the Comte's birthday, there were great rejoicings at Loch Kennard, the surrounding summits blazing with bonfires and splendid fireworks round the loch, the like of which had never been witnessed in that region of the country before.

A few years ago a Committee was appointed at Aberfeldy to collect funds for the purpose of erecting a memorial cairn for the famous Black Watch, or 42nd Highland Regiment, on a field close to the town of Aberfeldy, where the regiment was originally embodied in May 1740.

Knowing that the Comte de Paris—then residing at Loch Kennard—was immensely rich, it was at first suggested that he should be called upon for a subscription, but after discussing the point it was considered needless to call upon a Frenchman for a subscription for such an object. However, a well-known clergyman in the Aberfeldy district volunteered to call upon the rich heir to the Monarchical Throne of France for a subscription. On reaching Kennard Lodge the minister was shown to the Comte's private secretary's room, who promptly asked the nature of the business of the visitor with the white choker. The minister in a few well-chosen sentences explained the purport of his visit to the Comte, who was engaged at the time. The confidential official went at once and told his master what the clergyman wanted. He soon returned and told the visitor that the Comte would like to know "vat the Black Vatch ever did vor France." The shrewd Highland clergyman—who knows and can do many other things "forbye" composing and preaching a good sound evangelical sermon—was equal to the occasion. He told the official to go back and tell his master that it was at a critical moment during the memorable battle of Waterloo, when Bonaparte staked his last card by hurling the flower of his splendidly mounted cavalry against the Black Watch and the other Highland regiments—which he always dreaded—in order to cut down, and, if possible, to annihilate them, that the undaunted, kilted Highlanders, with the feathered plumes of their Highland bonnets fluttering in the breeze, stood shoulder to shoulder, steady as a rock, presenting a square rampart of glittering bayonets, which defied Bonaparte's picked cavalry to penetrate. The cool and unerring aim of the Highlanders soon made sad havoc amongst their mounted foes, and their terribly thinned ranks retreated, completely discomfited and in utter confusion. Then Bonaparte's eagle eye saw at a glance that all was lost,

and at once began his disastrous retreat on Paris. Thus, by the indomitable pluck and bravery of the Highland regiments a great and glorious victory was gained by the British Army on the bloody battlefield of Waterloo, which put a stop for ever to Napoleon Bonaparte's unparalleled conquering and usurping career, and enabled the Comte's grandfather to ascend the throne and be crowned King of France! On conveying this information to his master, the secretary soon returned with a handsome subscription to the fund for building a big rough cairn—that will last for ages—in honour of the gallant Forty-Twa.

The famed Loch Kennard shootings were leased for fourteen or fifteen years by the late Mr John Graham of Skelmorlie Castle, Ayrshire, whom the writer knew very well for over thirty years in the way of business. During his long and active life Mr Graham was a most enthusiastic sportsman and capital shot almost to the very last. When considerably over eighty years of age he used to make first-rate bags. The last grouse he shot, when well on for ninety, was on the Kennard moor. His last day among the bonnie blooming heather which he loved so well, accompanied by his favourite keeper and friend (M^rIntosh), he killed only 2½ brace, and never handled a gun again. He died on the 4th October 1886, at the green old age of ninety-one. Mr Graham was well known and highly respected by all the people in the districts of Aberfeldy and Grantully. Some of his old servants and keepers still speak of him, even affectionately, as the genial and kindly-hearted old Mr Graham. Mr Graham was a great connoisseur and lover of paintings, and was possessed of one of the most select and valuable private collections of paintings in the West of Scotland. On one occasion, when calling at the Castle, he told the writer that a picture-dealer from London had offered him £40,000 for the pictures in one room—the drawing-room.

He had no special gallery for his pictures, but the walls of all the principal rooms in the Castle were thickly hung with paintings by well-known artists, including several fine works by Turner, and at least one—portrait of two sisters—by Gainsborough, which had cost him 6,750 guineas, and was sold in London after Mr Graham's death at £9,500 odds; but I believe he was offered £12,000 for it some time before he died. He had a very large-sized painting—"Highland Cattle," by Rosa Bonheur—which cost him a good many years ago 3,000 guineas, and was sold in London after his death at £6,500. It was by far the finest picture of Highland cattle I have ever seen. Originally there was nothing on the canvas except the Highland cattle, but a good many years ago there was a large loan exhibition of paintings held in Paris, and the Managing Committee wrote to Mr Graham for the loan of his large painting by Rosa Bonheur. Mr Graham at once consented to send his famous picture, but of course at their risk and expense. Before it was returned the artist (Rosa Bonheur) added a number of blackfaced ewes, a few lambs, and some rams, exquisitely painted, on a bare space at the bottom of the picture, which greatly enhanced the appearance and value of the work in Mr Graham's estimation, and he was very proud of the unexpected addition made to his favourite picture, by far the largest in his valuable collection.

The tenant of the Loch Kennard shootings before Mr Graham leased it was the Maharajah Duleep Singh, or Black Prince, as he was commonly styled, who resided for a good many years in this district. He is the son of the famous Runjeet Singh, the "Lion of Lahore," and his no less renowned Maharanee, the persistent foe of the British. The Maharajah is said to have lived an exemplary life and professed the Christian religion during his sojourn in this part of the country, although his subsequent career has shown that he has still a strain of the old blood in his veins.



An Exciting Adventure on the Banks of the Dochart—A Bull Fight.

LAST summer I spent some holidays in Breadalbane along with an old friend, Mr B., an enthusiastic Ayrshire man, who I daresay in his younger days honestly believed that there was no other spot throughout the wide, wide world that could for a moment be compared to Ayrshire, and more especially that could boast of such famous bards, “honest men and bonnie lassies,” romantic streams and placid lakes, “banks and braes,” “dens and dells,” and celebrated sleek, fat, fleckit cattle, including some prodigious big, strong, heavy bulls, &c., &c. When in good tune Mr B. likes to croon—

“ We’ll sing auld Coila’s plains and fells,
Her moors red-brown wi’ heather-bells,
Her banks and braes, her dens an’ dells,
Where glorious Wallace
Aft bure the gree, as story tells,
Frae Southern billies.”—*Burns.*

However, a little travel now and then beyond the boundaries of one’s own county helps wonderfully to brush aside local prejudice, and I have no doubt—although my esteemed friend may be somewhat reluctant to confess it—that he is ere now pretty well satisfied that there are some splendid-looking cattle to be seen besides the fleckit, spindle-shankit Ayrshire breed ; and that the Dochart, the Lochy, the Lyon,

the Tummel, and the Tay in Perthshire, will compare very favourably with the Irvine, the Ayr, the Doon, the Girvan, and the Stinchar, in Ayrshire. At anyrate, I know that he will frankly confess that there are some very tall, handsome, nice-looking young ladies in Perthshire; and that for big, heavy, finely-shaped salmon and grand surroundings, Loch Tay beats Loch Doon "ow'er the back."

Mr B. having often heard of the splendid big salmon caught by his Ochiltree friend, was bent on having a day on the Dochart, so we drove up one fine day to nearly opposite Loch Dochart House, and fished down the river to the march between the Benmore and Suie farms. The large grazing farm of Benmore extends for about five miles along the Dochart, which forms its march on the north; and the summit level of the lofty mountain range between Glendochart and the Braes of Balquhiddel on the south has been tenanted for many years by a family of several brothers and by their worthy father, Feracher M'Kerrachar, for long before them. In ascending the big Ben, by far the best starting-point is from the Benmore farmhouse, which stands on the extreme western verge of the farm—the mountain stream forming the march between it and the adjoining farm of Portnellan running past the end of the house, and a little over a mile from the railway station. The ascent is comparatively easy, a nice green grassy "carpet" all the way, and the smallest climber may be seen the whole distance from the start to the very summit. The two farms opposite Benmore, north side of the river, were some fifty odd years ago occupied by two well-known farmers in the district—Inverhagerney, by Mr J. Sinclair, who had in his possession some interesting relics of bygone days, including a celebrated rifle of great length, and widely famed for its extraordinary long range. It belonged at one period to one of the M'Nabs of Innishewan, and with which it is said he on one occasion

shot down no fewer than nine redcoats out of a band sent to harry and burn Rob Roy's house at the head of Glendochart. M'Nab having got the hint of their approach, and knowing their object, set off with his favourite rifle and a good store of bullets, proceeded to a favourable spot overlooking Rob Roy's Castle, took up his position among a *debris* of huge stones—a "scharnich"—and there awaited the approach of the redcoats. M'Nab from his ambush took deadly aim, and in a twinkling one of the soldiers lay dead on the hillside. A number of the regiment resolved to be speedily avenged for their fallen comrade, and at once marched rapidly in the direction of the report, but had not proceeded far up the hill when four of their number, one by one, bit the dust. The rest of the valiant band wheeled about and fled in dismay, leaving their mysterious, invisible, deadly foe master of the field, who sent a few swift and deadly messengers in hot pursuit. This rifle was afterwards in the possession of the famous Celtic bard, Duncan Ban M'Intyre, who sang its praises in one of his best songs—"Oran do'n Mhusg"—

"Bheir mi fhéin mo bhriathar gu bheil i ro mhath
Is nach d'aithnich mi riamh oirre cron am falach,
Ach gu foinneamh, finealta, dìreach, fallain,
Is i gu'n ghaoid, gu'n ghiomh, gu'n char fiar, gu'n chamadh."

Shortly after crossing the march between Benmore and Suie farms, and while fishing pretty close together on a large "wiel" at a part of the river pretty much screened by high banks, we heard a peculiar booming noise. I at first thought it was a train approaching from the south for Oban, but owing to the high bank we could not see it. By-and-bye, to our dismay, we saw a big Ayrshire bull coming round the spur of a hillock on the opposite side, and making straight for the river—an ugly-looking customer. I immediately cried to Mr B., and seeing no trees or any other place whatever of shelter or safety at hand, we at once took to our

heels for the hills, and, although neither of us is now quite so supple as we were thirty years ago, we went over the first few hundred yards, which was comparatively level ground, at a fair pace—the terrific roars of our formidable pursuer, which were seemingly proceeding from opposite directions, and resounding with a remarkable echo athwart the whole valley, causing us to put our very best “fit” foremost; but coming to a pretty steep “brae” we soon began to fag and got short o’ wind. On gaining the crest of the brae we ventured for the first time to look round to see what was what, and to our great relief and joy we saw at a glance that, although the big fleckit Ayrshire fellow was not far behind us, he had a more important job on hand than chasing “*two forfouchen*” tired-out fishers. From our now elevated position on the brow of a high knoll we had a good view of our surroundings. On the opposite side of the river we saw a pretty large drove of cattle, most of them being the fleckit or brown Ayrshire sort, and on our side of the water and about a quarter of a mile lower down we saw another herd—all Highland cattle of varied size and age—including a noble-looking specimen of a four-year-old Highland bull—dun-coloured, with flowing mane and a splendid head of horns, finely formed, tapering to a very sharp point—which I afterwards learned had gained several medals and prizes at some of the cattle shows. He was in advance of the rest of the herd, which was following their noble-looking leader and chief at a distance—a “*when*” sturdy stot-stirks with pricked ears and heads aloft leading the van. Not having seen a bull fight for many a long year, I watched with intense interest the preliminaries of the approaching combat. We had a first-rate view of the whole proceedings from the crest of a steep knowe, and as there was a large stone near us on which we could easily climb in case of danger we felt quite secure. Not a single human creature was to be seen in

any direction. The big Ayrshire giant took up his position on a grassy lawn at the foot of the brae, where he stood as still as a statue, with his neck slightly bent to one side, his fierce glaring eyes rolling wildly in their sockets; now and then making a peculiar hissing noise through his nostrils resembling the sudden escape from a steam pipe. The Perthshire Highlander was advancing steadily, bellowing and roaring at a terrific rate, lashing himself with his long bushy tail, pausing now and then and tearing up the sward with his forefeet, foaming at the mouth, and presenting a very wild picture of infuriated rage that we won't soon forget. When within a few paces of his opponent he paused for a minute, looking daggers at his foe.

They roared like thunder, the sward they tore and rent,
 Their rolling eyes like lions' fiercely glaring;
 With tails erect, and horned heads down bent,
 Prepared to test their strength, their pluck, and daring.

They then suddenly advanced and closed with a hard thud and rattle of horns. After a terrible struggle 'midst a cloud of stour and small divots sent spinning into the air from their powerful, hardy hoofs, the fleckit giant was forced on his knees, his head crushed against the sward and one of his horns forced into the ground, and in a few minutes would have been choked, but with a mighty effort he regained his feet and wheeled about as if going to run; but after drawing his breath he immediately turned round and boldly faced his foe. Both stood for a minute or two staring wildly at one another, panting and blowing, their huge sides going like a pair of bellows. We now observed that Ayrshire was badly wounded in the side of his neck—about midway between head and shoulder—an ugly slanting gash about a foot in length, inflicted by one of the Highlander's sharp-pointed horns. There was a stream of blood running from the wound and trickling down on the ground. The wounded

fleckit giant suddenly sprang forward and closed with his foe in round number two, and for a few minutes Ayrshire had decidedly the best of it, driving the Highlander rapidly down a slight incline right before him; they were now some thirty or forty yards from the spot where the combat commenced, and on more uneven ground. By-and-bye the tide was again in favour of Perthshire — who pushed his antagonist at a terrible rate before him. Suddenly the Ayrshire giant lost his feet and rolled heavily over into a deep boggy “sheugh”—the Highlander, with an irresistible impetus, going with a dull sounding crash right over on the top of him. On regaining their feet, after a somewhat comical struggle in the ditch, the Ayrshire giant—all covered with mud and “glaur”—showed the white feather, turned tail and retreated, “hirplin’” slowly in the direction of the rolling Dochart—the proud, unscathed Breadalbane conqueror disdaining to pursue his now retreating, sorely wounded, crippled, vanquished foe. Mr B., who had eagerly watched with keen and exciting interest the furious battle, was several times on the point of running down the brae to help his “countryman,” but he *didna* go.





A Day on Loch Erricht,

WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.

LOCH Erricht forms the extreme north-west angle of the parish of Fortingall and the county of Perth. A portion of the loch is in Inverness-shire, and extends for about sixteen miles in length by a mile more or less broad, stretching away in a north-easterly direction towards Dalwhinnie. It lies at an elevation of about 1,200 feet above the sea, and is one of the highest of the great and magnificent chain of Perthshire lakes which go to supply the majestic Tay. Loch Erricht is one of the wildest, most gloomy, and weird lochs in broad Scotland, presenting as it does along its lonely shores scenes of savage grandeur. The surrounding lofty mountains amidst which this lake lies in some parts rise almost sheer up from the water's edge to great heights, their sides deeply scarred by numerous scooped out ragged gullies, formed by the winter's storms, and their summits here and there shooting up into lofty, bare, craggy pinnacles. On the east side there is a greater intermixture of rocks and stunted woods along the shore. On the west side, about six miles down from the head of the loch, Ben Alder is seen towering up in bare precipitous cliffs to the height of 3,766 feet above the sea. A well-known cave—or cage, as it is called by some—exists in the face of this wild, rugged

mountain, in which Prince Charlie is said to have taken refuge for some time during his wanderings in the Western Highlands after his disastrous defeat at Culloden. Ben Alder, with some adjoining mountains, are occupied as a deer forest. At the base of the big Ben, situated in a lonely secluded neuk, we observed a shooting lodge, the only solitary habitation we could descry in any direction all the time we were on the loch. In several places the loch is said to be very deep.

There is an old traditional story regarding the original formation of this weird Highland loch—

“Lone 'midst Nature's mountain wilds”—

which for its strangeness deserves to be recorded. The story goes that the whole area now covered by its waters was at one period a thickly-populated district, and formed a parish called Feadail; that in course of one night, after the inhabitants had all retired to rest, the floodgates of some great subterranean body of water were thrown open by a terrible convulsion of Nature, and that the whole parish was suddenly submerged, and all the population, with their houses, cattle, and fields, &c., were overwhelmed and perished. The tradition also bears that for long afterwards the parish church, manse, and several other prominent objects, were to be seen on a clear summer day far down at the bottom of the loch.

The first time I ever fished on Loch Erricht, along with a friend—a good many years ago, and long before either of us had ever heard of this remarkable traditional story regarding the original formation of the lake—I have still a vivid recollection of both of us being much struck with some uncommon and peculiar features of this Highland loch. In the first place, it lies almost due north and south, whereas all the principal lakes of Perthshire, from Lochs Chon and Ard,

the farthest south, to Loch Rannoch on the north, all lie due east and west, or nearly so, with the exception of one, namely, Loch Lubnaig; and every one of these, without a single exception, have either one or two considerable head-streams or feeders falling into them at their head. The absence of this is a marked and peculiar feature in regard to Loch Erricht, as no stream whatever flows into it at its head or upper end, except perhaps a few straggling small rills issuing during rainy weather from a mossy bog or swamp round the head of the loch. Its waters extend so close to the summit level of the comparatively small ridge which separates it from the shed of the Truim, one of the head streams of the Spey, that there is actually little or no area for water to drain or collect. It would not be at all a difficult undertaking to divert the overflow waters of Loch Erricht into the Spey instead of Loch Rannoch. I have never rowed all the way down to the foot of the loch, but for a good many miles down we did not observe a single stream of any consequence entering the loch. I believe the principal, or almost only feeder, falls into it pretty far down.

Loch Erricht is generally reckoned a good loch for *salmo-ferox*, but somehow I never managed to catch any of them. We had fair baskets of rather small-sized trout. It may be most conveniently fished by staying at the Dalwhinnie Hotel, the landlord of which has several boats on the loch, with experienced boatmen when required. The head of the loch is within a mile of the hotel, a plain but substantial house, built with roughly dressed light grey granite, and stands, like the wells in the desert, partly surrounded by a larch plantation, about the only green spot on which the eye can rest for many miles around in this bleak dreary desert.

Her Majesty the Queen and her Royal Consort, with their daughter Princess Alice, Prince Louis of Hesse, Lady Churchill, and a few attendants—travelling *incog*.—spent a

night at the Dalwhinnie Hotel on their way across the mountain wilds of Badenoch and Athole to pay a visit to the late Duke of Athole at Blair Castle. The Royal party left Balmoral early on Tuesday morning (8th October 1861), and drove to Castleton of Braemar, where they changed horses and continued their journey up past the Linn of Dee as far as the Geldie Water, eighteen miles from Balmoral. Here they found a number of Highland ponies in readiness for them, and thence proceeded up along the banks of the Geldie, Glen Fishie, &c., Charlie Stewart acting as chief guide.

“We had gone on very well for about an hour when the mist thickened all around, and down came heavy, or at least beating rain with wind. . . . Dearest Albert, who walked from the time the ground became boggy, got very wet, but was none the worse of it. At length, at two o'clock, just as we were entering the beautiful Glen Fishie, it cleared, and became quite fine and mild. Brown waded through the Etchart leading my pony, and two of the others who were riding together on another pony dropped the whole bundle of cloaks into the river.

“The falls of the Stron-na Barin, with that narrow steep glen which you ride up crossing at the bottom, were in great beauty. We stopped before we entered the wood, and lunched on the bank overhanging the river, where General Grey joined us, and gave us an account of his arrangements. We lunched rather hurriedly, remounted our ponies, and rode a short way, till we came near to a very steep place not very pleasant to ride. . . . We had to get off for a few hundred yards, the path being so narrow as to make it utterly unsafe to ride. . . . Alice's pony already began to slip. . . . Grant, on a pony, led me through the Fishie (all the fords are deep) at the foot of the farmhouse, where we met Lord and Lady Alexander Russell last year, and where we found two carriages. We dismounted and entered them, and were off at five o'clock. We were to have started at four. . . . At length, and not till a quarter to nine, we reached the inn of Dalwhinnie—29 miles from where we had left our ponies—which stands by itself away from any village. Here again there were a few people assembled, and I thought they knew us, but it seems they did not, and it was only when we arrived that one of the maids recognised me. She had seen me at Aberdeen and Edinburgh. We went upstairs; the inn was much larger than the one at Fettercairn, but not nearly so nice and cheerful; there was a drawing-room and a dining-room, and we had a very good-sized bedroom. Albert had a dressing-room of equal size. Mary Andrews and Lady Churchill's maid had a room together. Every one was in the house, but, unfortunately, there was hardly anything to eat; there was only tea

and two miserably-starved Highland chickens, without any potatoes, no pudding, no *fun*, and no little maid (the two there not wishing to come in, nor our two maids, who were wet, and drying our and their own things) to wait on us. It was not a nice supper, and the evening was wet. As it was late, we soon retired to rest. Mary and Maxted (Lady Churchill's maid) had been dining below with Grant, Brown, and Steuart . . . in the 'commercial' room at the foot of the stair. They had only the remnants of our two starved chickens."—*Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands.*

Some two years afterwards (15th September 1863) the Queen paid Blair Castle another memorable visit. The Duke was then suffering under a most distressing incurable ailment. He knew that his days in the land of the living were numbered, and that he had only a comparatively few short weeks to live. On her way from England to her charming Highland home on the romantic banks of the winding Dee, the Queen, then a heart-stricken, mourning widow, left her train at Perth, and proceeded, with a few attendants, by a special train to Blair Castle, to condole with His Grace the Duke and his Duchess in their great and sore affliction. After spending about an hour at the Castle, Her Majesty returned to Perth. The Duke was able to accompany her to the railway station, where for the last time he kissed the royal hand, and the Queen took a mournful last farewell of her esteemed and valued friend. She never saw him again. The parting was witnessed by all at the station in deep sadness, and many were in tears.

A short way above Dalwhinnie, and nearly opposite the lower end of Loch Garry, a large upright stone may be seen on the left-hand side of the road with the figures 1729 carved on it in prominent figures. It was here where the soldiers under Lieutenant-General George Wade, who was then commander-in-chief of the king's forces in Scotland, and who formed the lines of road from the opposite points of Perth and Inverness, met one another, and thus marked the

spot where and when they met after over ten years of arduous toil they had finished their great and important undertaking.

Some few miles farther on, or about midway between Dalwhinnie and Dalnacardoch, the Pass of Drumouchter is reached, which is strictly guarded day and night by two gigantic sentinels, the Badenoch Boar on the one side and the Athole Sow on the other, as the two opposite mountains are called by the natives. This Pass forms the boundary line in that direction between the wide districts of Badenoch and Athole and the counties of Perth and Inverness, and is called *Druim-albin*, or Great Grampian, backbone of Scotland. It also forms the summit level of the road and railway between Inverness and Perth, at an altitude of very close on 1,500 feet above sea level, with a descending slope of about 94 miles to Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, and 51 miles to the "Fair City" of Perth. For nine or ten miles on the Athole side of the mountain ridge the gradient is one in seventy.

The bleak, moorish wilds around Drumouchter consist chiefly of stunted grass, heath, and heather, dark mossy swamps, impetuous torrents, grey ragged rocks, frowning precipitous heights, and with numerous cairns here and there, presenting the appearance of so many weird grey-clad spectres—memorials of those who had perished in the winter wild snowstorms, or fallen fighting bravely for their cherished Highland homes, kith, and kindred. The marks of an encampment of a party of Cromwell's army may still be seen near Dalnaspidal, just within the Perthshire boundary, where they received an important check by the Athole men and some of the Camerons of Lochiel. Here, too, General Cope drew up his army in battle array in expectation of being attacked by the Highlanders in 1745, whilst they awaited him in a strong position on the northern side of Corryavrick,

and by his ill-advised move in quitting his well-chosen position and marching onwards left the road open to the insurgents. And here, too, Lord George Murray, early in 1746, planned and executed a series of daring and brilliant attacks on various important posts held by the Royalists. Of this exploit, General Stewart of Garth, in his "Sketches," says—"I know not if, in the whole of the Peninsular campaigns, there was exhibited a more perfect execution of a complicated piece of military service."





A Day on Loch Rannoch,

WITH DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.

STARTING from the Buchanan Street Railway Station, Glasgow, by the 7.15 A.M. train, accompanied by an old and esteemed fisher friend, and after a ride of one hundred and some odd miles, we reached the Struan Station on the Highland Railway, and there found a tidy waggonette and pair in waiting for us. After a drive of other thirteen miles through a bleak, dreary, heather-clad moor we arrived at the Dunalister Hotel, Kinloch Rannoch (Mr Gow, proprietor), our journey's end for the day. The charming Highland village of Kinloch Rannoch is finely situated upon a level plain at the east or lower end of Loch Rannoch, with a narrow, comparatively flat vale stretching away eastwards, through which the river Duthag, or Rannoch Water, winds with a gentle flow under the shadow of the lofty Schiehallion. After a course of seven or eight miles it falls into Loch Tummel, and again flowing out of that loch it assumes the name of Tummel, and after a farther run of fifteen miles it forms a junction with the Tay a short way below Logierait. A few hundred yards after leaving its parent lake the river is spanned by a substantial bridge of four arches, just opposite the Dunalister Hotel, which, with the Episcopal and Free Churches, and a

number of tidy cottages, stands on the north side ; while a portion of the village, including the Bunnanoch Hotel (Mrs MacDonal), Post Office, Established Church and manse, &c., is situated on the south side of the bridge.

In an open space in front of the Dunalister Hotel stands a handsome monument of finely-polished Peterhead granite. This monument was erected by a number of Highlanders in 1875 as a mark of respect to the memory of Dugald Buchanan, author of a small volume of sacred hymns or poems which are still often read with pleasure and benefit by many Christians who understand and can read the Gaelic language. Buchanan's poems have now been for about 125 years—or since the year 1767, the date of the first edition—before the reading public, and during that period I believe that more than twenty editions of them have been issued from the press. This indicates a large circulation, considering the necessarily limited number of Gaelic readers ; and to the credit of Highlanders their esteem for their favourite hymn-writer still continues. It is said that he composed several songs on various subjects that were never published. Buchanan resided for at least fifteen years as teacher and evangelist at Kinloch Rannoch, and was much respected and esteemed by all the people in that district for his great diligence and success in teaching the young, and his consistent, exemplary, and uniformly pious life. I believe that the Rannoch people offered to defray the cost of his college training in order that he might become their parish minister. On one side of the monument is inscribed the following stanza in Gaelic, being the last of his poem on the skull :—

Fhir chluinneas mo dhan.

Dean aithreachas trà

'M feadh mhaireas do shlaints bo bheachd

Mu'n tig ort am bàs

Nach leig thu gu bràth

Air geata nan gràs a-steach.

On the obverse side of the monument is—

1875.

IN MEMORY OF
DUGALD BUCHANAN,
THE RANNOCH SCHOOLMASTER,
EVANGELIST, AND SACRED POET,
DIED 2ND JUNE 1768.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.”—1 Thess. iv. 14.

The ruined walls of the humble little cottage where Buchanan was born in the year 1716 may still be seen on the west bank or Ardoch side of the river Balvaig, directly opposite the railway station of the ancient Highland village of Strathyre. When his monument at Kinloch Rannoch was about to be erected, there was a somewhat keen discussion and competition as to whether it was to be placed in his native hamlet, close to the spot where he was born—a beautiful and suitable site for such an erection—or at Kinloch Rannoch, where he died. But the Rannoch party, being the more numerous on the list of subscribers to the fund, carried the day. This very handsome and finely-proportioned obelisk will for long be an additional object of interest and ornament to the finely situated Highland village of Kinloch Rannoch.

Some years ago a sum of money was raised by public subscription for the purpose of purchasing and preserving the cottage in which the Highland bard lived and died at Kinloch Rannoch. However, on the 10th August 1881, by the high-handed act of the proprietor—Major-General Alistair MacDonald of Dunalistair—the old house, to the great regret of many Highlanders, was completely demolished.

It is gratifying to record that Buchanan's numerous admirers in the Strathyre and Balquhidder districts had resolved to follow the example of those in Rannoch, and

have erected a monument to the poet in his native hamlet of Strathyre. This chaste little monument is in the form of a memorial water fountain, which stands in front of the railway station. The site was generously granted as a free gift by the Directors of the Callander and Oban Railway Company. The opening ceremony took place on the 14th July 1883, in presence of a large assemblage of the Celtic poet's admirers from many parts of Scotland. At the close of the ceremony the fountain was handed over to the care and keeping of the Railway Company's officials.

The following is a copy of the inscription on one side of the monument at Strathyre :—

IN MEMORY
OF
DUGALD BUCHANAN,
BORN AT ARDOCH, STRATHYRE,
IN 1716.
TEACHER AND EVANGELIST
FOR 16 YEARS
AT KINLOCH RANNOCH,
WHERE HE DIED.
INTERRED AT LITTLE LENY,
NEAR CALLANDER.
HE WAS A TRUE POET.

“ An eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures.”

The view from the village of Kinloch Rannoch to the west is very extensive, and the whole expanse of the bright lake is seen at a glance in the near view. The hills on either side rise abruptly at first, and afterwards with a more gentle slope, and are fringed with varied-tinted woods, in some parts a good way up, behind which the mountain sides are seen retiring. The deep, sombre shade of the extensive pine forest on the southern shore is finely contrasted with the lively and variegated tints of the birch wood on the opposite

side of the lake. A number of shooting lodges are seen along the north shore, finely situated, and commanding a splendid view of the lake from end to end, and lending additional interest and life to the beauty of the landscape. On the south side of the lake stands Dall House, a large mansion, the seat of Mr T. V. Wentworth, proprietor of the Dall Estate. To the west of Dall House the famed black wood of Rannoch is seen, covering a large area of the mountain side; Slios Garbh, a hoary remnant of the great Caledonian forest, which at one period extended from Glencoe to Braemar, and from Glenlyon to the Spey, covering a space of over 2,000 miles. Beyond the lake, in the same direction, the extensive Moor of Rannoch is seen stretching away westward. "Bounded by mountains so distant as scarcely to form an appreciable boundary; open, silent, solitary—not even the mountain bee was on the wing to give life to the scene—nay, the very midges seemed to scorn the Moor of Rannoch; no water to indicate that something yet lived or moved. The heart-sinking stillness of this solitude was the more dreary that it was so spacious." Looking eastward, the village of Kinloch forms the foreground, and immediately behind on the left a steep ascending mountain, forming nearly half a circle, terminating in the bold, precipitous, bare summit of Craigbad. A considerable mountain stream, Auilt Mhor, comes tumbling down the face of this hill, forming a long series of fine cascades, with a never-ending noisy roar. An assemblage of overlapping hill ranges are seen due east, including Dunalistair—*i.e.*, Mount Alexander, &c.; and to the right Schiehallion is seen towering up to the height of 3,547 feet above the sea. Probably one of the best views of Schiehallion—which only assumes its singularly sharp conical appearance when viewed from certain standpoints—is from the village of Kinloch, or, perhaps, a couple of miles up the north side of the loch. Viewed from this position, it presents

the form of a huge regular pyramid rising up from either side in a straight line and terminating in a conical peak.

Schiehallion is said to have acquired its name from having in days of long ago been the special haunt of a gigantic fairy queen called Caillin, a noted and renowned personage in Highland mythology ; and that during subsequent ages this mountain was a favourite resort of the Daoine-shi or Elfu people. The celebrated cavern in this mountain is said to have two entrances—one from either side of the hill, and some miles apart. Many strange and eerie tales are often heard related in connection with this weird and wonderful subterraneous cave of the fairies, such as that the inside consists of numerous separate, gorgeous, glittering chambers, and that as soon as a person advances a short way he comes to an open door, which the moment he enters suddenly closes, as it opens of its own accord, and prevents his returning. It is said that in days of yore the fairies used to assemble in great numbers in this spacious and mysterious cavern, where they held some special meetings or convocations, presided over by the famed queen of the fairies called Queen Mab, gorgeously arrayed in her favourite green silk robe, with her beautiful golden yellow hair waving in long flowing ringlets over her shoulders down to her waist.

The upper end of the loch being considered the best part for fishing, the morning after we arrived at Rannoch we drove up the south side for six or seven miles, where some of the hotel boats are usually kept during the fishing season. After getting everything in proper trim we were soon afloat, drifting down with a gentle breeze along some of the best fishing creeks and bays, and in the course of the day managed to secure very fair baskets of nice-sized trout in fine condition. The loch seemed well stocked with finely-marked yellow trout. They are very lively, and give capital sport. I daresay there are few if any other lochs in Perthshire from

which such a number of large-sized trout are taken. In the lobby of the Dunalistair Hotel I observed six stuffed trout, which weighed when caught $3\frac{1}{2}$, 7, $8\frac{1}{2}$, 10, $10\frac{1}{2}$, and $14\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. respectively; and in the lobby of the Bunrannoch I saw a magnificent trout—a perfect model—which weighed when captured 14 lbs., killed by a Mr Walker, quite a youth, from near Liverpool. Loch Rannoch has for long been famed for *salmo-ferox* of large size, but they never rise to the fly; and the usual mode of fishing for them is by trolling with long salmon lines and phantom minnows, or a natural minnow, which does best. No salmon, grilse, or sea-trout ever get up past the Tummel Falls.

The loch lies about due east and west, at an elevation of 668 feet above the sea, and is a few hundred yards less than ten miles in length, with a remarkably uniform breadth of a mile, more or less, from Finnart Point to the very foot of the loch—a distance of nearly nine miles—discharging its overflow into the river, directly in a line with the middle of the loch. The depth of the loch varies considerably. Opposite Talla-Bheith it was 43 fathoms, September 7th, 1877; opposite Dall House, 56 fathoms, September 7th, 1877; and opposite Carie, 75 fathoms, July 1875. These different soundings give a pretty fair idea of the average depth of the loch.

There are two islands situated near the head of the lake. Eilean-nam-Faileag, the farthest east, is said to be artificial, and resting upon large beams of pine wood firmly joined to each other. This island in days of yore was often used as a place of confinement or prison for such as offended the chief. To this retreat there is said to be a road or stone pier from the north shore, but which is always under water, with a considerable depth of water on either side. The chief proprietors of the loch are Mr T. V. Wentworth of Dall; Sir Robert Menzies, Bart.; the Robertson of Struan; and Mr

Hugh I. Tennant of Dunalistair and Wellpark, Glasgow, who acquired the beautiful and picturesque estate of Dunalistair in 1884, at the price of £151,000. (This estate was recently purchased by Mr J. C. Buntcn, Glasgow.) There are two considerable head streams, which may justly be termed second-class rivers, falling into the loch, one at the extreme west end, and the other a couple of miles down on the north side. The Gamhair, which takes its rise on the south side of Glen Etive, and in its course, by the union of numerous mountain rills, becomes a stream of considerable volume, after a run of eleven or twelve miles, expands into Loch Laoidean—a sheet of water five miles in length. Leaving Loch Laoidean, and after a course of other eight miles, it falls into Loch Rannoch by two branches at the extreme west end of the loch.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century a severe and bloody battle was fought on the banks of the Gamhair between the Stewarts of Appin and a tribe then inhabiting the western district of Rannoch called Clan Iain-Bhuidhe—*i.e.*, the children or descendants of John of the yellow hair. The chief of Appin, with his clansmen, on reaching the confines of Rannoch, saw at a distance a habitation, with flocks of sheep and cattle, which belonged to one of the MacGregors of Rora in Glenlyon—said to have been the second son of the laird of Rora, who for some offence had been banished from Glenlyon by the rest of the clan. The Chief of Appin sent him a courteous message requesting some refreshment for his men. MacGregor at once, in the true spirit of ancient Highland hospitality, sent one of his retainers with a good, fat four-year-old stot, which so pleased Stewart that he requested an interview with MacGregor, and proposed that himself and all his men should join them on the following day, and should they manage to vanquish and expel the Clan Iain-Bhuidhe from Rannoch he should have

all their lands and gear to himself. This tempting proposal was readily accepted, and next day MacGregor with all his retainers marched along with the Stewarts. In the fierce and deadly hand-to-hand conflict that ensued the greater portion of the Clan Iain-Bhuidhe were slain. The remainder were hemmed in on all sides by the now elated victors, and were compelled to plunge into the river, and the few that escaped fled to other districts, most of them to the wilds of Athole, &c. A mountain stream that flows through the farm of Dunan, still called by the old people of the district Caochanna-Fola, *i.e.*, the Rill of the Blood, is still pointed out to this day as the spot where this fierce and bloody battle was fought.

The Chief of Appin had now his revenge for the cruel death of two of the Clan Stewart of Appin, who, when returning home from Perth by way of Rannoch, were way-laid, robbed, and murdered by a party of the Clan Iain-Bhuidhe. After bidding a hearty farewell to his new-found ally, the Chief of Appin with his faithful followers quickly retraced their steps to Argyllshire. MacGregor had now as much land as his chieftain of Rora. It is generally said that the family of Dunan for many successive generations were among the most respected and esteemed of the Clan MacGregor in Rannoch.

The river Erricht issues from the loch of that name, and after a run of several miles with a comparatively slow flow about due south, it becomes an impetuous roaring torrent till it falls into Loch Rannoch. During the reign of King Robert I. a fierce and bloody battle was fought on the side of the Erricht between Donnacha Reamhar, ancestor of the Robertsons of Struan, one of the oldest historical families of Scotland, and Alexander MacDougall, chief of Lorn. Donnacha was a staunch friend and follower of Bruce. MacDougall was son-in-law of the Red Comyn, whom Bruce

slew at Dumfries. This made him and his family mortal enemies of Bruce and zealous partisans of the English faction. With the view of joining a band of the English army who were marching north towards the Rannoch country, MacDougall with his army had penetrated into Perthshire as far as the river Erricht. Donnacha Reamhar, on hearing of the approach of the MacDougalls, quickly assembled all his followers from Rannoch, Strathmumcl, Athole, &c., and with his army lay concealed in a thick wood on the east side of the Erricht, in order that he might seize the first favourable opportunity of attacking the invaders. Being anxious to ascertain the exact position and strength of the invading host—following the example of Alfred the Great going into the Danish camp in the guise of a harper and ascertaining their strength and disposition—Donnacha disguised himself as a beggar, with a meal pock hanging by his side, and without any difficulty soon found his way into the very heart of the enemy's camp, where he was immediately surrounded by the Lorn men, eagerly inquiring as to the number and disposition of the army opposed to them, and specially as to their leader's personal appearance and prowess. They were told that he was generally reckoned by those who knew him best to be a very fierce and cruel man, but he hoped that they would soon have him in their power. Donnacha, having obtained all he wanted, was in the act of slipping quietly to the outside of the enemy's camp when a gleg-eyed officer observed the gleam of Duncan's armour through a rent in his tattered beggar's clothes. This at once aroused the officer's suspicions that the beggar was a spy in disguise, and ordered his instant arrest. But the Rannoch hero took to his heels, and was at once hotly pursued by a band of the MacDougalls. Duncan soon outdistanced them all except one, a famous athlete named Alastair Ogg MacDougall, on whom he suddenly turned and dispatched

before his comrades could come to the rescue. Then, redoubling his speed, he came to the roaring Erricht at a certain spot where the river is confined by opposite perpendicular precipitous rocks within a deep, wild ravine of fifteen or sixteen feet wide, the river rushing along with irresistible fury far down below. This wild, deep chasm the brave athletic chieftain cleared at a bound, and his enraged pursuers were compelled to stop short. This spot still retains the name *Leum Dhonnacha Reamhar*—*i.e.*, Duncan's Leap, and is an object of special interest, and often pointed out to strangers visiting the Rannoch district.

Recrossing the river higher up shortly after midnight with the whole of his army, Donnacha rushed down pell-mell upon the Lorn host, who were quite unprepared for the sudden and unexpected attack. After a terrible hand-to-hand conflict, in which large numbers were slain on both sides, the invaders were completely overpowered, and a large number taken prisoners, among whom was the Chief of Lorn himself. He was for some time afterwards confined and closely guarded in the fortress on the island of Loch Rannoch.

Tradition says that the captured chief made his escape from his island prison in the following manner. When autumn came round the prisoner expressed a strong desire to have some of the fine apples that grew on a certain tree in front of his own castle in Lorn. His jailors, who, it would appear, were rather lenient to their high-born prisoner, told him that he might send his own manservant to Lorn for some. He did so, and his faithful, trusty servant carried a pockful of apples all the way from Lorn to Rannoch. Having managed to land on the island by a boat he had quietly secured on the shore and delivered his precious burden to his beloved master, who at once opened the bag and began to eat one of the beautiful red-cheeked apples in presence of his two guards, who, by their wistful looks, gave sufficient evidence

that they would like to have a share of the dainty fruit from Lorn. MacDougall observing this, gave an apple to each, and after giving his servant a private signal threw a number of the apples along the prison floor, and taking instant advantage of the two jailors' scramble after the apples the captive chief and his servant rushed out, locking the prison door behind them. They immediately sprang into the boat—the only one on the island—and rowed with all haste to the north shore, landing in a well-known creek, which to this day bears MacDougall's name. From thence they set off at once over the heathery hills with hasty strides, steering their course for their native Lorn, which they reached at length in safety. Next morning the people on shore, finding a boat unmoored on the gravelly beach, rowed across to the island, where they found the disconsolate, crestfallen jailors securely locked up in the prison minus their prisoner.

I had occasion to spend a week at Kinloch Rannoch in 1878. At that time there was only one hotel in the place, namely, the MacDonald Arms, a comparatively small, plain house, which, with a small farm of about 40 acres, had been occupied for over twenty years by a very shrewd, active, managing widow lady—Mrs MacDonald. Shortly afterwards the then proprietor had resolved to rebuild and enlarge this hotel in a more modern style, and in August 1880 advertised the grand new hotel to let. Mrs MacDonald, the old tenant, having, I believe, got a quiet hint that she would not be considered a suitable tenant for such a grand hotel, did not offer for it, but immediately negotiated for a long lease of a large private house situated close to the bridge on the south side of the river, with the privilege of free fishing for her visitors on Loch Rannoch. The proprietor of the house, who also owns a small landed estate on the south side of the river, agreed to enlarge the house to a good-sized hotel, to be called the Bunrannoch Hotel. The house has been enlarged several

times since, and now looks quite as large as the Dunalistair and is very handsomely furnished. The name of the old hotel was changed from the MacDonald Arms to the Dunalistair Hotel, and the new tenant by-and-bye finding that the lion's share of the visitors to Rannoch patronised Mrs MacDonald's house, bade farewell to Rannoch—maybe a poorer if not a wiser man. For many years General MacDonald levied a tax of 3s. per day for every rod that went on the loch. Two anglers in a boat had to pay 3s. each, which yielded about £100 a year; but the fishing from the Bunrannoch Hotel being quite free, this tax for long levied on anglers had to be discontinued, so the fishing on the loch is now quite free to visitors staying at either of the hotels. In 1881 General MacDonald got a handsome little steamer, the "Gitana," built and placed on the loch in connection with his braw new hotel. However, this tidy little steamer—which, I have been told, cost over £3,000—on the 6th January 1882, during a hurricane, sank from her anchorage near the north-east corner of the loch to the bottom, and now lies under 90 feet of water.

While on a visit to some friends in Rannoch quite recently I drove one day (12th October 1892)—accompanied by a friend—round the head of the loch (22 miles). We were favoured with an exceptionally fine bright sunny day, the blue heavens above without a cloud-speck; the lake during the fore part of the day like a sheet of glass; the varied tinted woods along the sloping shore was seen reflected upside down in the clear, still waters of the lake, presenting a very unique and charming picture. The road skirts the margin of the lake nearly all the way. A short distance above Kinloch we passed an upright stone on the right-hand side of the road, which I found to be nearly six feet above the ground, and some three feet broad by two feet thick, and which very probably was used for some purpose at one time

by the ancient Druids. Several similar stones are to be seen along the loch side. The side of the stone facing the road has the following inscription on it in large letters, "Clach-a-Mharsanta"—*i.e.*, the Merchant's Stone—"704 feet above sea." This stone a good many years ago is said to have been the scene of a very sad and tragic incident. It used to be quite common for men to travel about the country selling a miscellaneous assortment of light goods, which they usually carried in a neat square little mahogany box or pack, mounted with brass, strapped over their shoulder. These travelling merchants or packmen were always welcome visitors to country folks who lived in lonely, out-of-the-way districts, where visitors as a rule were few and far between. I have still a vivid recollection with what eagerness I looked forward to the regular visits of a certain packman who usually stayed a night at our house in a remote country district. With what eager curiosity and delight we youngsters gazed into his little "shoppie" or pack, containing innumerable interesting nick-nacks, including some beautiful several-bladed pocket knives, &c., &c.! In these days—more than half a century ago—newspapers were not so plentiful as they are nowadays. The packman had always a budget of news to tell us when he came round, which he did with great gusto to eager listeners. He was a capital storyteller, and I daresay some of his marvellous tales were a little embellished and improved in the telling. He was a very good singer, and sang some of his favourite songs with great spirit and glee. I well remember I never tired listening to him singing or reciting "Shon M'Nab"—

Her Nainsel be Shon M'Nab,
 Pe auld's ta forty-five, man,
 And mony troll affairs she's seen
 Since she was porn alive, man.

But a' ta troll things she pe seen
 Wad teuk twa days to tell, man;

So gin you likes she'll told you shust
Ta story bout hersel', man.

Nainsel was first ta herd ta kyes
Pon Rannoch's ponny praes, man,
Whar tousand pleasant days she'll spent
Pe pu' ta nits and slaes, man.

But foul pefa' ta gauger loon,
Pe put her in ta shail, man,
Whaur she wad stood for mony a tay
Shust 'cause she'll no get bail, man.

But out she'll got—nae matters hoo—
And cam' ta Glesgow town, man,
Whaur tousands wouders more she'll saw,
And she'll walk up and down, man.

Ta Glasgow folk pe unco folk,
Hae's tealings wi' ta tiel, man—
Wi' fire tey grund ta tait o' oo',
Wi' fire tey card ta meal, man.

Wi' fire tey spin, wi' fire tey weave,
Wi' fire do ilka turn, man ;
Na, some o' tem will eat ta fire
And no him's pelly burn, man.

Wi' fire tey mak' ta coach pe rin
Upon ta railman's raw, man,
Nainsel will saw him teuk ta road,
And teil a horse ta traw, man.

Anither coach ta Paisley rin,
Tey'll call him Lauchie's motion,
But, oich, she was plawn a' ta bits
By rascal rogue M'Splosion.

Wi' fire tey mak' ta vessels rin
Upon ta river Clyde, man ;
She saw't hersel', as sure's a gun,
As she stood on ta side, man.

But gin you'll no pelieve her word,
Gang to ta Proomielaw, man,
You'll saw ta ship wi' twa mill-wheels
Pe grund ta water sma', man.

Oich, sic a toon as Glasgow town
She never saw pefore, man,
Ta houses tere pe mile and mair,
Wi' names apon ta toor, man.

And in teir muckle windows tere
 She'll saw't, sure's teath, for sale,
 Praw shentlemans pe want ta heid,
 And leddies want ta tail, man.

It would appear that one of these travelling packmen, when walking down the loch side one evening on his way to Kinloch, laid down his pack on the Druid's stone to have a rest. Sad to relate, the pack had slipped down the back of the stone, and the strap catching him by the throat he was strangled. Next morning his dead body was found in an upright posture against the stone.

Some three miles above Kinloch Craiganour shooting lodge is passed high up on the hillside on our right, which, with grouse shootings and deer forest, has been occupied this season (1892) by Francis J. Tennant, Esq., son of Sir Charles Tennant, Bart. of The Glen. A few miles farther on the shooting lodges of Tallabeidh and Camusericht are also passed on the right, both occupied respectively by a "Sassenach" frae ayont the Tweed. Some eight miles from Kinloch the scattered hamlet or township of Kilchonan is reached, occupied by a considerable number of small farmers or crofters, their bracken-thatched dwellings of the most primitive-looking description imaginable. Here we made a short halt, and paid a visit to the ancient kirkyard of Kilchonan—the burial-place of Saint Connan, and the last quiet resting-place of many successive generations of the hamlet's dead. In the centre of the churchyard stands the ruined remnant of a very ancient chapel. The Kilchonan Burn, a stream of considerable volume, descends the face of the mountain side averagely in a very straight line from the north-east, and a few hundred yards above the churchyard it bounds over a perpendicular precipice of great height, forming a splendid waterfall—the Kilchonan Falls—passing along one side of the burying-ground with a never-ending murmuring *coronach*.

On approaching the head of the loch the entrance gate to Rannoch Lodge is passed on the left. The house stands at the head of the loch, surrounded by green verdant lawns overlooking the lake. This lodge, with grouse shootings, fishings, &c., was occupied last season by Mr Carnegie, the American millionaire. The shooting lodge of Dunan is situated a few miles farther west, and which, with a deer forest connected with it, was tenanted this season by Lord Granville Gordon. These five shootings yielded this season a rental to the proprietor—Sir Robert Menzies—of £3,275, which is considerably more than double the rental of all the tenant farms on his Rannoch estate put together.

On reaching Camusericht farmhouse, which stands close to the eleventh milestone from Kinloch, we called upon the farmer and his braw, blithe better-half, from whom we received a hearty Highland welcome and unbounded hospitality. Mr MacDiarmid, who is a J.P., is one of the largest, best-known, and most respected farmers in Perthshire, and is generally reckoned one of the best judges of blackfaced sheep and Highland cattle in the north of Scotland. We made a stay of several hours at Camusericht, exploring and surveying its surroundings. The farmhouse, a two-storey building, is built with light grey granite, which gives it a nice, light, clean appearance, and is well sheltered from the northern wintry blasts in the lee of wooded hills behind. It stands nearly in a line with the west end of the loch, and within a short distance of Rannoch Lodge, but on a more elevated site, with a plantation between. In the drawing-room I observed copies of three works by Carnegie, namely—"Triumphant Democracy," "An American's Four-in-Hand Tour in Britain," and "Round the World." These three volumes of 509, 338, 360 pages respectively, which are finely printed and handsomely bound, were presented to Mr MacDiarmid by the author when leaving Rannoch.

The Rannoch folks are looking forward with special interest to the opening of the West Highland Railway, which will revolutionise matters considerably in some respects in Rannoch, and more especially in the upper districts. At present the nearest railway station is Struan, twenty-four miles from the head of the loch, and in some parts the road is very hilly and steep, and besides, a considerable stretch of the road is private, and for which an exorbitant toll is levied. It seems surprising that the County Council or Road Trustees do not make an effort to get this iniquitous tax on the Rannoch people and the numerous summer visitors abolished for ever. To the inhabitants around the head of Loch Rannoch, the "Braes," &c., the price of coal is about 52s. per ton. The Rannoch Station on the West Highland Railway will be about five miles from head of the loch, with a level road all the way along the banks of the river Gamhair.

Starting from Camusericht on our way back, a road branches abruptly off to the left, and the Gamhair is soon crossed by the Victoria Bridge, which was erected in 1838 by Sir Neil Menzies and the Trustees of the Struan estate. Close to the road, on the south side of the river, stands Tighnalinn, which for many long years used to be kept as a well-known inn. On the opposite side of the road, on the right hand, stands the Barracks, a pretty large building situated on the Struan estate, and is now let as a shooting lodge. The name Barracks is derived from their having been originally erected for a detachment of troops under Ensign Munro—afterwards Sir Hector Munro, Commander-in-Chief in India—who was stationed here to preserve the peace after the Rebellion of 1745. The road down the south side is carried along the hillside through the black wood of Rannoch at a considerable distance above the loch. We got back to Kinloch in the evening, having enjoyed our drive round Loch Rannoch exceedingly.

Kinloch Rannoch may be reached by three different routes—from Kenmore up past Coshieville and round a haunch of Schiehallion, 18 miles; or from Struan Station, 13 miles; but by far the most pleasant and enjoyable route, although a little longer—21 miles—is by way of Pitlochry, across the bridge of Killiecrankie, and up along the valley of the Tummel, through the picturesque estate of Bonskeid, and past the Tummel Falls. It was from here Mrs Brunton, author of “*Self Control*,” wrote when she characterised the Tummel as the “stream of her affection—of all the rivers the most truly Highland—impetuous, melancholy, and romantic—foaming among the fragments that have fallen from mountains which seem to have been cleft for its course.” The romantic cottage at which she resided is thus described by her:—“It has no lawns or gardens near it; no paltry work of man’s device to fritter away the majesty of nature. Fortunately there is no room for such disfigurements, for the site of the house occupies the only level spot between a perpendicular mountain and the river. The walks are cut out of the solid rock, and sometimes approaching the brink of the precipice show the Tummel foaming far below. Sometimes they descend to the stream, and then wind up its perpendicular bank to show the noblest mountain imaginable. But still all is a deep solitude. No trace appears of any living thing, except now and then a roe springing from a thicket or an eagle sailing down the glen.”

Proceeding westwards along the banks of the river the road ascends, winding up a gentle slope, on gaining the summit of which one of the grandest prospects imaginable suddenly bursts on the view. Loch Tummel, with its indented capes and bays, lies stretched out below in fairest prospect before the spectator’s gaze. The lofty, rounded, pow of Farragon, and the huge bulk of Schiehallion, rise in full view from the opposite shore. A richly wooded vale

carries the eye westwards, where the mountains of Rannoch are seen retiring to form a spacious basin for the loch, which is only hid from the view by the rising grounds of Dunalistair; the hills of Lochaber bound the view to the far north-west, forming altogether a scene beyond the power of pen or pencil. Loch Tummel is about three miles long by half a mile or so broad at its broadest part, and lies at an elevation of 480 feet above the sea. At the lower end of the lake there are two rounded wooded hillocks. Past these the Tummel glides with an almost imperceptible flow, very different from the impetuous character it soon afterwards assumes. The scenery along some parts of the Tummel valley, and more especially around Mount Alexander or Dunalistair, is reckoned by not a few to be equal, if not superior, to the famed Trossachs.

When approaching Kinloch Rannoch, Innerchadden—a historic spot—is seen on the opposite side of the walk, occupying a singularly beautiful situation, surrounded with variegated woods at the base of a lofty rock of curious and romantic formation, called the King's Watch-tower. Here the immortal patriot Wallace, with his brave and faithful followers, rested for several days when returning from his expedition to the Western Highlands. Afterwards Innerchadden was the scene of a severe battle. King Robert Bruce, with his undaunted army of patriotic Scots, fought with the English and renegade Scots, and gained a glorious victory. The scene where the two armies met in mortal conflict is called Innerchadden, *i.e.*, the point where the battle began; and the spot where the fate of the day was decided is called Dalchomie, *i.e.*, the field of the great victory by the brave.

“ Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory !

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;
See the front o' battle lour :
See approach proud Edward's power—
Chains and slavery !

Wha will be a traitor knave ?
Wha can fill a coward's grave ?
Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Let him turn and flee !

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw ;
Freeman stand, or freeman fa'—
Let him follow me !

By oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins—
But they shall be free !

Lay the proud usurpers low !
Tyrants fall in every foe !
Liberty's in every blow—
Let us do or die !"





A Day on Lochindorb,

WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS HISTORIC
ASSOCIATIONS.

WHILE spending some holidays not very long ago at Forres, I resolved, if possible, to have a day's fishing on Lochindorb. I daresay there is not another loch in Scotland of equal size, and identified with so many stirring and important events in Scottish history, that is less known generally than Lochindorb, or in Gaelic, Loch-an-dorbh—*i.e.*, Lake of Trouble. Knowing that the fishing on the loch was strictly preserved, I wrote a note to the Earl of Moray's factor, whom I knew slightly, asking permission for a day's fishing on Lochindorb. He promptly replied to my note, giving me full permission for a day's fishing, not only on Lochindorb, but on several other preserved lochs on the estate. The Earl, who lets neither fishings nor shootings on his Morayshire estate, is very liberal in granting permission for a day's fishing to any respectable person who may choose to apply for it.

Being aware, although I had never seen it, that Lochindorb is situated in a somewhat wild and inhospitable region of Morayshire, and not caring to proceed there alone, I arranged to join a photographic artist, a Mr MacSweno, who is well known and much respected in the ancient town of

Forres and surrounding district. Mr Mac, judging from the east of his "physog," with his dark, clear, piercing eyes, jet black—but now mixed with some streaks of silver gray—hair, and bushy beard, is probably a descendant of some roving Scandinavian chief or pirate, and may have added "Mac" to his somewhat uncommon name to make it sound better; and, besides, I fancy that he rather liked to be reckoned a Celt. He very kindly presented me with a copy of his portrait, his figure arrayed so far in the Highland garb, with a smart glengarry bonnet and a tartan plaid thrown gracefully "ower" his "shooder"—but minus the kilt, sporan-mallaeh, dirk, and hose, &c.—a capital likeness. Mac had made arrangements to go up to Lochindorb some fine day to take some landscape views. Finding that we could not accomplish our proposed expedition without spending at least one night somewhere in the vicinity of the loeh, we were by no means very sure whether we could manage to procure shelter under some friendly roof-tree for a night or not. There is no public place of accommodation nearer than Grantown, which is some nine or ten miles from the loeh. We wrote to the stationmaster at Dava asking if he could let us have a bedroom for a night, but if not, to be good enough to let us know by note if he knew of any place near his station where we could get a night's lodgings. He replied very briefly, but to the point—"I have no spare room for anybody, and I don't know any place hereabouts where you can get a night's lodgings."

However, one fine afternoon—beginning of May—we started about two o'clock from Forres Railway Station. We would have started earlier, but the forenoon trains did not then stop at Dava. After a ride of some fifteen miles up a pretty "stey brae" all the way, we reached the Dava Station. As a rule, no part of the Highland line is so frequently blocked up with snow during the winter as the Dava section.

On leaving the Dava Station, the road for the loch ascends, winding zig-zag up through a dark, bleak, heather-clad moor. From the time we left the station till we came in sight of the loch, a distance of several miles, we neither met nor saw a living creature, with the exception of some grouse—which appeared to be very plentiful—their continual clear-ringing “whirrrrock-ock-ock-ock” helping to enliven the otherwise dreary surrounding scene. Mr Mac had a barrow of a somewhat peculiar and unique construction, which he usually took with him on similar expeditions to the country to take sketches. On this occasion the said barrow was pretty well loaded with the photographer’s various apparatus, including a pretty heavy box of plates, &c., to which were added my fishing gear, provisions, &c. As the road in some parts is pretty steep, our progress ascending the hill was not very rapid—Mac, his smart, active assistant Iain, and self taking turn about between the trams of the wheelbarrow and end of the trace rope. On gaining the summit of a sharp-backed hill ridge, we suddenly, as if by magic, obtained a splendid bird’s-eye view of Lochindorb and its immediate surroundings—probably the very best view of the loch to be had from any standpoint. The whole of the bright sheet of water is seen from end to end at a single glance, with its solitary rock-bound island situated about the centre of the lake, on which stands the imposing hoary lichen-covered crumbling ruins of Lochindorb Castle. Near the head of the loch a small shooting lodge, belonging to the Earl of Seafield, is seen situated on a wooded point of land which projects into the lake. The only other solitary habitation that we could descry in any direction was a small primitive-looking farmhouse, standing high up on a hillside on the opposite side of the loch. The whole surrounding district or basin in which this lake lies presents one of the most dreary and desolate scenes that can be imagined. The lake is generally

reckoned to be about three miles in length by less than a mile broad at its broadest part, or fully six miles in circumference. The one side belongs to the Earl of Moray, and the other to the Earl of Seafield. The river *Dorbach* flows from its lower end, and after performing many curious windings, passing round the base of the Knock of Brae Moray—the highest summit in Morayshire—forms a junction with the Divie opposite the lofty ivy-clad ruins of Dunfail Castle, standing on a rocky eminence, and which at one time was surrounded on three sides by the turbulent waters of the Divie, the whole forming a very picturesque feature of the romantic scenery of the Divie Glen—

“The wild romantic banks which fringe the winding Divie’s side.”

Being favoured with a beautiful, bright afternoon, with the slanting golden beams of the descending sun glinting amidst the grim ruined walls of the ancient fortress of Lochindorb, I left my friend the artist and his assistant on the top of the hill ridge from which we obtained our first view of the lake preparing his apparatus for taking some views of the old castle, &c.—the fine bright afternoon being very favourable for the purpose. From thence I proceeded with my fishing gear on my back to survey the land and endeavour, if possible, by hook or by crook, to procure a night’s lodgings for self and my two travelling companions. I steered my course in the first place in the direction of a gamekeeper’s cottage, which we knew to be situated somewhere near the head of the loch. I had posted a letter to the keeper a week or ten days previously, but as there is neither a Post Office nor a postman passing within a good many miles of his lonely abode, I got there before my note had reached him. Happening to meet the guardian of grouse before I reached his dwelling, I briefly explained to him the purport of my unexpected visit. He told me off-hand at once that had I been alone they could

easily have managed to give me some corner for the night, but seeing that there were three of us he would require to see what his wife would say about it. Reaching his cottage, the keeper's blithe and kindly-hearted better-half, on hearing my doleful story, without the slightest hesitation undertook to put us all up under her roof-tree for the night, and said she would do her very best to make us as comfortable as possible. She then ordered her husband—a middle-aged, good-natured-looking chiefl, who I daresay had long been accustomed to do what he was bidden by his better-half—to go at once to meet the other gentlemen and show them the way to the house. In a jiffy she had the kettle hung on the "swee," and when the keeper returned with my two friends later on she had a capital toosey tea prepared for us—lots of crisp oatmeal cakes, nice sappy barley bannocks and scones, &c., to which we did ample justice after our afternoon's hard work. As far as I can remember, the keeper's family consisted of either six or seven "youngsters," including a fine, plump, thriving-looking baby boy named "Wee Lauchie," just about to be weaned, as the fond mother told me. The young folks appeared to be very timid and shy. I noticed when I first entered the cottage that they all fled helter-skelter to some back apartments. We spent a very pleasant evening with the keeper and his family sitting round a blazing, cheerie peat fire.

Mr Mac, who is an inimitable story-teller, mimic, and actor, and might have made his mark and fame on the stage, entertained us with some stirring tales about the "fearfu'" cantrips of a band of brownies and water-kelpies which in days of yore used to haunt the weird, gloomy Findhorn Glen. He also related some thrilling stories about some notorious witches, who, it would appear, had their abode for ages in and around the ancient town of Forres, enough to make any timid mortal's hair stand on end and tremble in their shoes. Three of these noted witches are said to have had the

audacity to encounter the renowned Macbeth on the "blasted heath" near Forres while on his way with his army from Inverness to Forres :—

MACBETH.

SCENE I.—*An open p'ace. Thunder and lightning.*

Enter three Witches.

1 *Witch*—When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
2 *Witch*—When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won:
3 *Witch*—That will be ere the set of sun.
1 *Witch*—Where the place?
2 *Witch*—Upon the heath:
3 *Witch*—There to meet with Macbeth.
1 *Witch*—I come, Graymalkin!
All—Paddock calls :—Anon !—
Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[*Witches vanish.*]

SCENE III.—*A heath. Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

1 *Witch*—Where hast thou been, sister?
2 *Witch*—Killing swine.
3 *Witch*—Sister, where thou?
1 *Witch*—A sailor's wife had chesnuts in her lap,
And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd :—
Give me, quoth I :—

2 *Witch*—Shew me, shew me.

1 *Witch*—Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

[*Drums within.*]

3 *Witch*—A drum, a drum!

Macbeth doth come.

All—The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine :—
Peace !—the charm's wound up.

[*Enter Macbeth and Banquo.*]

Macbeth—So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Banquo—How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are ye aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,

By each at once her choppy finger laying
 Upon her skinny lips :—You should be women,
 And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
 That you are so.

Macbeth—Speak, if you can ;—What are you ?

1 *Witch*—All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, thane of Glamis !

2 *Witch*—All hail, Macbeth ! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor !

3 *Witch*—All hail, Macbeth ! that shalt be king hereafter.

Macbeth—Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more :
 By Sinel's death, I know, I am thane of Glamis ;
 But how of Cawdor ? the thane of Cawdor lives,
 A prosperous gentleman ; and, to be king
 Stands not within the prospect of belief,
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
 You owe this strange intelligence ; or why
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
 With such prophetic greeting :—Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*]

Banquo—The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
 And these are of them :—Whither are they vanish'd ?

Macbeth—Into the air ; and what seem'd corporal, melted
 As breath into the wind.—Would they had stay'd !

The traditional scene of Macbeth's meeting with the three witches is situated a few miles due west from Forres, and about mid-way between the Highland Railway and the main country road leading from Inverness to Forres, which here runs parallel. "The blasted heath" is very descriptive of the place which is still pointed out to strangers as the very spot where the witches met with Macbeth and Banquo. It consists of an oval-shaped hillock or large mound, without a single blade of green grass or vestige of vegetation of any kind, although round its base the ground is clothed with coarse heath and grass. At a comparatively recent date a considerable stretch of the "Heath" was planted with wood—chiefly with Scotch firs, which appear to be in a thriving condition. Singular enough most of the trees on the blasted hillock were planted in clumps of twos and threes close together. A well-known farmer, a very old man, whose lands adjoin the "blasted heath," once told me that the place was planted with wood some fifty odd years ago.

I have still a very vivid recollection of a little scene I once witnessed on the "blasted heath" not very long ago. A party of us, including several young lady friends, went one day from Forres to visit the scene of Macbeth and Banquo's meeting with three of the weird sisters. We had not proceeded more than a few hundred yards on our way back along a footpath—a short cut—through a dense wood, when a strange-looking object was seen at some distance through the trees, and evidently coming along to meet us. One of the young ladies, who had never been in the district before, and whose head had been filled with "maybe" exaggerated stories about the Forres witches, got so alarmed at the idea that we were just on the point of meeting one of them, that she got quite excited, and at length uttered a piercing scream, which resounded strangely 'midst the thick forest. In order to soothe and allay the young maiden's alarm, we left the path, turning to the right in the direction of the turupike road. But being curious to ascertain who or what the slowly-approaching figure was, I ventured to remain behind for a little and watch its movements. I soon discovered that the witch of the young lady's imagination was only an old fishwife from the fishing village of Findhorn, on her way to the nearest farmhouse with some fresh fish. I took a good swatch of the sturdy, broad-shouldered old fishwife, rigged out in the usual characteristic garb of her class—a peculiar shaped head-dress and unco short petticoats, a dark, swarthy complexion, prominent cheek bones, with loughish, straggling tufts of a greyish beard, her back geyan boo'ed, and altogether might readily pass for a veritable elderly witch. I told her that one of my young friends had mistaken her for a witch, and was terribly frightened. The aged dame laughed heartily. "Nae, nae, sir," quo' she, "a'm nae a witch, but just an auld widow wumman frae Findhorn gann about wi' ma creel on ma back sellin' fish." She then gave me a brief

sketch of her previous history, how long she had been a lone widow, that she had two big braw sons in America, a married daughter in Dundee, &c., &c. ; but as the uneventful history of a Findhorn fishwife might not be found of any special interest, it is needless to repeat it here.

A detailed account of all the noted witches that have existed in Forres and surrounding district, even within the last 150 or 200 years, and generally supposed to have had some mysterious direct dealings with the "auld enemy" of mankind—namely, the devil—would fill many volumes. A large portion of the private diary of Alexander Brodie, Esq. of Brodie Castle, the representative of the old well-known family of that name in the counties of Elgin and Nairn, is about witches. This full and most interesting diary, which, with the consent of the family, was published some time ago by the Spalding Club, was begun by the author in the year 1650, and continued till within either one or two days of his death, which took place on the 17th April 1680. The diary is then continued by his son, James Brodie, from the 17th April 1680, and ends in February 1685. The tone of the diary from beginning to end clearly shows that the author was a very pious and God-fearing man. I will here give just one or two short extracts from the diary of this highly esteemed gentleman, as an illustration of the gross superstition of the not very remote age in which he lived, and took an active and leading part in the public affairs of the county.

"2d Julie (1655).—Mr Harie told me what work he had with witches, ther lifting him and bowing his bodie together in his bedd ; ther confessionis and Sathan's own that they could doe him noe harm ; made his image in wax, but could not hurt him. Oh ! what confirmation was this to my soul to belive in God ; al sufficient and not to turn to crooked paths.

"June 22d (1662).—I met with Mr Alex. Colvil, and confereed anent witches. He told me (1) A disposition that they saw persons ther [which] cannot without other evidence prove them present because the deivel can mak appearances fals ; (2) He said the mark is not infallible, because phicians think by natural means the flesh

may be deadned and feeling taken away ; (3) That they could not reallie transport themselves whither they pleased, for they would be oft at that sam instant in other places, lyin on ther back or faces, quhil they seind in ther imaginations to be carried to other places farr off ; (4) Lykways as to chap(e)s, but to say as to chaps I cannot tell. . . . So I reverence the Lord's providence. But my hand shall still be lifted up to God for mercie to the land in this particular, and that he would glorifi himself in discovering and destroying al thes and other works of the devil, may ras up zealous and able men with enlarged and of good understanding for this end ; for the land is his, he has set up his tabernacle in it, and we are cald by Him. Oh, give not over as thou art threatning, but recover for thy name's sake. Destroy this Dragon, for he fights against our Michael, he and his angels—his wicked angels—his natur, operations, workings, subtilti, but let this be made up in Jesus Christ—being God over al, blessed for ever, to quhom is committed al power in earth and heaven, quhom devils ar forced to acknowledge and obey, who has conquered them in our natur ; spoiled, disarmed, vanquished, and triumphed over him ; the blest seed that should bruis the head of the serpent, in quhom al the nations of the earth are blest, who has redeemed lost mankind by his blood, and delivered us from Sathan his rag, dominion, power, temptations, wyls, violence, that we may serv the living God our life. Sathan is that evel spirit which fell from his place, the father of lies, a murtherer from the begining, the serpent old crooked, the dragon, accuser, tempter, the leviathan, lucifer, enemie of mankind and our salvation, the roaring lion, the adversari, head of his members and instrumts, quhom he helps and strengthens to work all ungodlines and unrightiousnes, oposed to God and his natur purlie and perfectlie the destroyer, keeper of the bottomles pit, prince of darknes. But our Head and Lord is by natur the Son of God as well as man, so God is Sathan's partie when he has to doe with us the Saviour of mankind ; Jehova, our righteousnes, the holy one of God, ful of grace and ful of truth, in quhom the Godhead dwells bodilie, who has recevd the Spirit without measure.

“ April 29th (1663).—This day we wer cald to Forres anent the witches. Mortoun was as scrupulous that he would scarce meit, but resolved not to vote. Again I desired grace from the Lord for my own and my son's deriction, that in this we may not doe our own work nor follow ani base pasion or blind zeal of our own spirits ; (2) that thes may be guided which are apponted to judge ; (3) and God may vouchaf mercie to the poor wretches to open ther eyes and ther mouths and get himself glorie in them. He may derict the whole mater in his wisdom and mercie for his glori and the bearing down wickednes. There was little done becas ther was not a quorum of the Commisions. Mortoun declined even after he promised, which made our meeting ineffectual.

“ May 1st.—This day was appointed for trial of the witches. We had met with other impediments hitherto, what may fal out this day we know not, but desires to comit ourselves, even our minds and spirits, to God, and the ishue and ordering of that which we are

about that it may be to his glori the tearing down of sin, terror of others, and the comfort of those that we employed in it. And the Lord did accordinglie give some ishue. The poor creatures wer found fullie guiltie and condemned to die ; but Sathan hardnd them to denie. Let the Lord overcome ther obduredus in His due tym. Grang was not clear ; albeit he consented to the asiz, yet he was avers from the sentence of death. I desired to be tendred with some human kindres affection towards the wretched creatures, and bewail ther sin and misirie.

“ May 2nd (1663).—I sent for Mr Hari to com and wait on the witches ; to see if God would open ther heart to give God glori and confes their sins. I mentioned them to God as I could, and puts this and al my burthens ower on him, for the work is his. Oh ! that he would appear for the glori of his own name.

“ May 4th.—In the afternoon Isobel Elder and Jean Simson wer burnt at Forres ; died obstinant, and the Lord to shut the dor so that wickedness should not be discovered nor expelled out of the land. Oh, that the Lord glorifi Himself, bring down this kingdom of Sathan, and deliver us.”

According to Mr Mac’s account, which is fully borne out by many other reliable authorities, it would appear that the very last of the weird sisterhood, whose life was sacrificed to the gross superstition of a bygone age in the district of Forres was a notorious witch named Dorothy Calder. Dorothy is said to have lived in a tidly thatched cottage on the banks of the Findhorn, a short way above the old Findhorn Bridge, and not far from Darnaway Castle. She had for long been suspected of having been connected and mixed up with many strange and mysterious transactions. At length, however, poor Dorothy was seized by the iron grasp of the law, brought to trial at Forres, and was found “fullie guiltie,” and condemned to be burnt. A stake was erected on the summit of Drumduain Hill, situated a short way east from Forres, on the right hand side of the road to Elgin. The poor unfortunate Dorothy was securely tied to the stake by an iron chain ; twenty cart loads of peats were built in the form of a circular wall a good bit from the stake, the inner space being filled up with dried bristling whins, and the whole pile set on fire. The loud frantic shouts of the assembled throng drowned the piercing shrieks for mercy,

mercy, uttered in vain by the poor supplicating victim, who in a few minutes breathed her last. Her charred mortal remains were placed in a barrel and buried at a certain spot at the foot of the hill, and a huge stone was placed on the top of the grave, in order, no doubt, to keep Dorothy secure below the ground.

Many years afterwards, when a new house was being built near the spot, and stones being rather scarce about Forres—sand, sand everywhere—the contractor of the building had the temerity to bore a hole in the very centre of the big stone on Dorothy's grave, and by a charge of powder it was rent asunder into several pieces—the contractor no doubt acting under the full belief that there was very little danger of Dorothy making her appearance above ground again. But the then civic rulers of Forres, on hearing the incredible news, which spread like wildfire through the town, hurried to the scene, and peremptorily ordered a portion of the stone, which by this time had been placed in the foundation of the building, to be taken back at once to its old position. After a good deal of labour this was done, then the respective pieces were carefully put together and securely mended with strong iron clasps, fixed into the several pieces of the stone with molten lead. In this state the stone may still be seen close to the roadside about half-a-mile east from the Cross of Forres, and familiarly known as “The Witch's Stane,” and to this day is an object of keen interest and attraction to strangers visiting Forres, &c.

On the following morning the whole household watched with evident keen interest and curiosity the proceedings of the two artists while arranging their apparatus for taking a photograph of the cottage, &c. They began by placing a long three-legged stool, with a sharp iron point to each leg, which they fixed into the ground, in front of the house; then placed a small square mahogany box, with a big round hole

in two opposite sides, on the top of the three-legged stool. The young folks' curiosity seemed greatly excited on seeing Mr Mac hiding the box all but the round hole in the side facing the cottage, and himself all but his legs under a loose dark cloth, where he remained for a short time fummelling and moving the box with his hands. After taking a couple of photographs of the cottage, including a bit of the loch, &c., Mac proposed to take a photograph of the old keeper, with all his household in a group. It was no easy task, however, to get them all satisfactorily arranged. The keeper himself insisted on having his favourite double-barrelled gun—a breech-loader—placed under his left oxtter, and a big retriever dog, named "Punch," sitting on his hunkers beside him, the keeper's better-half holding her youngest olive branch, "Wee Lauchie," in her arms. After taking a peep through the round hole in the box, Mac had to go back several times to the group to give the restless sitters a last finishing touch, moving their heads slightly, and telling them to look steadily at a certain object, and to keep very, very steady, just for a minute, and he would soon be done. I saw the photograph after it was developed and printed a few days afterwards. It made a very interesting picture, and will, I have no doubt, be much prized by the keeper and his family for many long years to come.

Immediately after breakfast the keeper got a tidy little boat, usually kept in a small pier not far from his house, put in proper trim, and he and I were soon afloat. Although rather small—probably four or five to the lb.—the trout were very numerous, and rose greedily to the fly, and any ordinary fisher, if favoured with a good fishing day, could easily secure a splendid basket. In a few hours I had over three dozen, indeed as many as I cared to take; it was rather early in the season, and the fish were not in very good condition.

In the course of the day we rowed across the loch to the island, where we spent a good part of our time surveying with much interest the crumbling, ruined walls of Lochindorb Castle, which in the stirring days of long ago was reckoned one of the most impregnable strongholds throughout the north of Scotland. The island comprises an area of fully an acre, which is wholly covered round and round, almost to the water's edge, with the building, the outer walls, seven feet thick, running up in unbroken lines from one point to another. The only entrance to the Castle was from the east side, close to the only landing-place. Admission was gained to the fortress through numerous defences of the deep gateway. The courts intervening between the inner and outer walls were strongly defended at all salient points or angles by strong circular towers, one of these completely commanding the entrance. A large inner quadrangle was occupied by the palace, banqueting hall, &c. I believe there is no very authentic record when or by whom this very ancient castle was first erected. It was for long the principal and most impregnable stronghold of the Comyns, and rivalled in extent and the number of its defences the fortresses of Royalty. From the Douglas Peerage and other public records may be learned that Black John Comyn of Badenoch died about the year 1300 at his castle of Lochindorb, and that as his grandson of the same name died soon after without issue, the direct male line of the family became extinct.

In the year 1335, when the Earl of March defeated and killed David de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, at Kilblain, and raised the siege of Kildrummie Castle, the Earl of Athole's lady fled to Lochindorb Castle. Sir Alexander Gordon laid siege to it, but King Edward of England arrived with a large army, and compelled him to raise the siege and beat a hurried retreat. The spot where the besieging army lay is on the east side of the lake, on a flat tongue of land jutting out into

the loch opposite the castle, and may still be traced by the double ditches and redoubts by which it is surrounded.

King Robert II., in the first year of his reign, gave to his eldest son Alexander, Earl of Buchan, Lord of Badenoch, &c., and his heirs, a certain portion of Badenoch, with the castle, deer forest, and lands of Lochindorb. This Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, &c., is said to have been a giant in stature and of stately mien, courageous and bold as a lion, but possessed of a most ferocious and ungovernable temper, and was commonly called the fierce Wolf of Badenoch. He was for long a bitter and relentless enemy to the dignitaries of the Romish Church. It was on his arrival one day at Darnaway Castle, the ancient seat of the Earls of Moray, accompanied by a splendidly equipped retinue, which included several of his stripling sons, in order to attend and take part in a grand tournament which was to be opened on the following day on the spacious and beautiful "Meade of St John," on the bank of the Findhorn, that he learned for the first time from his friend and relative, the Earl of Moray, that he had been excommunicated by the Church, and consequently that neither himself nor any of his sons would be permitted to take any part in the coming tournament. On hearing the unexpected and unwelcome news his rage was unbounded, and at once sounding his bugle, and collecting all his followers, he marched rapidly on to Forres, and soon had all the edifices belonging to the Romish Church there in flames. The conflagration being distinctly seen from Darnaway Castle, which stands on a splendid elevated site, the Earl, with a numerous band of nobles, who had assembled at the Castle to take part in the great tournament on the following day, at once got their steeds saddled and galloped off to Forres. Their vigorous and noble exertions were the means of saving the greater portion of the town of Forres from the raging flames.

Not satisfied with the devastation he had caused at Forres, shortly afterwards he marched out one evening from his stronghold on Lochindorb, accompanied by three of his youthful sons and a large number of his valiant followers, and proceeded to Elgin. The clanking, clattering noise of his mounted troopers marching through the streets of the peaceful town during the sombre midnight darkness caused great alarm, which was soon increased to the wildest panic and consternation when the whole town from end to end was illuminated by the wild, hissing, whirling glare of the grand old Elgin Cathedral, the Bishop's Palace, &c., being enveloped in one raging, roaring blaze, the terror-stricken inhabitants flying half-naked from the town for their lives, some shrieking in their wild despair—"It's the fierce Wolf of Badenoch ; it's the fierce Wolf of Badenoch !"

We got back to the keeper's cottage pretty late in the afternoon, and found that our kind-hearted hostess—whose hospitality and kind attention under the circumstances were unbounded—had killed two of her best and fattest nine months' old chickens, and had them nicely stewed and simmering in a big pot over the fire ready for us. Our appetites being in rare trim for a set-to, my two companions and self soon demolished the two tender chickens, along with a large ashet full of nice mealy "tatties" lauching in their jackets, leaving nothing but a big bing of sma' banes and tattie-skins. Dinner over, we got all our luggage, including my fishing gear, &c., packed on Mac's unique barrow, and, after bidding our hostess and all at the cottage a hearty good-bye, we set off for the railway station. We arrived at Forres pretty late at night all right, and neither of us, I daresay, will ever forget our "Day on Lochindorb."



A Day on Loch Doon, Ayrshire,

WITH A DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS SURROUNDINGS.

I HAD resolved to throw aside business harness, with its worries, and have a week's outing to the classic land of Burns, along with one of my oldest and most valued friends, an enthusiastic Ayrshire man, a great admirer of his famous countryman, the ploughman bard. I shall never forget the many pleasant and enjoyable holidays I had spent with my esteemed friend at his fondly-cherished native home, one of the most charming and picturesque spots in the county of Ayr. We arranged on going first direct to Dalmellington, in order to have a few days' fly-fishing on Loch Doon, where we had fished several days annually for many years.

We started one morning from the Glasgow and South Western Railway Station, St Enoch Square, Glasgow, which, although not the largest, is one of the most elegant, finely-designed, and complete railway stations in the three kingdoms. After a ride of some 40 miles we arrived at Ayr, the capital of Ayrshire, long widely famed for "honest men and bonnie lassies," a prosperous, aristocratic, fine-looking old town, built on a sandy plain on the sea-shore. It stands on the river Ayr, which forms its harbour. A short distance above Ayr the Maybole, Girvan, and Strauraer line branches off to the right. From Ayr to Patna Station, ten miles or so,

the iron road goes up all the way a pretty steep ascent ; and our puffing, noisy, fiery steed had a stiff pull up the "stey brae," with a heavy mixed train of goods and passengers tied to his iron tail. When nearing Hollybush Station we got a passing glimpse of Dalrymple, a nice rural village away on our right, situated on the banks of the river Doon ; and a short way farther on the classic Doon opens to our view close on the railway to the right. From here to Dalnellington the line goes along the bank of the river. Patna Station is next reached, from which we get a bird's-eye view of the village, situated on a steep hill-slope on the opposite side of the Doon, which it overlooks. It consists chiefly of one street, which is pretty steep, with white-washed, clean, tidy-looking houses on either side. Owing to the steep slope on which it stands, the houses forming the one side are much higher than those on the other. About the centre of the village, in a small square fronting the Established Church, and close by the primitive little old schoolhouse, is seen a very neat and handsome water fountain, from which the villagers obtain an abundant and never-failing supply of as pure and fine water as can be had in Scotland, widely famed for "makin' real guid tea and toddy." The water is brought in a small iron pipe from a large spring at the foot of Patna Hill. This elegant and ornamental water-fountain was presented a few years ago to his native village by Sir A. B. Walker, ex-Lord Mayor of Liverpool, who is much respected and esteemed by the folks of Patna and district for his many acts of kindness and generous liberality—a liberality not confined to his dear native village, as is evidenced by his recent princely gift of £40,000 to the city of Liverpool to rear a magnificent Art Gallery—a long-felt want in the big, bustling, busy city of Liverpool. Sir A. B. Walker's eldest brother (Peter) has been three times elected Lord Mayor of Wrexham. The good folks of Patna may justly feel some pride in seeing so

many of her sons occupying such high positions in many parts of the globe. The eminent Professor M'Cosh, of Princeton College, U.S., is also a native of Patna, and several others that might be named. The most prominent object in the neighbourhood is the dumpling-shaped Patna Hill, rising abruptly from the west end of the village. It stands in the centre of a triangle formed by three extensive valleys—one stretching away south-east past Dalmellington, one away north or slightly north-west towards Ayr, the other south-west past Kirkmichael. Probably there is not another spot of the same altitude in all Ayrshire from which a more varied and extensive prospect can be obtained. From Patna to Dalmellington the iron way is almost quite level, passing up through a beautiful pastoral valley, the Doon winding through wide sylvan meadows, with green-clad hills and dales rising on either side of the valley. A short way above Patna we pass the handsome residence of John Hunter, Esq., the residing managing partner of Dalmellington Iron Works. The extensive works, consisting of eight blasts, are next passed close to the line on the left, and we come to a halt at Waterside, a large village of several rows of one-storey houses, occupied by the mining population—the most intelligent and best behaved class of miners I have come across. I have had occasion to be in the district now and then for many years, and as far as I can remember such a thing as a strike or dispute in connection with the works is quite unknown, which says much for the good sense and managing tact of all concerned. Two miles farther on we reach Dalmellington, our journey's end for the day, and we were soon in clover at the Black Bull Hotel. The village of Dalmellington stands on the highway from Ayr to Dumfries, nestled close together in the mouth or opening of a narrow gully, part of the village being built upon the steep slopes on either side. Not long after my arrival at the Black Bull I had a visit from my old

and respected friend Robert Gemmell, a very prince of boatmen, and who is well known to all the fishers frequenting Loch Doon, &c., for the last fifty or sixty years, and I fancy he must now be about midway between the threescore-and-ten and fourscore, but still strong, hale, and hearty, full of cheerie buoyant life and humour, can dance a jig, sing a good song, and tell a capital story. Robert has been long famed as a good fisher and fly-dresser, and has about the neatest knack of disposing of a set of any one I ever came across. He takes a nice clean envelope out of his "oxter" pocket, which he carefully opens and displays to your admiring gaze a set *o' real killers*, and really a very gaudy, pretty set they are—trail-jungle-cock wings, dark body, gold tinsel and yellow tip, Bob-storm cock wings, pheasant breast hackle, gold tinsel and yellow tip. When Robert sees that you are fairly in love with the set, he gives you a friendly poke in the ribs with his elbow, and whispers in your ear, "As ye're no everybody, I'll let you have the set for two bob." I have not the slightest doubt—for I can speak both from experience and observation—that many have bought flies from Robert who at the time were actually in the belief that he had done them a great favour.

Starting the following morning for the loch, we drove up along the high road to Dumfries for about two miles, where the sort of private road for the loch, &c., strikes off to the right, and after a drive of other two miles, passing most of the way through a dense forest, where we see a number of roe-deer skipping gracefully about, and droves of rabbits, &c., we reach the lower end of the loch, where the boats are kept, and there discharged our smart "coachie" Bob, and his mettled brown mare "Meg," to return for us in the afternoon. While Robert and his "dacent, quait, staid" assistant, Edward, are putting up the rod and selecting a good set of flies (before doing so Robert generally takes a quiet look

skyward to see how the clouds look, then with the tail of his eye measures the size of the ripple on the lake before fixing on a set), I will give my readers a brief pen-and-ink sketch of Loch Doon, a large portion of which is seen from where we now stand. It lies at the extreme south boundary of Ayrshire. Several miles along its shore, on the south side, is in Kirkcudbrightshire. It is about seven miles long and from half a mile to a mile in breadth, with innumerable deep indented creeks and bays and small islets. From about four miles from its lower end it lies nearly due south, then takes a sudden bend to the west, or slightly south-west. At this bend there is a group of small islands composed of a mass of ordinary-sized stones piled topsy-turvy and crowned with stunted brushwood. These islands from time immemorial have been a favourite haunt of sea-gulls. Immense swarms of these birds arrive there generally about the same day of the month every season, to build their nests, &c., which they do very quickly, but in a very clumsy, careless style, just a few bits of sticks laid across each other, and barely sufficient to prevent their eggs from toppling over amongst the stones. The gulls must be poor architects compared to some of their smaller feathered "brithers," who often display such marvellous sagacity, architectural ingenuity, and artistic skill in first choosing a favourable site, and then rearing for themselves and young ones a neat, substantial, "couthie, cosie little cot." When the mammas think the young gullies sufficiently strong to undertake a lengthened journey on the wing, they depart from their quiet, sequestered summer quarters on Loch Doon for their distant winter ocean home. Generally a sullen cormorant may be seen hovering about the lake, often perched on the pinnacle of a rock or big stone, weird-like, with outspread wings to the sun and breeze, drying his dusky feathers after a fishing raid in the transparent waters of the lake. Conspicuous near the head

of the lake is the imposing ruins of Loch Doon Castle (or Ballich Castle), a lofty octagonal structure, built on a rock-bound island. As far as I know, the history of this once imposing and formidable stronghold is shrouded in almost complete obscurity. During a very dry summer, about fifty years ago, four canoes in a good state of preservation were dug out from the sand and stones at the port entrance to the castle—the largest measuring $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length by 4 feet 9 inches broad, was sent to the Glasgow Museum; the next largest, measuring rather less than 20 feet long, and elaborately carved with many curious devices, was taken to Culzean Castle (the Marquis of Ailsa's), where it may still be seen in a pond near the castle. The other two were placed in a small pond made for the purpose at the head of Glen Ness. I observed that the pond had been cleaned out very recently, and as the water in which they are immersed is quite clear, the canoes, which are apparently quite entire, are easily seen, and are objects of much interest to parties visiting the Glen, &c.

From either side of the lake rise green-clad hills and mountains, some of which round the upper end are of considerable height, and exclusively occupied as sheep walks; and the extensive watershed, of which the lake forms the centre, with the exception of one or two farmhouses and a few cottages occupied by shepherds and gamekeepers, is a solitary, treeless wild, almost wholly owned by two proprietors, namely—the Marquis of Ailsa and the late Lady Cathcart's successor. The wide basin of the lake gradually narrows towards the lower end to a gap from which flows the new-born Doon. At one period the river as it left its parent lake was precipitated over a steep rock forming a fine cascade, but about a hundred odd years ago the then proprietors resolved on lowering the waters of the lake, which was accomplished by piercing a couple of small tunnels

through the solid whinstone rock, forming a substantial bridge, along which the road is now carried. By this operation of tunnelling the ridge of rock on which the lake used to discharge itself, the usual and natural level of its waters has been lowered some fifteen to twenty feet, and a large portion of its original bed laid dry, detracting greatly from its natural beauty. Sluices have been erected at the mouth of the tunnels for the purpose, I believe, of regulating the volume of water flowing into the river, and preventing the extensive flat meadow-land lower down from being flooded during very heavy rains.

Leaving the lake by the two tunnels, the river at once enters Glen Ness, which, with the exception of the Findhorn Glen, is one of the most remarkable ravines I have ever seen in Scotland. A lofty ridge of hills seems here to have been cleft asunder to afford an outlet for the waters of the lake. On either side the rocks rise almost perpendicularly, but broken and rugged, to the height of three or four hundred feet—

“ The braes ascend like lofty wa’s,
The foaming stream deep roarin’ fa’s,”

beautifully ornamented and adorned by overhanging foliage of every hue and colour—

“ The hoary cliffs are crown’d wi’ flowers,”

and surrounded with a dense forest of lofty tapering trees, chiefly larch and Spanish wood, with here and there a giant, hoary Scotch fir. The ravine does not appear more than forty or fifty feet wide, and extends for fully a mile in length.

The proprietor, some few years ago, made a nice footpath along the bank of the river, which here rushes headlong down its narrow rocky bed. The walk along the glen is strictly private, with a locked gate at each end ; but strangers,

by calling at a neat tidy cottage at the foot of the glen, are freely admitted, usually accompanied by a guide. Emerging from the lower end of the glen, Berbeth House is seen close at hand to the left, finely situated on a raised terrace overlooking the Doon.

Robert having got everything in trim for the day's campaign, we embarked and steered our course up the west side; but, finding the trout were not in a good mood for "catchin' flees," Robert by-and-bye began to tell us some good stories, old and new—generally some exciting salmon-fishing adventure, in which, as a rule, the salmon comes off second best. Robert wound up a good salmon story—"Eh, man, but auld Sir William was a prood, prood man. When we had the big fellow—a *twenty-seven pounder*, by George!—fairly secure in the boat he gave a lood 'hoorae, hoorae,' and said—'Well done, Robert; we're the boys,' and slippit a yellow soverei'n into my luif."

Up to mid-day our success was only so-so—the loch was too calm—but, a fine breeze springing up from the "sou'-west," we soon made a pretty fair basket, and at the close of the day had five dozen and seven nice-sized trout. I have fished on many lochs where I got larger trout and made a heavier basket, but I know few lochs where an ordinary fisher has less chance of coming off with a clean basket. The trout are very lively, and give good sport, although not so large or nearly so numerous as they were twenty or thirty years ago. A considerable number of salmon find their way to the lake every season, but are very shy. Several are, however, taken every year by small trout fly when fishing for trout.

The fishing on the loch is quite free, and no charge made for the boats. The two hotels—Black Bull and the Eglinton—have, I believe, the same number of boats on the loch—either four or five each. The accommodation at the Black

Bull is plain but comfortable, and charges very moderate. The distance from Dalmellington to the loch by the road is about four miles, but for strong, active, "souple chiel's" who may prefer to walk there is a fine romantic footpath less than three miles along

"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair ;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care ?
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flow'ry thorn,
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Oft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree ;
And my fause lover stole my rose,
But ah ! he left the thorn wi' me."





A Fishing Adventure.

A DAY ON THE FINDHORN.

LIKE many other noble rivers, the true source of the Findhorn is a subject of dispute, some maintaining that the parent rill comes from the mountains of Laggan, not far from the source of the Spey ; while others regard the springs that issue from a mountain side nearer Stratherrick as its true source. After a very rapid and impetuous run of about 60 miles, upon the whole in a pretty straight line from the south-west to the north-east, its many loops and bends adding probably 20 to 25 miles to its length, it enters the Moray Firth close to the ancient fishing village of Findhorn, a few miles below Forres. For variety and grandeur of scenery the Findhorn is unsurpassed in Great Britain. To gaze far down from the brink of some dizzy cliff upon the turbulent impetuous stream when in full spate, dashing and tossing in wildest fury against the jutting granite rocks and huge ragged boulders, in its swift and headlong career along the bed of its deep indented ravine, for long stretches forming one continuous raging, foaming cataract, is a very interesting and impressive scene—once seen never to be forgotten.

“ The Findhorn’s sweeping waters, rolling on in kingly might,
Now slumbering calm, now flashing by in many a line of light ;
The giant rocks that tower above, the crags man dare not scale,
Where the Alpine fir and gnarled oak sigh hoarsely in the gale.”

The scenery for many miles along its banks, and more especially from its junction with the Divie below Relugas House to the foot of the glen at the limestone quarries, is exceedingly wild and grand, every few yards presenting a fresh and romantic scenic picture.

The estate of Relugas was at one time owned by the late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, author of several interesting and popular works, including a volume containing a very full and graphic account of the memorable floods in the province of Moray and adjoining districts, which occurred in the year 1829. Relugas House occupies a singularly beautiful and romantic site on an elevated plateau of ground, bounded on the east by the Divie, and on the west by the Findhorn, the fine sloping lawns stretching down towards the river. The front to the south overlooks a long stretch of

“The wild romantic banks which fringe the winding Divie’s side.”

A few hundred yards above the confluence of the two rivers, at the lower end of Rannoch, or Randolph’s Haugh, the Findhorn takes a sudden bend, and forms a wide, circular, whirling, tossing linn, from which it enters a narrow gap or gateway—Randolph’s Leap—between two opposite lofty rocks, probably not more than 8 to 10 feet wide, but evidently very deep, through which the whole river flows. Were the gap closed up the haugh above would very soon be flooded, and a lake of considerable extent formed. During the great flood of 1829 the river at this point rose 50 feet above its ordinary level. Sir T. D. Lauder says—“The next spot I visited on the morning of the 4th was the Findhorn at Randolph’s Bridge. I have already mentioned that the flood rose to the height of 50 feet there. I found it in its greatest grandeur, flooding over the whole haugh of Rannoch, carrying large trees with their roots and branches triumphantly around it. The tumult of the surges was so

tremendous that the primitive rocks shook as the Divie Bridge had done the previous evening. Nothing can convey an idea of the violence and velocity of the water that shot away from the whirling sea above the cliffs. It was scarcely possible to follow with the eye the trees and wreck that floated like straws on its surface. The force was as much more than that of a raging ocean as gunpowder ignited within the confined tube of a cannon is more terribly powerful than the same material when suffered to explode on the open ground." The narrow gap is called Randolph's Leap, around which long ago was the scene of the terrible hand-to-hand battle of the "Lost Standard," fought between Randolph, Earl of Moray, and the Comyns. The wildest and grandest part of the Findhorn Glen is between Randolph's Leap and Sluie. The deepest and narrowest part is at the Esses—a series of rapids and salmon leaps, and where during the flood of 1829 the river rose 50 feet above its ordinary level, the same height as at Randolph's Leap. The tidy little hamlet of Sluie consists of five neat slated cottages on the bank and overlooking the river. The occupants of the five cottages are usually closely engaged for more than one half of the year at the salmon net fishing on the river. From Sluie down to Coulternose—the termination of the Glen—the valley is much wider, and the character of wildness disappears with the precipitous granite rocks, while that of richness and beauty continue. Immediately below Sluie the appearance of the river's channel is all at once completely changed. Instead of the grey granite and whinstone rocks the river flows along a bed of soft reddish sandstone, rising up in some places in high overhanging cliffs. A short way below Sluie a row of old hoary oak trees may be seen close to the river side, and skirting the border of a beautiful and extensive green meadow, a singularly lonely sequestered spot, which from time imme-

morial had been the chosen abode of a large colony of herons—consisting, I believe, of about three hundred members, more or less, who literally encased the branches of the trees with their bulky nests. These stately birds when absent from their nests were constantly seen, either hovering above the river's course or sitting patiently on its brink eagerly watching for their finny prey, and used to lend an additional interest and charm to the surrounding picturesque scene, while the lofty cliffs above them afforded ample opportunity to the passing traveller of leisurely studying their interesting and often amusing habits. A long feud had existed between the herons and a numerous neighbouring colony of jackdaws, and for long continual skirmishes were kept up between the opposing camps. Now and then a band of the jabbering daws would take up their position in the branches of some of the lofty trees to watch the movements of the enemy; and whenever one of the herons would leave its nest a few of the more daring ring-leaders of the impudent daws would pounce down from their lofty watch-tower into the nest which the heron had just left, and either smash the eggs or roll them over the side into the river. At length the daws had resolved to challenge the enemy to a regular pitched battle, and one day—I have not been able to find out the exact day and date, but off and on about twenty years ago—the daws had summoned a numerous host of their friends throughout the surrounding country. After a prolonged and hotly-contested bloody battle, the plucky jacky-daws gained a great and glorious victory over their bigger long-legged enemies, and at once took possession of their now vanquished foe's camp and all it contained. Shortly after their disastrous defeat the herons began to survey the surrounding district, and at length selected a quiet secluded spot a short way below Kincorth, close to the Culbin Sands, as their new abode. For many long years the heronry

in the Findhorn Glen used to be an object of special interest and attraction to the folks of Forres and district, and more especially to the many strangers who annually visited the famed Findhorn Glen.

At a certain point of the road along the brink of the glen, about a mile or so below Sluie, where the river takes a sweeping bend, a wide and magnificent prospect is obtained. A long stretch of the river is seen rolling majestically onwards through an extensive and beautiful semicircular vale called the "Mead of St John," so called from a religious edifice which stood upon it in bygone days. At its lower end the valley gets gradually narrower, and the river is again for a short space confined between high rocky banks; but immediately after passing through the narrow gap called Coulternose, the Findhorn escapes entirely from its long narrow rocky glen, and glides grandly onwards with a gentle flow along a bed of white sand and gravel to the sea, passing in beautiful sweeping curves through the level fertile lands around Forres, bounded on the north by the white sandhills of Culbin; and, beyond, in the far distance, across the Moray Firth, is seen the bold outline of a long sweeping stretch of the Sutherland and Caithness mountain peaks. On the west side of the valley, finely situated on elevated ground midst extensive wooded parks and grassy lawns, stands Darnaway Castle, the ancient seat of the Earls of Moray, commanding a wide and magnificent outlook. On the east side of the valley, situated on a badly chosen site, completely screened and buried amidst a forest of tall giant hoary trees, stands Altyre House, the residence of Sir William Gordon Cumming of Altyre.

Probably there is no other river in Scotland more liable to sudden and extraordinary spates than the Findhorn. Many destructive floods are on record; but by far the greatest and most disastrous ever witnessed probably since the country

was inhabited occurred between the 3rd and 4th of August in the year 1829. The value of land destroyed and carried away, of houses overturned, and of valuable timber torn up by the roots and swept away along the course of the Findhorn and the other streams affected by the floods, exceeded all calculation. There are several distinct marks along the glen showing the exact height to which the river had risen. One of these flood-marks—an erect hewn pillar of freestone, with an arrow neatly cut out on one side, and with the words “Flood-mark ; 3rd and 4th August 1829,” underneath, may be seen immediately below Relugas House and opposite Randolph’s Leap. There is another distinct flood-mark on the ruins of the old mill at Logie, which stands back between 70 and 80 feet from the brink of the rock over the river. The height of the flood-mark—an arrow cut out on one of the corner stones of the gable—is about 14 feet. The whole height of the river above its ordinary level was about 30 feet, with a breadth of about 240 feet. The lower flat of the mill, owing to a whirling eddy, got filled quite solidly with sand to the ceiling, which probably prevented the entire building from being swept away. The extensive level fertile plain between the mouth of the glen and the sea was one whirling surging lake, some small vessels sailing up from the sea over cornfields, hedges, &c., to Forres. The ancient town of Forres, which stands on an elevated sandy ridge, was nearly all surrounded by water, and all communication with the suburbs cut off except by boats. Many people escaped being drowned by taking refuge on the roofs of their houses till rescued by brave volunteer crews in rowing boats. When the flood had partially subsided, a large number of salmon were caught in shallow pools of water midst the wasted cornfields, behind hedges, &c.

The fine old stone bridge of Findhorn, near Forres—consisting of a centre arch 95 and one on either side of 75

feet span—was swept clean away before the overwhelming torrent. The old bridge was replaced some 50 feet higher up the river, two years afterwards, by a suspension bridge, built from plans by Sir Samuel Brown, R.N., at a cost of about £10,000, and is probably one of the most beautiful structures of the kind to be seen in broad Scotland. The handsome gothic arches which form the entrance to the bridge are flanked on either side by lofty and finely-proportioned towers, built of light-coloured freestone, on which rest the massive chains from which the bridge is suspended, the lofty towers forming a prominent and pleasing feature in the surrounding wooded landscape. A few hundred yards below the suspension bridge the river is spanned by the Highland Railway viaduct, formed of three spans of 150 feet each, affording a clear water way of 450 feet. This handsome iron viaduct was opened in October 1858. A short way further down the river there is a public ferry.

If a band of water-kelpies from the Findhorn Glen were to make a raid some dark night on the salmon nets along the river-side, take them all on their backs and carry them out to the middle of the Moray Firth, sink them to the bottom of the sea and keep them there, the Findhorn would be one of the best rod fishing streams in Scotland. A large number of salmon grilse and sea trout enter the river every season, but anglers have not much chance of securing heavy baskets so long as the river continues to be raked daily with murderous nets. The well-known and respected firm of Messrs Hogarth & Co., of Aberdeen, have been for many years the lessees of the fishing from the mouth of the river as far up as it can be fished with the net. Sluie, which is about nine miles from the mouth, is the highest station. The Messrs Hogarth are very liberal in granting permission to fish for trout to any respectable persons who apply for it,

with the condition annexed that if any angler happen to catch a big salmon or grilse he is in honour bound to deliver them up to the manager of the fishings. The lessees have a blank day—I think it is every eighth day—on which they are not at liberty to use their nets on any part of the river; but even this blank day, which should have been reserved to the people of Forres, is let to another party (Mr Bisset), who has a lease of the salmon fishing along the sea shore and round the mouth of the river. As a proof of the large number of salmon that go up the river, it would appear to be a well-authenticated fact that on one occasion, a good many years ago, no fewer than 1,300 salmon were caught in the famous Sluie pool in one night. This well-known and remarkable pool is always fished at night, and the work is attended with considerable danger to the fishermen. In some parts it is very deep, and surrounded at several points by jutting overhanging rocky cliffs.

The first day I had ever fished on the Findhorn was while spending some holidays at Forres; I crossed the river by the ferry, and fished down the west side. I secured a good basket. Besides a number of yellow trout, I took nine sea trout out of one pool, and finer trout I never saw, just newly run up from the sea, as clear as silver, and in splendid condition. Next day I resolved to go up the river, and while buying some flies in a shop before starting, a Forres fisher (Mr C.)—who I afterwards learned is reckoned one of the best anglers in the town—walked hurriedly into the shop to get some indiarubber bait hooks. Although I had never seen him before, I took the liberty of asking him if he was for the river, and he replied that he was just going off to have a day's fishing. Seeing a disengaged cab standing opposite the shop door, we at once hailed cabby, and directed him to drive as fast as he could up to the old limestone quarries. "All right, sir," quo' he, and in a jiffey whipped

the hap off his old nag's ("Turk") hurdies, and mounted to his seat like a lintie, gave a smart crack with his whip, as much as to say—"Now, auld Turk, put your best fit foremost, and show these fellows what you can do." Nothing seemed to raise "crusty Bob's" dander more readily than to hear any disparaging remarks made anent his big-boned, knock-kneed, worn-out looking old horse, and he declared, with emphasis, "that when Turk was in his prime there was not his match in all Morayshire; that he thought little of spanking out twenty miles an hour without a hair on his back being up or down." The distance from the Cross of Forres to the lime quarries is only two miles and a "bittock," but I suppose that, in or derto simplify matters at settling the fare, the cabby called it three. On reaching the quarries, we paid Bob his fare, and discharged him there and then, and at once scrambled down the steep, rough, wooded bank, and landed at the river-side opposite a splendid long weil; but to fish it properly one requires to wade. It was a fine bright sunny morning, with a smart south-west breeze blowing down the glen. We at once began to put our rods in order, and mutually arranged that he would fish up the river, and that I would fish down. We both filled and lighted our pipes before commencing the day's sport. He then walked up the side a bit, and boldly stepped into the river. As I did not intend to wade, I found it rather difficult to get a good place to stand upon. The bank is very rough, with a *debris* of stones, bushes, trees, &c., to the very edge of the water; but on going down the side a short way I found a spot where I could throw my line with some freedom. At my second throw I hooked a pretty large and very vigorous sea trout. On the spur of the moment I seized my pipe, with the burning dottle, and put it hurriedly into my coat pocket. In a few minutes afterwards, while all my attention was absorbed watching the rapid movements of the big lively

trout, I suddenly became enveloped in a cloud of stifling reek. My first momentary impression was that some of the water-kelpies from the glen had kindled one of the old lime-kilns just close above me, until I felt my back getting hot, and saw my small steel clip, and sundry other useful articles, dropping on the ground, and then discovered to my dismay that my clothes were on fire. I instantly threw down my rod, and pitched off my coat and vest, and saw that the linings of the said articles were in a blaze. While working vigorously extinguishing the flames, my pirn gave a sharp bir-bir, and I noticed with the tail of my eye that my favourite rod, which I have used for more than a quarter of a century, was being hauled into the flowing stream. I at once sprang to seize it, and not a moment too soon, as the butt end of the rod was on the point of slipping over the ledge of the rock into the rapid swirling current below. It took me an hour to get matters put in order again. However, I was glad that I managed to secure this big trout, and after tying up some of the big gaps in my coat and vest with bits of string—the coat pockets were entirely burnt out—I walked off, and did not try another cast until I was fairly clear of the steep wooded bank, and had reached the Red Craig pool, where I fished mostly the rest of the day. I had no sooner commenced to fish than I was somewhat startled by observing several biggish stones being pitched, evidently with considerable force, into the river, close to the opposite side. I had never been at the place before, and being impatient to make up leeway at my day's work, I did not at first pay much heed to my surroundings; but being curious to ascertain the cause, I began to make a careful survey. There was not a single person, or even a house of any sort, to be seen in any direction. There was a farmhouse not far off, but hid from my view by a plantation. During my stay at Forres I had heard such frightful eerie stories anent the queer doings of

water-kelpies and uncannie Forres witches—three of whom, in the days of yore, on the “*Blasted Heath*,” not far from where I stood, had the audacity to encounter and stop the way of the dauntless warrior Macbeth and his retinue, when marching from Inverness—that maybe I felt somewhat shaky in my shoes. The Red Craig pool consists of a long semi-circular well, pretty broad in some parts—probably from 150 to 200 feet—with a strong current on the opposite or west side. On the east side, from which I was fishing, the water is comparatively smooth, with an extensive white, gravelly, flat shingle.

At first sight the Red Craig looks just like an almost perpendicular precipice extending for about a quarter of a mile or so, rising sheer up from the edge of the river to the height, I daresay, of about 200 feet, crowned with a forest of pine. The face of the Craig, from where I stood, presents a somewhat singular picture. There are several distinctly different stratas or layers, although nearly the same light, reddish colour. The first thirty feet or so from the base appears like firmly consolidated sand, and about perpendicular. The next bed or layer consists of rough gravel mixed with fine sand, with lumps of stones here and there, and with more slope. The face is overlapped at the top by a thick network of bare tree roots. I did not require to watch long till I saw where the shower of stones were coming from. A numerous flock of noisy, jabbering jacky-daws were flying hither and thither—some of them alighting on a stone projecting out from the face of the Craig, which, with the touch of the daws, lost its slight hold and rolled down, gaining increased momentum till it reached the plumb-part, thence bounded a good bit across into the rapid stream below. The process of the river wearing away the Craig is continually going on from year to year. A quantity of fine sand is constantly running down the steep face into the river, or, if the stream is low, forming

into a series of small pyramids along the base of the cliff, resembling heaps of meal or flour on falling down through an aperture upon the floor after going through the process of grinding—to be swept clean away when the river rises in volume. Now and then a noble pine tree that has been gradually undermined topples over, and comes rolling down with roots and branches entire with a rumbling crash into the river.

My Forres friend joined me in the course of the afternoon, and on examining and comparing baskets we found that we had exactly the same number of fish, and in all my fishing experiences I never saw two baskets so much alike in every respect. In each there was one trout a good bit bigger and one a good bit smaller than the others. I fully believe that although all the fish in our respective baskets had been carefully weighed one by one, the weight would not have varied half an ounce.





A Singular Adventure on the River Dee,

WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SKETCH OF ITS HIGHER
REACHES, INCLUDING BALMORAL.

THE Dee ranks either as the fourth or fifth largest of our Scotch rivers. It issues from a small spring near the summit of Ben Muich-Dhui—which stands 4,300 feet high—at an elevation of about 4,050 feet above the sea. Ben Muich-Dhui is surrounded by an assemblage of other lofty summits, several of which—including Cairntoul, Breriach, Cairngorm—are considerably over 4,000 feet above the sea, and, with the exception of Ben Nevis, are the highest mountains in Scotland. They all appear pretty close together. Cairntoul is the most southerly and Cairngorm the most northerly of the group, but owing to their dumpling-shaped formation (their summits being comparatively flat), these Aberdeen mountains are very uninteresting compared to many of the Perthshire Bens, or the picturesque conical peaks of the Arran and Skye mountains.

For nearly thirty miles from its source the infant Dee flows about due south through a singularly wild and desolate region, seldom trod by human footsteps.

“ Beyond the grisly cliffs which guard
The infant rills of Highland Dee,
Where hunter's horn was never heard,
Nor bugle of the forest bee ;

'Mid wastes that dorn and dreary lie,
 One mountain rears its mighty form,
 Disturbs the moon in passing by,
 And smiles above the thunderstorm."—*Hogg*.

It forms a junction with another head stream near the Linn of Dee, thence flows for other 65 miles averagely in a straight line due east along the beautiful and finely-wooded valley of the Dee, falling into the sea at Aberdeen and forming its harbour.

The famed Linn of Dee presents a most remarkable and unique spectacle, unlike any other place of the kind that I have ever seen, and is quite beyond the power of my pen properly to describe or pourtray. For a considerable distance the water rushes along between two opposite perpendicular or overhanging precipices from 30 to 40 feet high, and in several parts where the river has formed a channel beneath the rocks it cannot be seen from the brink above, but its never-ending loud rumbling roar may be heard at a distance of several miles. The deep, weird gorge is so very narrow at the top that any active person with a good steady nerve can easily jump across from one side to the other. There are either three or four small falls, but when the river is in flood the falls disappear, and the river becomes one wild, raging, foaming torrent, which sometimes fills the chasm nearly to the brim, and the wild fury of the pent-up torrent is simply tremendous, presenting a very remarkable and imposing spectacle.

“ He who first met the Highlands' swelling blue
 Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
 Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
 And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
 Long have I roam'd through lands which are not mine,
 Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,
 Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
 Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep :
 But 'twas not all long ages' lore, nor all
 Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall ;

The infant rapture still survived the boy,
And Lochnagar with Ida look'd o'er Troy—
Mixed Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,
And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount."—*Byron.*

Lord Byron when a boy one day made a narrow escape with his life at this spot. As he was scrambling along the steep declivity immediately above the gorge, a tuft of heather caught his lame foot, and he fell all his length, and rolled down, but his attendant fortunately managed to get hold of him just on the brink of the precipice, and saved him from instant death.

A portion of Lord Byron's early life was spent at Ballatrach, on Deeside, below Balmoral, on the same side of the river, and under the shadow of "Dark Lochnagar." It is to the Dee that he alludes in his poem, "When I roved a young Highlander"—

"I arose with the dawn : with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along ;
I breasted the billows of Dee's rushing tide,
And heard at the distance the Highlander's song."

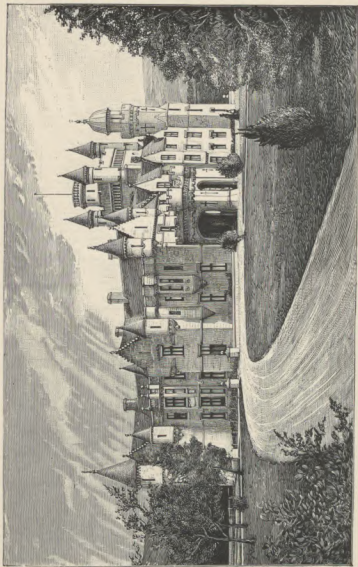
A handsome bridge, built with light-coloured granite, was thrown across the gorge in 1857, and opened by the Queen in person.

From the Linn—which lies close on 1,200 feet above the sea—to Aberdeen, a distance of some 64 miles, the river has such a very gradual fall that there is not a single mill of any sort driven by it, which, I daresay, cannot be said of any of the other principal rivers of Scotland.

In days of yore, before the murderous stake-nets were placed round its mouth and lower reaches, an immense number of salmon used to ascend the river, and when servants were being engaged by the Deeside lairds they stipulated that they should only have salmon for dinner two days a week ! But times are now changed, and if the lairds get salmon twice a week they may think themselves fairly well off. The

Dee, however, is still a very good salmon river ; the rod fishing alone on its higher reaches yields an annual rental of over £4,000, besides considerable stretches of the water being preserved by the respective proprietors for their own sport. Her Majesty the Queen alone has about seven miles of the river, which, of course, is preserved, and usually affords capital sport. As a rule the Dee salmon are much smaller in size than those of the Tay ; occasionally, however, a big fellow finds its way up the river. A few years ago a 57-pounder was killed in the Ardoe pool, which, I believe, was the heaviest salmon caught with the rod that season (1889). The Ardoe pool, which is about 200 yards long, is one of the best pools on the Dee. This famous pool has recently been added to the Heathcot water (Dr Stewart's), which now extends for fully two miles of the river.

Some five or six miles below the Linn of Dee the ancient well-known village of Castleton of Braemar, containing about 400 inhabitants, is reached. It is finely situated on rising ground on the sloping south side of the Dee, which it overlooks. The village stands at an elevation of about 1,100 feet above the sea, and is generally reckoned a very bracing, healthy place, and consequently a favourite health resort for visitors from various parts of the country during the summer season. The Cluny, which descends from the hills to the south, flows through the centre of the village, forming the boundary between the Duke of Fife's estate on the west and the Invercauld estate on the east side, and joining the Dee about half a mile below the Castleton. The Cluny divides the village as near as maybe into two equal divisions, with a Roman Catholic, a Free Church, and the Fife Arms Hotel on the west ; the Established Church, the Episcopal Church, and the Invercauld Hotel—a very handsome building—on the east side of the river. The village has a public library and a meteorological observatory, with a set of the finest



BALMORAL CASTLE FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

(From a photograph by G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.)

instruments—a gift from the late Prince Consort, who was greatly esteemed by all the folks of Braemar.

On the 6th September 1715, John Erskine, thirty-ninth Earl of Mar, amidst a large assemblage of his retainers and followers, raised the standard of rebellion at Castleton, on a rounded knoll close to the Invercauld Hotel.

The old castle of Braemar, whose ruins stand on the east bank of the Cluny, close by the bridge, is said to have been Malcolm Canmore's hunting seat—the wild regions of Braemar being then, as now, widely famed for the abundance of its deer, grouse, and all sorts of wild game. After it became the property of the Earls of Mar they used to hold hunting tournaments or entertainments of great splendour, attended by a host of nobles and Highland chieftains, &c., from all parts of the country.

A short way below Castleton, on the north side of the river, straight opposite the "Lion's Face," occupying a splendid site, stands Invercauld House, the seat of the Farquharsons of Invercauld, an ancient and respected family, who have held the estate of Invercauld for centuries.

Some nine miles below Castleton stands Balmoral Castle, now familiarly known the world over—at least by name—as the fondly-cherished Highland home of our beloved widowed Queen, who has endeared herself to all of every creed and station in the Balmoral district, more especially the afflicted, the poor, and the needy. The castle occupies a most charming site within a peninsula formed by a sweeping semicircular bend of the Dee, which flows past pretty close to the back of the house. The whole of the peninsula, which is bounded on the south by a deer fence fully seven feet high, along the base of Craig-Gowan, is laid out in beautiful lawns and pleasure grounds. Balmoral was first leased in 1848, and afterwards (in 1852) purchased from the Fyfe Trustees by the late Prince Consort. The old castle not affording sufficient

accommodation for the Royal Family, it was resolved to build a new one, which stands on the same level with the former building, but nearer the brink of the Dee. The building is in the Scottish baronial style of architecture. The design consists of two separate blocks of buildings, connected by wings, at the east angle of which the massive tower, 35 feet square, rises to the height of 80 feet, and is surmounted by a tower with circular staircase rising to the height of 100 feet above the ground. The plans of the building—which has ample accommodation for about 130 persons—were by the late Mr William Smith, architect, Aberdeen. The stones, which are of a very light grey granite, were taken from a quarry on the estate, and being dressed in ashlar work the castle looks as if it had been hewn out of one of the large granite rocks which so much abound on the Balmoral estate. The foundation-stone was laid on the 28th September 1853, and was occupied for the first time by the Royal Family on the 7th September 1856. The castle stands at an elevation of about 930 feet above the level of the sea at Aberdeen. The castle and its immediate surroundings on the romantic banks of the winding Dee—

“Dee’s silver stream rolls its swift waters near,
Gilt with the golden sunbeams here and there”—

are exceedingly beautiful, presenting a most charming landscape picture that could hardly be excelled. A very marked and striking feature of the picture that bursts on the view when approaching Balmoral is an assemblage of conical-shape peaked cairns, standing out prominently on the crest of a series of rounded knolls along the summit of Craig-Gowan, which fronts and overlooks the castle, and the charming and picturesque dell spread out before the spectator’s admiring gaze below.

I had seen these interesting cairns, which lend such

additional interest and effect to the place, repeatedly when passing up and down to and from Braemar, along the north side of the river; but being curious to have a nearer view of them, while spending a winter several years ago with some friends in Strathdee, a well-known Aberdeen gentleman gave me a letter of introduction to Dr Profeit at Balmoral, who, on glancing over my friend's letter, at once gave me full permission to go up to the top of Craig-Gowan and survey the Queen's Cairns.

[It may be mentioned here that the writer of these pages was instrumental in having a cairn erected on the summit of several of our lofty Highland Bens, including the Queen's Jubilee Cairn on the crest of Ben Ledi—"Hill of God"—erected by a band of loyal Highlanders on the 14th June 1887.]

I will here give a brief pen-and-ink sketch of only two of these interesting cairns—namely, the first and the last erected. The others are all pretty much alike in shape and size—a conical form, and probably about twenty feet more or less in height. On the face of each there is a tablet of polished granite, on which may be read a brief history—date of birth, marriage, &c., of the respective members of the Royal Family. The first erected of these eleven cairns has the following inscription on a block of polished granite, which is built in one side of the erection, some five or six feet from the ground:—

THIS CAIRN WAS ERECTED IN PRESENCE OF
QUEEN VICTORIA AND ALBERT PRINCE CONSORT,
TO COMMEMORATE THE PURCHASE OF
THE BALMORAL ESTATE.
OCTOBER 11TH, 1852.

The original cairn was only a comparatively small erection, but some years ago it was encased in a much larger structure

built of light-coloured granite, and only a comparatively small portion of the old cairn, including the original tablet, can now be seen through a small arch in the outside case.

“Monday, October 11th 1852.

“This day has been a very happy, lucky, and memorable one—our last! A fine morning.

“Albert had to see Mr Walpole, and therefore it was nearly eleven o'clock before we could go up to the top of Craig-Gowan to see the cairn built, which was to commemorate our taking possession of this dear place; the old cairn having been pulled down. We set off with all the children, ladies, gentlemen, and a few of the servants, including Macdonald and Grant, who had not already gone up, and at the Moss House, which is half way, Mackay met us and preceded us playing, Duncan and Donald going before him to the highest point of Craig-Gowan, where were assembled all the servants and tenants, with their wives and children and old relations. All our little friends were there: Mary Symons and Lizzie Steuart, the four Grants, and several others.

“I then placed the first stone, after which Albert laid one, then the children according to their ages. All the ladies and gentlemen placed one, and then every one came forward at once, each person carrying a stone, and placed it on the cairn. Mr and Mrs Anderson were there; Mackay played; and whisky was given to all. It took, I am sure, an hour building, and whilst it was going on some merry reels were danced on a big stone opposite. All the old people (even the gardener's wife from Corbie Hill, near Abergeldy) danced, and many of the children. Mary Symons and Lizzie Steuart especially danced so nicely, the latter with her hair all hanging down. Poor dear old “Monk,” Sir Robert Gordon's faithful old dog, was sitting there amongst us all. At last when the cairn was completed Albert climbed up to the top of it and placed the last stone, after which three hearty cheers were given. It was a gay, pretty, and touching sight, and I felt almost inclined to cry. The view was so beautiful over the dear hills, the day so fine, the whole so *gemuthlick*. May God bless this place, and allow us yet to see it and enjoy it many a long year.”—*Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands.*

The last one erected of these cairns stands on the summit of Craig-Lowrigan, separated from Craig-Gowan by a deep gully, along which there is a road, and which overlooks the castle and vale below. There is a nice zig-zag path made to the respective cairns through the long heather. This great cairn is quite an imposing structure, and forms a very prominent object in the Balmoral district, and is familiarly known along Deeside as “Prince Albert's Memorial Cairn.”

The erection is in the form of a pyramid—indeed, as near as may be, an exact miniature of Cheops or Great Pyramid of Egypt—which, according to Herodotus, covers an area of thirteen acres. This ancient writer gives 800 feet as the height, and likewise the length of its base on each side, or in all 3,200 feet round the base. The same writer says that 100,000 men worked without interruption for twenty years in building this enormous pyramid—I believe the most stupendous structure ever reared by the hand of man.

“ Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops.”

The late Dr Norman MacLeod gives a very racy and amusing account of his attempt to climb Cheops Pyramid, or Big Cairn, as the highly-gifted, widely-known, and esteemed Highland divine terms it. With the assistance of five Arabs, two in front and three behind, the doctor managed the first twenty steps, and then stuck. “ Walking along the base of the structure, which seemed interminable, we got upon the first ledge, and began the ascent. Half-a-dozen bare-armed, lightly-clad, dark-complexioned, white-teethed children of the desert surrounded me, measuring me with their eyes, and jabbering irreverently in Arabic about my size, I believe. . . . The next wall above me was somewhere above my chest or chin ; so, meditating upon the vanity of human wishes, upon the loss to my parish (so argued the flesh) by a vacancy, upon the inherent excellence of humility, the folly of pride and of sinful ambition, I then in a subdued but firm tone declared that no arguments with which I was then acquainted would induce me to go a yard higher.”

The Prince Albert Memorial Cairn measures about 45 feet along each side, or in all 180 feet round the base, and slopes up to a sharp point at the top. The height is the same as the length of each side. The structure is composed of blocks

of roughly-dressed granite, which will last for ages to come. There are a number of polished tablets built in a line on one side (east side) of the cairn, on which is inscribed in large letters the initials of Prince Albert's various titles, &c. There are several other larger tablets, with passages of holy writ, one of which (by far the longest) is said to have been selected for Her Majesty the Queen by the late Dean Stanley. I will here give a copy of the inscription on one only of the tablets, and which is placed on the side of the building facing Balmoral Castle :—

TO THE BELOVED MEMORY
OF
ALBERT, THE GREAT AND GOOD
PRINCE CONSORT,
RAISED BY HIS BROKEN-HEARTED WIDOW,
VICTORIA R.
AUGUST 21, 1862.

“ He being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time,
For his soul pleased the Lord ;
Therefore hastened He to take him
Away from among the wicked.”—*Wisdom of Solomon, iv. 13, 14.*

The Balmoral estate now extends for about 11 miles along the south side of the Dee, stretching away southward to the very summit of the wild and precipitous classic “ Dark Lochnagar.”

“ 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 still they are sacred 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 Lochnagar.

Ah ! there my young footsteps in infancy wander'd ;
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid ;
On chieftains 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 place to the rays of the bright polar star ;
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,
Disclosed by the natives of dark Lochnagar.

'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 Lochnagar 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 Lochnagar.

'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 early 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 Lochnagar.

Years have rolled on, Lochnagar, since I left you,
Years must elapse ere I tread you again :
Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft you,
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's plain.
England ! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roamed o'er the mountains afar :
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic !
The steep frowning glories of dark Lochnagar !" — *Byron.*

Some nine miles below Balmoral, Ballater, the metropolis of Strathdee and the terminus of the Deeside Railway, is reached. The village stands close on 700 feet above the sea, has for long been famed for its bracing air and fine situation, and during the summer season is usually crowded with visitors, chiefly Aberdonians. At Panninich, situated a couple of miles or so from Ballater on the south side of the river, there are several mineral wells, the "wonderfu'" virtues of which has long been famed in Highland tradition.

The Aberdeen water supply is diverted from the Dee at Cairnton, fully 22 miles from the Granite City. A special feature of the works is a tunnel, nearly 800 yards in length, which is cut out through below the hill of Cairnton, consisting

of solid rock of a very hard nature. At the lower end of the tunnel are the filtering beds and the Invercannie Reservoir, estimated to hold 15,000,000 gallons of water. From the reservoir the water flows most of the way in a close culvert along the sloping north side of the valley to Aberdeen—a distance of nearly 20 miles. The ceremony of opening the works by Her Majesty the Queen took place on the 16th October 1866—the beautiful silver handle, with a long and elaborate inscription on it, by which the Queen turned on the water, may still be seen in the pump-house below Cults. The estimated cost of the works was £130,000.

At Peterculter the water is conveyed across the glen along a high bridge in iron pipes. The Peterculter Glen is one of the most picturesque and romantic spots in the district, and is visited by great numbers of people during the summer season. A special object of attraction to the place is a large-sized wooden figure—probably 8 or 9 feet in height—of the bold Rob Roy MacGregor, arrayed in the well-known tartan of the ancient and renowned Clan Alpine or Gregor, with a drawn sword in his right hand and a shield in his left, in an attitude of bold defiant self-defence. The figure is placed on a rocky shelf in the face of a precipice, forming the east side of the gorge, and from its unique position presenting a very striking object, and is seen to greatest advantage from the high bridge that spans the Peterculter Burn and the deep ravine—indeed, it can hardly be seen from any other standpoint. When, by whom, or for what object the figure was placed there I have never been able to ascertain. I have been told that the first figure at one period served as a figure-head of a large vessel belonging to an Aberdeen gentleman, but at a comparatively recent date it was replaced by a new one, much larger than its predecessor, and representing a splendid specimen of a gigantic kilted Highlander—indeed, one of the best I have ever seen anywhere.

I have often fished on several parts of the Dee from Heathcot to the Linn of Dee, but chiefly for trout—caught only one solitary salmon—but was never very successful, and, so far as my personal experience goes, I found the Dee a very poor trouting river compared to its twin sister stream the Don, which flows parallel only some miles farther north, and falls into the sea a mile on the north side of Aberdeen. The Don is one of the best trouting streams in Aberdeenshire. I have, however, got fairly good baskets of nice trout on some of the tributaries to the Dee, especially the Cluny.

Having had no special fishing adventures on the Dee worth recording, I will here give a brief account of a somewhat singular and unusual adventure—namely, a severe and prolonged struggle between a dog and a salmon on the river. Several years ago while staying on Deeside I called one day upon a Mr Cruickshanks, who resided in a tidy villa with a fine garden, on the banks of the Dee, close to the north end of the suspension bridge—“the shakie brigie,”* as it is usually called by natives of the place. (This very convenient and useful bridge was erected solely at his own expense by the late Rev. George Morrison, D.D., for long the respected minister of the parish of Banchory-Devenick, for the convenience of those of his flock who resided on the north side of the river.) Mr Cruickshanks was for long well known in Aberdeen, and for many years a respected elder in the Parish Church of Banchory-Devenick. My chief object in calling upon him was to see his famous dog “Sancho,” whose remarkable swimming feats I had often heard related. “Sancho” was said to be a native of Russia, and altogether a somewhat singular-looking dog; dark brown colour, with short, glossy, curly hair, peculiar clear green-coloured eyes, a finely-formed head, his nose not unlike a polar bear’s, legs

* Shaking Bridge.

An Adventure on the River Dee.

rather short, with a well-formed powerful frame, and weighed rather over ten stone. He was a splendid swimmer, and a narrative of his exploits and adventures on the Dee would fill a small volume. However, I will simply give a brief account of one of his fishing exploits—namely, a severe and prolonged struggle with a 14-lb. salmon.

Immediately in front of Mr Cruickshanks' cottage the Dee is spanned by a neat, substantial suspension iron bridge—for foot passengers only. For a hundred yards or so both above and below the bridge the river runs with a strong current, and especially along the north bank, where the river is much deeper, with a gravelly shingle, and sloping towards the opposite bank. A few hundred yards lower down a long, sweeping, semicircular bend occurs in the channel, forming a long deep well—one of the best salmon pools in the river.

On the opening day of the salmon fishing that season, Mr Cruickshanks, accompanied by his favourite dog and constant companion, went down the river side to see the result of the first "shot" in the famous pool below the bridge. Either eight or nine fish were caught in the first haul, and while the fishermen were taking them out of the net one of the salmon slipped through their hands and wriggled down the steep, sloping, grassy bank (an artificial embankment) into the river. Sancho, who had been eagerly watching the fishermen's operations, instantly plunged into the river and dived in pursuit of the escaped salmon. By-and-bye—I never saw any dog that could keep so long under water—he popped up his head about the middle of the river with the salmon firmly seized in his mouth, across the back, about a foot from the point of the tail. After a prolonged and severe struggle, sometimes above and sometimes below the water, he at length gained the side, but would not let go his hold until he landed his struggling captive on the top of the embankment, where he was soon secured by the men,

who had watched the hard tussle in the pool with keen and exciting interest.

Sancho was usually kept on the chain, but when at liberty he spent most of his time on the banks of the river; and when he saw branches or pieces of wood floating down the stream he plunged in and brought them ashore. During rainy weather, towards the end of harvest, the Dee occasionally comes down raging from bank to brae in full flood, overflowing its banks and sweeping hay ricks, cut grain, &c., along with it. Sancho has been known to land as many as twenty-four sheaves, or two full stooks of corn, in one day, without the bidding of any one, but simply for exercise and amusement to himself.





A Fishing Adventure on the Tweed.

TAKEN PRISONER BY AN OLD SERVANT OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE Tweed usually ranks in importance as the fourth of our Scottish rivers—the Tay, the Forth, and the Clyde being respectively the first, second, and third. But, estimated according to the extent of country which it drains, it far surpasses any other Scottish river except the Tay; for while the Spey, which rules next to it in volume of water, drains only 13,000 square miles; and the Clyde, which is next to the Spey, drains only 1,200; the Tweed drains 1,800. The Tweed has two principal head streams, one of which bears the name of Tweed from its source. The other is called the Lyne. Both take their rise respectively in the extreme south-west and north-west districts of Peeblesshire. From its remotest source to the sea at Berwick-on-Tweed it forms a run of about 100 miles. Its parent rill comes from a small spring called Tweed's Cross, on the extreme south-west boundary of the parish of Tweedmuir, about half-a-mile from the border of Lanarkshire on the west, and about the same distance from the border of Dumfriesshire on the south. The Tweed and the Clyde for many miles from their source flow in the same direction, and pretty near on the same level, on a high table-land of country, as if "switherin'" whether to join or separate, and whether to steer their final course toward the eastern or western ocean. Tradition says that in the days of

yore, before the city of Glasgow had acquired its great commercial importance, it was proposed to turn the waters of the Clyde into the Tweed, with the view of rendering the latter navigable to a greater distance along the Merse ; and in favour of the project, had it ever been attempted, there existed, singularly enough, remarkable facilities for accomplishing the juncture of the two streams. Close to the town of Biggar there is a mossy bog which extends all the way between the two rivers, and the difference of level of the respective waters is only a comparatively few feet. From its source to Peebles the Tweed has a fall of about 1,000 feet ; and from Peebles to the sea, a distance of some 70 miles, it has a fall of only about 500 feet.

I had often seen and fished the higher reaches of the Tweed from near its source to Peebles, but had never seen any part of it lower down till recently. One of my oldest and most valued friends had fallen into bad health, and was advised by his medical advisers to go to the Melrose Hydropathic for a change. Before he left home we had arranged that I would go to see him, and spend some days with him at Melrose. Although not able to fish much himself, my friend—who was one of the best anglers I have ever seen handle a rod—had taken his fishing gear with him. On the morning after I arrived, my friend, knowing that fishing was one of my special hobbies, offered me his rod and basket, and advised me to go and have a cast on the river close by. I was rather pleased to have the opportunity of having a few hours' fishing on the widely-famed Tweed. I was distinctly informed by my friend and the manager of the establishment that the fishing on that part of the river was quite free. On reaching the water-side I found the river a good deal dried up ; the weather had been very dry for some time previously. I was so much surprised and disappointed on seeing the murky ugly colour of the water, and the dark unpleasant-

looking banks—forming such a contrast to some of the splendid rivers of Perthshire, clear as crystal, where I had fished a few weeks previously, that I swithered for a little whether to commence fishing or not. The shingle along the bank was all covered over with some dark blue slimy stuff, chiefly caused, I believe, by the Gala, which pours its dirty and polluted waters—often the colour of ink—into the Tweed a short way higher up. However, I commenced and fished up as far as the Melrose Bridge, and finding, owing to the direction of the breeze, that I could fish better from the opposite side, I crossed over by the bridge and fished up the river. I had not proceeded far when I heard a gruff stern voice behind me—“Hae ye got liberty to fish here, sir?” Turning sharp round I stood face to face with a tall, strong, elderly-looking man. I explained to him as well as I could that I was distinctly told that the river at that part was quite free, otherwise I would be the last man to trespass on any one’s fishing ground, and to clinch the matter I opened my basket and showed him that I had not killed a single fish, either big or wee. However, he told me in quite a decided tone that I had passed the march, and that I must go along with him to the big house. Seeing how matters stood, I thought that my most prudent course was to submit to my fate, and go quietly along with my somewhat grim and stern-looking captor. While proceeding along the river side I observed a number of flat-bottomed boats or cobbles with sharp bows and broad sterns tied to some trees here and there. I ventured to ask the old keeper what these boats were for. He briefly explained to me that they were used by the fishers for getting at the best pools, &c. I then asked him if they had had good sport on the river that season, and what was the heaviest salmon they had killed. I think he said that the heaviest fish they had caught was 27 pounds. “Tuts, man,” I said,

"I killed a 43-pounder not long ago." "Did you?" quo' he. "Where?" "On Loch Tay," I said. "Ah, indeed," quo' he; "I hae often heard o' Loch Tay, and read the report of the Loch Tay salmon fishing in the *Scotsman* every day, but I canna understand very well hoo a fisher can manage to land a big salmon like that on the middle o' a deep loch." Seeing that he was very curious to hear an account of the usual mode of fishing for salmon on Loch Tay—of which he had evidently often heard, and had read the reports of the salmon fishings in the newspapers—on reaching his own house, Pairloin Cottage, on the banks and overlooking a stretch of the winding Tweed, we sat down on a rustic seat at the end of the house. I tried to give him the most glowing description I could of the famed Perthshire lake, and the usual mode of fishing for salmon on it. I took up a piece of board and drew a rough pencil sketch of one of the Loch Tay boats, which, I told him, were quite a different style and altogether much better boats than his shallow, rickety-looking cobbles, and then explained to him from the sketch that there were always two boatmen in each boat—usually big, strong, hardy fellows—each of them having two light oars, and they take turn about at the rowing. The fisher sits in the stern of the boat between his two rods, and facing the boatmen. The rods are crossed at a certain angle, the points 15 to 20 feet apart, more or less according to their length. There is usually from 50 to 70 yards of line out, with perhaps about the same length on the reels. All that the fisher can do is simply to attend carefully to his lines and reels. As a rule, he puts a smooth pellet of stone or a piece of lead on the top of the line lying on the seat-board to prevent it from running out, and the line being kept tight helps to hook a fish when it makes a grab at the bait—usually a phantom minnow. The head boatman sits next the fisher, and his gleg eye is constantly watching

the points of the rods, and readily observes if there is even a small trout nibbling at the bait. As the fisher can't well observe the points of his rods, he keeps his eye eagerly on the stone laid on the top of his line. The first hint he gets when a fish is hooked is to see the stone suddenly pitched either into the loch or sent dirling along the bottom of the boat, and hear the sharp, shrill birr-birr of the big reel spinning round at a great velocity. He then seizes the rod, while the head boatman instantly seizes the other, and reels up the line as fast as he possibly can, and puts the rod away into the bow of the boat to be out of the way, then clears the deck for action. Sometimes the exciting tussle between the fisher and the salmon lasts, as the case may be, from twenty minutes to an hour or more, the head boatman all the time directing his assistant how to steer and row the boat. Salmon often vary their tactics when fairly hooked. I have seen some make a straight run of forty or fifty yards or more comparatively near the surface, and then make a splendid leap, probably eight or ten feet, clear out of the water, coming down with a heavy splash. Others dart down, down, like an arrow to a great depth, and remain there quite still for half-an-hour or longer. When a salmon is fairly tired out he comes gradually near the surface, floundering and splashing the water with his broad tail, till at length he owns fairly beat, and turns over on his side, "pechin'" and gasping, quite exhausted. Then Seamus Mhor, Alastair Ruadh, or one of the other famed Loch Tay boatmen, who, with gaff in hand, has watched with keen and exciting interest the prolonged tussle, gives the finishing stroke to the contest by neatly gaffing the salmon, and with his strong brawny arm lands him securely in the boat; but before taking out the cleek gives him a few smart raps on the back of the head with the "bishop"—a stout stick with a rounded ball on the end, usually kept in the boat for the purpose. Many a splendid

salmon has been needlessly lost by an inexperienced duffer of a gaffer, to the great chagrin and annoyance of the angler. I told my attentive and eager listener, however, by the way, that the foregoing sketch of salmon fishing on Loch Tay applied only to experienced old stagers, and that a new beginner often finds his first tussle with a thirty pound salmon to be no bairns' play, and sometimes makes a complete bungle of it.

The old Loch Tay boatmen can tell many stirring and amusing stories about the comical mishaps and misadventures of new beginners at the salmon fishing on the loch. I related the following brief account of a big, jolly Cockney's first lesson at salmon fishing on Loch Tay to my interested captor, who had now assumed a more polite and friendly tone towards me, and listened to my story with rapt attention.

I had arranged to join an old fisher friend at the Benlawers Hotel, situated at the base of the big ben on the north side of Loch Tay, and about equi-distant from Killin and Kenmore, where we had spent a week or more at the salmon fishing regularly for many seasons. On reaching Dunblane Station on my way from Glasgow to Loch Tay, there were a goodly number of passengers with piles of luggage on the platform who had arrived from the south by the London train, and bound for Oban, &c. I took special notice of a somewhat unusual style of wooden box amongst the luggage, which I daresay might measure some 10 or 12 feet in length by 8 or 9 inches square, and secured by three iron clasps or hoops, and the porters seemed to have some difficulty getting it into the luggage van. On arriving at Killin Station—the line did not then extend to Killin—I observed the foresaid box being taken out of the van and laid on the platform, and which was addressed in prominent letters to the Killin Hotel, Perthshire. Besides the regular stage-coach for Aberfeldy and Killin, &c., there was a closed carriage, into which a

gentleman, a lady, and self stepped, followed in a few minutes by a big, frank, jolly-looking Englishman. He was no sooner seated than he began to talk, and favoured us with a brief sketch of his past history ; but it is needless to repeat much of it here, as it might not be of special interest to the reader of these rambling pages. However, he told us that he had overworked himself at some excitable business in London, and had got into such a sleepless, nervous state of health that he was unable to attend to almost anything in the way of business, and that his medical adviser had ordered him to leave London and all business affairs at once for a time and start for Scotland, and try salmon fishing for some weeks for a thorough change. After consulting several friends as to the best salmon lochs in Scotland, he was strongly recommended to go to Loch Tay, in Perthshire, as the most famed salmon loch in Scotland. This point being settled, he called on one of the best known fishing tackle makers in London and told him to prepare all the necessary tackle for salmon fishing, including rods, reels, lines, &c., and pack the whole carefully in a proper box, which was to be sent to the Euston Station on a certain day at a certain hour. After fully relating to us the purport of this his first visit to Scotland, he asked me if I could give him any information about Loch Tay. I frankly told him that I happened to make my first appearance on the world's shifting, fleeting stage on the lochside, so that I knew it pretty well, and seeing that he was a stranger to the place, that I would be delighted to give him all the information I possibly could about the loch, &c. I then added that I was on my way to have a week's salmon fishing on the famed lake myself, but was going to Lawers, some eight miles beyond Killin, and would very likely meet him on the loch some day and hear how many big salmon he had secured. He then asked me, "Where's your rods?" I pointed to my two favourite rods—each in four pieces—in their plain covers

standing in a corner of the carriage. "Do you mean to tell me," quo' he, "that you can manage to kill a large fish with such small rods as these?"

When approaching Killin he asked me if I would oblige him by examining his new rods, &c., when we reached the hotel, as he had never tried salmon fishing before. I said that I would do so with pleasure, as I had about an hour to spare before the coach would start for Aberfeldy. On reaching the hotel all the passengers came off the coach, and after some trouble the long box was safely landed on the gravel in front of the house. The landlord, as requested by letter, had engaged two experienced boatmen for the gentleman expected from London. The two men being present, they were ordered by the gentleman to get the box opened at once. After a good deal of trouble the box was at length opened, and its contents taken out and laid carefully down on the gravel. I had seen many a fisher's unnecessary display of fishing gear prepared for a fishing campaign, but had never seen anything to be compared to the contents of this gentleman's box, which had roused my curiosity the first time I saw it, and which must have cost a considerable sum of money. On looking over the various articles I told him that although his rods, reels, &c., were far too large and clumsy, still they might do well enough for trolling, but that he would not have the slightest chance of ever catching a salmon with such traces and phantom minnows; but if he would send his head boatman along to the village he would get proper minnows for a few shillings.

The boatmen—both of whom I knew very well—told me afterwards that on the following morning they made an early start for the loch, the boat gliding smoothly down with the current of the gently-flowing Lochy. It was a beautiful bright sunny morning, the placid lake like a sheet of glass, and doubtless the stranger would gaze with keen delight

upon the singularly grand and picturesque surroundings, the like of which, I daresay, he had never beheld before. On reaching Clochrin Burn—the march between the preserved and the hotel water—they landed in order to get the big rods put in proper order for the day's sport. After doing so they proceeded at the usual special fishing speed along the shore past the "Fat Man's Rock." The scenery along the shore, especially at this part of the loch, is exceedingly beautiful, the hillside in some parts rising almost sheer up from the margin of the lake in terraced, fantastic, bosky crags, overhung with rich foliage of variegated hues and colours. At several points along the shore a remarkably distinct repeating echo is returned from the precipitous rocks along the beach. On a calm day, the sharp, clear brrr of a good-going salmon reel may be distinctly heard at a distance of several miles—the smooth surface of the water seems to be a good conductor of sound. As the Highland boatmen hadn't very good English, and the Englishman could neither understand nor speak a single word of Gaelic, for a time solemn silence reigned on board the boat, while the big Londoner's whole attention was absorbed watching the graceful gambols of some young roe deer midst the copeswood high up above him along the rugged shore and a pair of capercaillies with their gaudy shining plumage, perched on a branch of a hoary Scotch fir. (These beautiful and rare birds in Scotland are numerous about Auchmore and Lochtayside.) In a twinkling, as if by magic, the scene on the boat was completely changed—a big salmon had suddenly seized the blue minnow, and the small rounded stone laid on the top of the line was sent dirling along the bottom of the boat, the reel, with its sharp, birring skirl, revolving with great velocity. Donacha, head boatman, instantly seized the other rod, winding up the long line with all possible speed, expecting, of course, the gentleman to take hold of the other rod with the salmon on ;

but the poor fellow had got such a terrible fright with the sudden noisy "hullabaloo" in the boat that instead of seizing his rod at once, as he should have done, he got completely bewildered, and trembled like a leaf in every limb. Donacha, who can do a good big "swear" in Gaelic when roused or excited, urged the Englishman to take hold of his rod or the salmon would be lost, but no use. The gentleman had got into such an excited nervous state that he was unfit for the time being to put his hand to anything. Had it been blowing a fresh breeze they would have got into a regular mess, as one of the boatmen would be obliged to use every effort to keep the boat from drifting on the rocks; but fortunately the loch was pretty calm, and the boat easily managed. The second boatman took the empty rod, and soon had it placed in the fore end of the boat, while Duncan took the other and the salmon in hand, and in less than half-an-hour had him secure in the boat—a beauty. Before the close of the day's sport they had other two salmon, which the gentleman played himself without the slightest assistance, and his was the only boat on the loch with three fish that day. He fished for several weeks, and was one of the most successful fishers on Loch Tay that season, and returned to London quite an altered man after his prolonged visit to Loch Tay and "the land of famed Breadalbane."

My captor appeared to be much interested with my brief sketch of salmon fishing on Loch Tay, and I began to feel confident that his heart was softening, and that I would get off without being sent to prison after all. By-and-bye he invited me inside his cottage, and showed me his fly-book, containing a large assortment of finely-dressed flies. Observing that I was in love with a certain fly he presented me with it, which I prized highly, and have kept it as a pattern and a memento of my fishing adventure on the Tweed.

When bidding him good-bye, after thanking him heartily for all his considerate kindness and leniency, I asked him if he would be good enough to give me his name, and that I would make it a point to pay him a visit if spared and had an opportunity of being in the district again. He at once told me that his name was John Purdie.

Meeting my friend after getting back to the establishment—"Well, Mr F.," quoth he, "good sport?" "No," I said, "I had very poor sport; I did not catch a single fin, and was taken prisoner to the bargain." I gave him a good scolding for telling me that the river was free, and told him how I was seized by a big, strong, stern-looking keeper and marched off for the jail. Instead of expressing any regret or sympathy at my misadventure, I had not heard my friend laugh so heartily for many a day.

While taking a saunter along one of the corridors of the house along with my friend, I suddenly came to a halt, and gazed with some surprise at a statue placed at the end of the corridor. I said to my friend, "There's the statue of the very man who took me prisoner on the river straight before us." My friend seemed to doubt the correctness of my story, but, on stepping forward to the statuette, we at once saw on a brass plate in front of the figure, in neat, plain letters, "John Purdie," &c., and a most excellent likeness it is, with his fishing-rod in hand, his pot hat adorned with several salmon flies, and a big salmon in his bag, with the tail sticking out above his left shoulder. We ascertained afterwards that the statuette had been executed by Mr Currie, the well-known sculptor at Melrose, and presented to the establishment by a Liverpool gentleman. We were also informed by several parties that John Purdie, when a youth, used to accompany Sir Walter Scott when fishing on the Tweed and some favourite loch in the neighbourhood of Abbotsford. I have quite forgotten the name of the loch;

it commenced with the letter "C." One is apt to fancy that the story of Sir Walter Scott fishing on his favourite stream belongs to the somewhat distant past. But the veteran John Purdie still forms a living link to the great poet and novelist, of whose cherished memory and world-wide renown every Scotchman scattered throughout the remotest parts of the globe is justly proud. Two of Purdie's uncles were for long faithful and much-valued servants to Sir Walter Scott. Charlie Purdie was reckoned the most celebrated angler in the district in his day. He had charge, partly as lessee, of the salmon fishing for several miles of the Tweed, including all the water attached to Abbotsford. Amongst some other special festival days, which were eagerly anticipated and fondly remembered by the Laird of Abbotsford's rural neighbours, was a regular day's fishing on the Tweed. "This special day had been established with a view, besides other considerations, of recompensing Charlie Purdie for the attention he always bestowed on any of the lairds or their visitors that chose to fish either from the banks or the boat within his jurisdiction. His selection of the day and other preparations generally secured abundance of sport for the great anniversary; and then the whole party assembled to regale on the newly-caught prey—boiled, grilled, and roasted in every variety of preparation—beneath a grand old ash tree adjoining Charlie's cottage at Boldside, on the north side of the Tweed, about a mile above Abbotsford. The banquet took place earlier or later in the day, according to circumstances, but it often lasted till the harvest moon shone out on the lovely scene and its revellers." The other uncle, Tom Purdie, was Sir Walter's special favourite and attached friend. Lockhart, in his *Memoirs of Sir Walter*, says:—"The close of the autumn (1829) was embittered by a sudden and most unexpected deprivation. Apparently in the fullest enjoyment of health and vigour, Thomas Purdie leaned his

head one evening on the table and dropped asleep. This was nothing uncommon in a hard-working man, and his family went and came about him for several hours without taking any notice. When supper time came they tried to awaken him, but found that life had been for some time extinct. Far different from other years, Sir Walter seemed impatient to get away from Abbotsford to Edinburgh. 'I have lost,' he writes (Nov. 4) to Cadell, 'my old and faithful servant, my factotum, and am so much shocked that I really wish to be quit of the country and safe in town. I have this day laid him in the grave. This has prevented me answering your letter.' The grave, close to the Abbey at Melrose, is surmounted by a chaste monument, having on two sides the following inscription:—

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE
OF
THE FAITHFUL
AND ATTACHED SERVICES
OF
TWENTY-TWO YEARS,
AND IN SORROW FOR THE LOSS
OF A HUMBLE BUT SINCERE FRIEND,
THIS STONE WAS ERECTED
BY
SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,
OF ABBOTSFORD.

HERE LIES THE BODY
OF
T H O M A S P U R D I E,
WOOD FORESTER AT ABBOTSFORD,
WHO DIED
29TH OCTOBER 1829,
AGED SIXTY-TWO YEARS.

I had occasion to be in the Waverley district some time

afterwards, and went a good bit off my way to pay a visit to my old friend, John Purdie. I found that he had retired from his post as water bailiff on the river, and left his charming cottage on the banks of the winding Tweed, and removed to the village of Newstead, a mile or so from Melrose. I had a letter from a friend who had been staying for a time in the Waverley district, and at my request had called to see old Purdie, and reported that he found him enjoying fairly good health, although getting aged and frail—then in his 86th year—but brightened up wonderfully when relating some salmon fishing adventures of his younger days. He had spent his long lease of life without interruption on the banks of his native Tweed.





A Fishing Incident on a Stream in Skye.

I HAD occasion a few years ago to be on a visit of several weeks to the late Rev. D. M'Callum, parish minister of Durnish, in the island of Skye. The Durnish parish has a seaboard of about 60 miles, and the glebe is one of the largest in Scotland, and is generally reckoned to extend considerably over a thousand acres, a large proportion of which, however, consists of sloping heathery moorland and capital grouse shootings. The glebe is bounded for a considerable distance on either side by a mountain stream, which, I daresay, with the exception of one or two, are the largest streams in Skye, and holds at all times native yellow trout; and at certain seasons of the year, and when the streams are in flood, a large number of sea trout ascend these rivers for several miles. Although these two respective streams take their rise widely apart, they gradually approach each other, and enter the sea—Loch Dunvegan—comparatively close together; the manse, which occupies a fine site at the head of Loch Dunvegan—stands about midway between the two rivers.

One of the manse dogs, a Skye terrier named "Garry," was a special favourite at the manse, and deservedly so, for although I have often seen a far prettier doggie, I have rarely met with a more sagacious, plucky little fellow. Although rather distant and shy to me at first, Garry and I gradually became fast friends. As a rule, he came to my bedroom door

regularly every morning prompt at six o'clock to give me the hint that it was about time to be up and get ready for our usual morning stroll. He usually accompanied me to the river when I went to fish, and seemingly took a keen interest in the sport, watching with close attention my every throw; and while playing a good-sized lively sea trout, I had often the greatest difficulty to prevent him plunging into the river to seize the fish. He would often swim across to the opposite side lower down or up and eagerly watch operations from the opposite bank; indeed, he became rather troublesome, continually crossing and re-crossing the river. When I got a fish landed Garry would make a great fuss, and seemed quite "big" when he saw the trout placed secure in the basket. Latterly, another terrier—a different breed and a close companion of Garry's, named "Ropack"—accompanied us to the river, and soon became a more eager and excited onlooker than even Garry. I was a good deal amused with the two one day at the river. I was fishing a long deep dark "weil," at a place where the river runs through a sort of flat haugh land, and forming a good many links and loops in its course. In some parts the banks were high and steep. On the side of the stream where I was fishing the bank was pretty high and steep; on the other side a sloping gravelly bank. I hooked a very vigorous, good-sized, lively sea trout. On being hooked, he continued jump-jumping three or four feet clear out of the water, glittering like a piece of silver in the blaze of the shining sun, making a hard struggle for freedom, then scampered up and down the pool. At last he darted down to the bottom, and my flies got fixed firm and fast on something evidently pretty deep down in the pool and near the opposite side. I felt quite annoyed at the prospect of losing my fine new cast of flies, which I had just got newly sent me by a fisher friend in the far south. I did not care a straw for the loss of the fish, as I might be upsides

with him some other day. I laid down my rod and began to pull off my boots and stockings. My two excited companions, who had watched the whole affair, I daresay fancied that I was preparing to jump into the big linn to catch the trout, and both were eager to plunge in along with me to assist at the capture. As I could not well fish from the opposite side against the strong breeze, I left my boots, &c., took rod in hand, walked some thirty or forty yards up the side of the stream, letting out my line as I went along—I had a pretty long line on—but it was nearly all off the reel before I reached a place where I could wade knee-deep across. My two active assistants—Garry and Ropack—were across long before me, and waiting impatiently to see what I was going to be about. On getting safely across, I began to wind up my line until I reached opposite the spot where it was fixed down below in the water. The river was pretty much swollen, and of a dark porter colour. I pulled the line in all directions, but to no purpose; it was quite firm and fast. I then waded cautiously in till the water was nearly up to my middle, and my two assistants swimming out before me, until I was straight above where the flies were fixed. I put down my arm, following the line, but could not reach where it was stuck, but my hand came against what seemed to be a supple-yielding stick. After peering steadily down into the pool—the sun was shining brightly—to my surprise I saw the big trout wagging his tail, but evidently quite exhausted. By degrees I saw that the flies were entangled about the root of a young tree which had been carried down the river, and had become partially embedded in the sand. I could not nearly reach the trout or the flies with my hands, and I did not care about diving; however, I got hold of a part of the root, and after some hard pulling I managed to haul the whole root, trout, cast, and all a good bit out on the gravelly beach, where I first secured the trout, which was well

hooked, and it must have been splendid gut to have stood such a severe test. I had some difficulty preventing my two active assistants—all drookit after a good swim in the linn—from seizing and worrying the trout. The two used to accompany me regularly every Sunday forenoon to the church, about a mile and a half distant from the manse. On seeing me to the church door, the sensible, auld-farrand Garry, instead of going inside, would wheel round and trot back a bit, and jump into the minister's carriage, which usually stood on the green lawn in front of the church, the horse being tethered not far off; and Garry would select the cosiest and softest rug, and after wheeling round and round for several times pop down to have a comfortable snooze till the congregation "skaled." As a rule—unless in very good trim for a walk—Garry returned to the manse in the carriage, sitting quite coolly beside the minister. Ropack usually lay down at my feet in the church during the service, and behaved very well, except the sermon happened to be extra long, when sometimes she would get up and stretch herself all her length, and give a long yawn, making a slight squeaking noise, but nothing to speak off, then look up into my face and give her tail a bit wiggle-waggle, as much as to say, "I wish the minister would stop and let us out."

There was another noted dog at the manse, a big, swanky, supple tyke named Moss, a light yellow colour with streaks of white athwart his body and one down his long nose, with a pure white tassel dangling at the point of his tail. Besides being a famous sheep dog, he was also a first-rate watch. I never saw him enter the manse except on Sunday, when he condescended to go in and even pay a short visit to the parlour or dining-room, wagging his gausy tail gently, and looking as much as to say—*Cia mar tha shu uille an diudh*—*i.e.*, Hoo are ye a' th' day?—he could speak no English. Regularly every night, wet or dry, he took up his stance on

the very pinnacle of a conical verdant knowe close to the manse, where he lay down curled up with his nose resting on his bushy tail, and woe betide any wandering straggler who unwarily ventured near the manse. The only time I ever noticed him to leave his usual and regular position was one night when blowing a severe gale, when he shifted to the lee side of a peat stack on the brow of the knowe. He seemed to have a bitter enmity to tinkers or tramps of all sorts. About the last thing I usually did every night before going to bed was to look out from my bedroom window to see the faithful and vigilant sentinel on his watch-tower guarding the manse and its slumbering tenants.

I witnessed a somewhat comical scene one day, in which Moss played a prominent part. One of the young folks at the manse, who was fond of playing pranks, got himself rigged out so as to represent a ghost or brownie, in order to frighten a visitor who happened to be staying at the manse for a few weeks, and was very timid—at any rate pretended to be so—about meeting ghosts, brownies, fairies, or such like uncannie ancient customers. The young wag, knowing that the timid visitor would arrive at a certain hour, got himself rigged out in an indescribable rag-tag dress, and slipped out by the back door and up the side of a dyke close to the way-side along which the unwary visitor was approaching. He hid himself in a small gravel pit till the stranger was within a short distance, when the brownie—who looked an old, frail grannie bodie, but very small in stature, and leaning on her staff as she moved slowly along—put in an appearance. Moss got his eagle eye on the mysterious-looking brownie, gave a savage howl, and bounded like a wild deer across the lawn, and was just on the point of seizing the “auld wifie,” but she had the presence of mind to snatch off her tattered head-dress and speak to Moss, who at once wheeled round and slunk away back, with his tail trailing behind him, evidently thoroughly

ashamed of his savage conduct to one of his ain folks of the manse. Moss is about the only member of the collie tribe I ever met with who fairly baffled me to get on anything like friendly terms with. I persevered for some time, but all my friendly advances were doggedly repulsed. The saucy surly fellow would neither obey nor take the slightest heed to anyone except to Alistair—the minister's man—a stout, sonsy, cannie chiel' (a Bachy), who performs his varied duties in a very staid, methodical, philosophic style.



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