



LOCII ARD.

LOCH ARD.

BY WILLIAM DRYSDALE.

THIS one of the most beautiful of our Highland lochs, lies about two miles from the Clachan of Aberfoyle. The lower lake, about a mile in length, is very narrow at the beginning, but widens out to a breadth of half a mile. The braes to the right are covered with oak trees nearly to the summit. This is the famous pass of Aberfoyle, renowned in Sir Walter Scott's novel of "Rob Roy," where Helen Macgregor encountered Captain Thornton. Here, also, a party of Cromwell's army, attempting to pass to the north, were repulsed by the Highlanders under the Earl of Glencairn and Graham of Duchray.

About a mile further, the visitor arrives at the upper and larger portion of the loch, which is separated from the lower one by a narrow stream. The loch here stretches to about three miles in length and about a mile and a half in breadth. There are a number of small rocky islands, which enhance the view. One of these islands, situated at the upper part of the loch, is Elean Gorm, and at the southern side an island with ruins is called Duke Murdoch's Castle, Murdoch, Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland during the captivity of James First in England, having erected it as a place of refuge should he be exposed to danger on the return of James. It is said that he was arrested here, taken to Stirling Castle, and executed on the Beheading Hill in 1425.

To the north-west, Ben Lomond is seen rising in a gentle slope to a height of 3192 ft., while to the north-east, Ben Venue rises to 2393 ft. The mountain stream, Corryghlas, falls into Loch Ard, forming the beautiful Falls of Ledard, the meeting-place of Captain Waverley and Flora MacIvor. The water at first falls in an unbroken sheet of 12 ft., then it dashes over a height of nearly 50 ft. A rock near the foot of the cascade, from 30 to 50 ft. high, gives a distinct echo, repeating a few words twice, and a gnarled oak trunk overhanging it is pointed out as the "ragged thorn, which, catching hold of the skirts of Bailie Nicol Jarvie's riding coat, supported him in mid air, not unlike to the sign of the Golden Fleece."

On the way the visitor passes the following houses—The Glashart, Loch Ard Lodge, Ledard, Kinlochard, and Coulegarton. A nice drive can be taken, passing Loch Chon, about

two miles further on, and it can be continued to Stronachlacher Hotel, about $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Aberfoyle, where the steamer can be had daily in the summer season to the Trossachs and Callander, or, by turning to the left, Inversnaid, on Loch Lomond, is reached, where steamers can be had for Balloch.

Good fishing can be had as early as March, Loch Ard being one of the earliest trout-fishing lochs in Scotland. The trout are of fine quality, averaging three-quarters of a pound. Fly-fishing is the only lure allowed on the loch, which makes it a greater attraction to sportsmen. Boats, boatmen, and permission to fish can be had at the Hotel, Aberfoyle.

