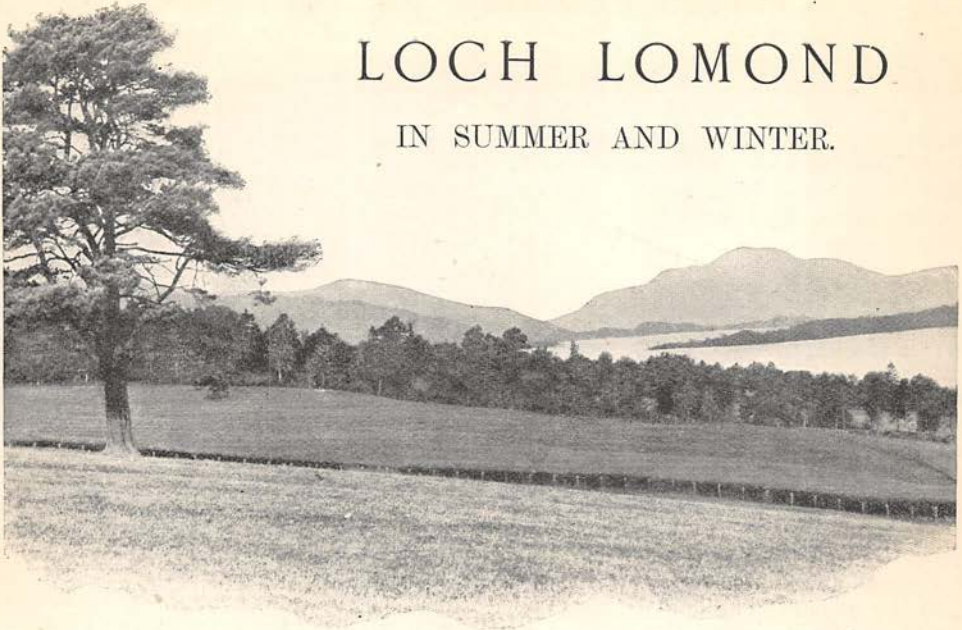


LOCH LOMOND

IN SUMMER AND WINTER.



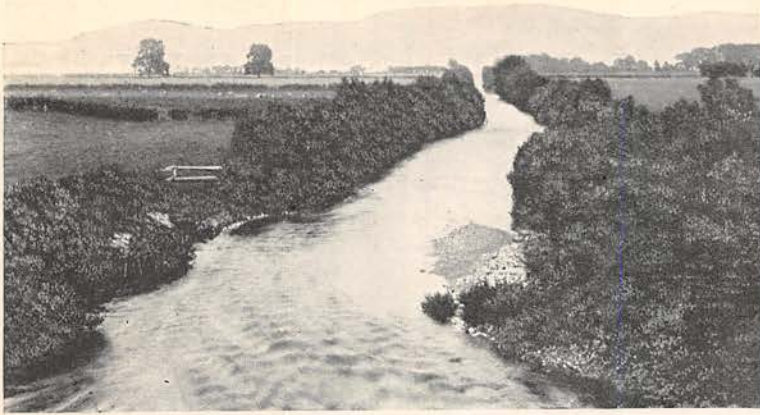
BY JAMES STRANG.

By yon bonnie banks an' by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomon';
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomon'.
O, ye'll tak' the high road an' I'll tak' the low road,
An' I'll be in Scotland before ye;
But me an' my true love will never meet again
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomon'.

IN this beautiful and pathetic Scots song there is something more than the cry of a lover for his mistress. It is the passionate yearning of an exiled Scot for his "ain countrie," and for all the memories that cling to it, of which none are more movingly insurgent to him than the vanished days and nights on the shores of the great loch enfolded by the mountains of the West. Full of delights for lovers, still and peaceful as Loch Lomond is to-day—save when Nature makes wild war in battling storm—it has its tempestuous, historic past. Tradition has it that when King Arthur was making war in Scotland, his defeated foemen retired from the Clyde to Loch Lomond and took refuge on the islands in the lake. In later days, the islands proved sorry shelters from the red rage of Haco, the Norwegian king who afterwards came by his deserts at Largs, at the hand of Alexander III. Haco's Vikings ascended Loch Long, and dragged their small boats across the narrow strip of

land which divides at Arrochar the salt waters of Loch Long from the fresh waters of Loch Lomond. On the islands of the lake many people had sought refuge from the sea-rovers, and the sudden incursion of the Norsemen took them completely by surprise. Sword and fire wrought cruel havoc, leaving death and smoking ruin behind them.

We are on more familiar ground when we come to the days when the Highland clans dealt out death to each other with claymore and dirk. Glen Fruin (the Glen of Sorrow) is to-day a quiet land of fertile acres and homely farmsteads, through which the river Fruin flows with many curvings until it shoots under a bridge which spans the highway with a sharp arch, when it stretches itself in a marvellously straight line for the loch, between banks crowned with dense thickets. But in 1602, Glen Fruin was the scene of a bloody battle between the Colquhouns and MacGregors. Victory rested with the MacGregors, but was far more disastrous to them than defeat was to the vanquished, for as a result of their savage butchery it was made punishable by death to bear the name of MacGregor, or to give food or shelter to any of the clan. The penal enactments against them were only



THE RIVER FRUIN ENTERING LOCH LOMOND.

repealed by Charles II., in return for the loyalty shown by the tribesmen to his father.

But we may pass now from these "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago," which seem, after all, but misty dreams, full of ghostly echoes and shadowy forms, as one joys in the springtime of the year or the flush of summer-tide on "the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomon'." Their witcheries are scarce ever more compelling than when—

The wee birdies sing an' the wild flowers spring,
An' in sunshine the waters are sleepin'.

Although, perhaps, still more sure and subtle is their glamour in the dusky glow of the sweet summer twilight—

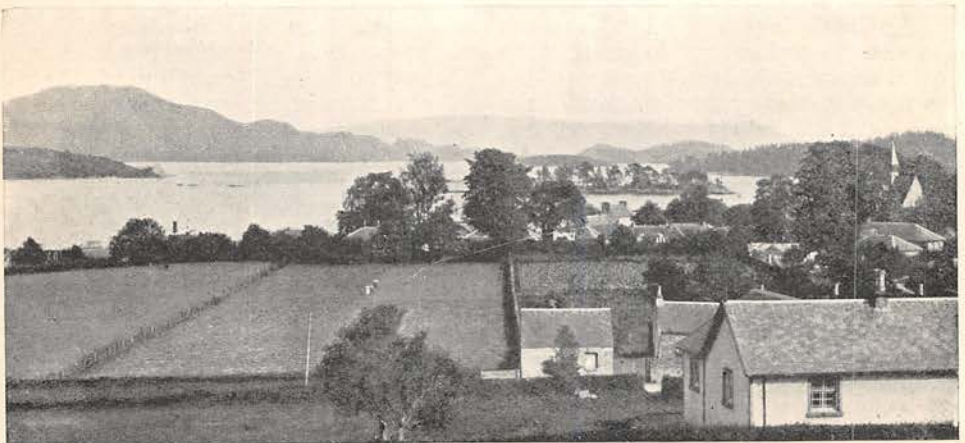
Where in purple hue the Hielan' hills we view,
An' the moon comin' out in the gloamin'.

The beauties of Loch Lomond and its shores far surpass those of Loch Katrine and the Trossachs, to which the genius of Sir

Walter Scott has given what may be called, in modern language, a "literary boom." No prettier corner can be found in broad Scotland than the picturesque little village of Luss, nestling under its flanking hills, with the parish church rising above the tall trees which surround its quiet "God's acre," along one side of which the Luss

Water washes rippling past, crystal-clear, over its clean bed of grey-blue slate. In front of the village is the Loch, with the slopes of the Aldochly hills rising on the further side; to the south-east it overlooks the broad lower expanse of the Loch, dotted with wooded islands, to the red Conic Hill of Balmaha and the far Killearn hills; while to the north-east it looks out across the water upon "the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomon'."

It is not so much to its supremacy of height, 3,192 feet, as of position, that "the Ben"—as it is familiarly termed throughout the West of Scotland—owes its distinction, with which something of affectionate pride is mingled in popular regard. It stands magnificently isolated from the clustering giants that rise in more towering grandeur to the north, and uplifts boldly on the verge of the great tract of undulating lowlands which



LUSS: VIEW TOWARDS BALMAHA.



LUSS: WITH INCH TAVANACH.



THE FALLS OF INVERRNAID.

sweeps away to the south, the east, and the west. The "steep, steep side" is in reality at the back of the mountain, above where the Forth rises as a tiny moorland stream, nut-brown amid the peaty moss. The writer once leapt lightly across this, in making an ascent of Ben Lomond from the eastern side—after a long walk across the moors from Stronachlachar on Loch Katrine—to descend on the Loch Lomond side at Rowardennan. It is from the latter place that the climb is usually made, by a well-defined park which presents no difficulties, and personal experience has proved that the ascent and descent can here be made without any pressure, within four hours. On another occasion, however, when the climb had also been made from Rowardennan,

Yet it is a picture apt to be disappointing to the tourist, for should he see the fall at its best, he has surely been a victim to the rains of this moist region, and infected in consequence with an ill humour. Or if he has the good fortune to come hither during one of the dry summer spells, which are as uncertain as they are glorious, he will find the fall shrunken by drought to such a paltry insignificance that it is bereft of even the semblance of a murmur.

It is still further up the lake, at its extreme head, that the most profound deeps of solemn quietude are to be found, where Ardlh lies cradled at the foot of Glen Falloch among the girdling mountains. A Sunday spent there years ago in a gamekeeper's cottage stands out from many memories of Loch-



BALLOCH : RIVER LEVEN LEAVING THE LOCH.

an attempt to take a short cut back by "the corrie" resulted in devious wanderings. More than once it has chanced that ambitious Vale of Leven youths who have rowed up from Balloch overnight, and climbed "the Ben" to see the sun rise, have found themselves wrapped round in the sunless dawn with blinding and baffling mist, through which they have groped their way downwards only to discover that they had descended on the wrong side, and were weary miles from their boat or any other connecting link with civilisation.

Wordsworth's poetic picture of Inversnaid is no doubt very beautiful, and there is the charm of delightful quietude in—

These grey rocks; this household lawn;
These trees, a veil just half withdrawn;
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the quiet lake.

lomondside. Divine service was held in the little schoolhouse by the lochside, and thither the shepherds brought their collies with them. The collies were quiet, sagacious brutes, and crouched most decorously at their masters' feet, even when praise was being sung in a fashion which would have set less philosophic or more fastidious dogs howling in agonising chorus. One collie, however, possibly young and thoughtless, made its way up to the preacher while he was engaged in prayer, and sniffed suspiciously around his bagged trouser-legs, after which—either fearing his master or distrusting the preacher—he made his melancholy way out. It was a peerless summer's day. The schoolhouse door was left wide open. Around the doorway pigeons fluttered and strutted with drowsy cooings; through it one could see

the blue waters gleaming in the sunshine, and the hills shimmering through the quivering heat. As one luxuriated in idleness afterwards outside, on that perfect day of slumberous summer heat, not a sound was to be heard but the faint bleat of a sheep on the hillside, or the chirring of grasshoppers in the dry grass.

Here, where the heather crept down to the edge of a dry watercourse, grew the golden

spikes of the asphodel. There, where the stubby rushes were ranked, were clumps of



BALLOCH: STEAMER FROZEN IN CAMERON BAY.



SKATING ON LOCH LOMOND.



CYCLING AND CURLING ON LOCH LOMOND.

the sweet-scented bog-myrtle; and in moist, mossy places lurked the beaded sun-dew. This is one of the few nooks in Scotland where the glow-worm is to be found, and at night its tiny lamp may be seen shining softly forth from the roadside banks.

The glory of the lower end of the lake, between Balloch and Rowardennan, is the wonderland of its islands. Out from Luss is Inch Lonaig (Yew Island), so called from the clumps of yews which darken its green slopes, and which tradition says were planted there by Bruce to supply his men with bows to match against those of the English archers. It was when rowing home from this island, where he had been shooting deer for distribution among his tenantry at Christmastide, that Sir James Colquhoun, eleventh baronet of Colquhoun and Luss, was drowned, along with four of his gamekeepers, on 18th December, 1873. It is believed

towering plumes of spruce and Scotch fir, among which in spring the tender green of scattered larches shows softly. It is a reposeful delight to moor your boat to the shore here on a summer's eve, when the white and gold of the water-lilies gleam upon the water, and the northern heavens between the purpling hills grow luminous with the wondrous glow of the spreading twilight. And when the round moon rises and the stars come out, it is like drifting through some fairyland of dreams to paddle slowly back to Luss, with the rugged mountains softened by creeping shadow, the islands slumbering peacefully on the bosom of



LOCH LOMOND IN FLOOD : CAMERON LODGE SURROUNDED.

that the boat was struck by one of the sudden squalls which, suddenly tearing across the waters from one or other of the gusty glens, make Loch Lomond dangerous for small craft, unless a most careful look-out is kept.

One of the prettiest "bits" on Loch Lomond is the narrow strait winding between Inch Connachan (Colquhoun Island) and Inch Tavanach (Monk's Island), which is said to have been the residence of St. Kersog. If so, the saint is to be congratulated upon his good taste. The shores between which the strait winds are wooded to the water's edge, and slope upwards on either side to lofty heights, dark with the

the Loch, and the water gurgling musically about the boat's bows, and rippling away astern where the starlight trembles dimly in the wake.

Inch Caillach (Nun's Island) lies on the eastern side of the lake, and is separated by a narrow channel from Balmaha Pier, the first at which the steamers call after leaving Balloch. Balmaha is in the country of the Duke of Montrose, the towers of whose lordly home, Buchanan Castle, rise amid the woods a few

miles away and overlook the fertile strath of the Endrick. This river carries down with it a rich deposit of silt, with which it makes broad and shifting shoals where it enters the Loch. Inch Caillach, to which one can row across in a few minutes from Balmaha, is an enchanted isle of shadow-flecked vistas and sweet silences. Landing in a little bay almost opposite Balmaha Pier, you ascend a gentle slope by a winding path which leads, between waist-high brackens and through a forest of birches and dwarf oaks, to a little graveyard where the mouldering bones of the ancient clansmen find kindly sepulture in solitude. The graveyard is old and neglected; its low walls are moss-



LOCH LOMOND FROZEN OVER: BEN LOMOND AND CORNER OF INCH MURRIN.

grown and crumbling; the lettering upon the more ancient stones is undecipherable; nettles and thistles flourish in rank luxuriance. Yet here in summer's prime the scented honeysuckle trails over the walls, and above the rank grass from which the tombstones rise the pink wild roses swing to the passing breeze. The cry of a wandering gull floats down as it poises against the blue; the coo of the cushats makes a mournful monotone in the woods. There is nought to disturb even less undreaming sleepers than those who slumber here so soundly, and whose dirge is sung by the wild winds on nights of winter storm as they sweep through the tossing branches of the great firs which crown the near crag rising sheer from the shore. There are not wanting significant signs, however, in this solitude of the dead, of the savage days of foray and onset when the dirk and broadsword did their bloody work

among the Highland hills. On the top of an exposed stone coffin is carved a sword, and the device is repeated on a red sandstone slab which has been dragged from a grave by some vandal and now lies snapped in twain among the nettles.

Inch Murrin, which possibly derives its name from St. Mirren, to whom the abbey church of Paisley was dedicated, is the largest island on Loch Lomond, and also the most southerly, being the nearest to Balloch, from which it is some three miles distant. The island is about three miles in circumference, and on the Boturich side tourists with sharp eyes or good field-glasses may see the posts which mark the measured mile for the Loch steamers. Perched on a knoll on the south-west point of the island are the ruins of Lennox Castle, shown in the illustration of Inch Murrin in winter, the snow-clad mountain in the background being Ben



ISLAND OF INCH MURRIN, WITH BEN LOMOND IN BACKGROUND.

Lomond. The great house of Lennox long held sway over wide lands at the southern end of Loch Lomond, and for a time kept high state at Balloch Castle, once the chief seat of the family, but no vestige of it remains. Balloch, however, seems to have been forsaken for Inch Murrin by the Lennoxes after the ruthless blow delivered against the family by James I., in the execution of Duncan, the seventh Earl of Lennox, and the Duke of Albany, whom the Earl's daughter, Isobel, had married. Inch Murrin was among the places visited by James I. when he was in Scotland in 1617, and there is a curious and interesting letter from Ludovic, second Duke of Lennox, to his "very good Lord, the Lord of Kilsyth," Sir William Livingstone, in connection with its preparations for the King's coming. In the letter, which is dated from Glasgow, 23rd July, 1617, Sir William is informed that the King "hath concluded to dine at Inchmurrin, where his dinner shall be sent, and there are tents to be provyded for that effect as you told me; and you must expect a good nombre of sharpe stomaches. You must take some care also that boats may be in readiness against his Matie come hither; so I rest your loving friende, Lenox."

Inch Murrin is now used as a deer-preserve by the Duke of Montrose, whose gamekeeper occupies a cottage below the knoll on which the ruins of Lennox Castle stand. It is a favourite landing-place for boating parties, and many are the joyous picnics which have been held on the greensward beside the ruined walls within which one of Scotland's proudest nobles once entertained his sovereign. The Duke's deer-island swarms with adders, which, like the deer, not infrequently defy their watery confines and adventure into the loch. Both are good swimmers. The Inch Murrin deer have been known to swim across to the Boturich shore, while the deer on Sir James Colquhoun's island of Inch Lonaig frequently swim across to Strathcashill Point, on the eastern shore. The rabbits on the islands are also migrants, but this is in the rare winters when the Loch is frozen over, when they scutter across upon the ice from one island to another.

The shores of Loch Lomond in winter are a *terra incognita* to the tourist. Nor is this surprising, for it can be as grim and forbidding then as it is attractive in summer. Sometimes, in a wet winter, the Loch rises to an extraordinary height, flooding and making impassable the high-road where it runs along the shore. There are great variations be-

tween its summer and winter levels. In the winter of 1893-4, Loch Lomond rose to a greater height than it had reached for 103 years. The difference between this and the lowest recorded level was no less than 8 feet 5 inches. In the illustration, the North Lodge of Cameron House is shown, with the avenue under water.

It is only in exceptionally severe winters that the broad expanse of Loch Lomond's southern waters is frozen over, while the longest and hardest frost cannot flow over the black deeps of its northern narrows. It may be of interest to note that the sister lake, Loch Katrine, from which the City of Glasgow draws its water supply, never freezes over to "bearing" point, although it is 300 feet higher than Loch Lomond. During the past quarter of a century Loch Lomond has only been "bearing" five times, which is not wonderful when it is considered that to freeze the lake there must not only be a severe and unrelaxing frost prolonged for weeks, but a complete absence of wind, which generally means days of dense white fog, under whose chill brooding the freezing of the Loch goes on stealthily and silently. In the winter of 1874-5, Loch Lomond was frozen—and the word must throughout be taken here as meaning "bearing"—for three days. The ice was in splendid condition, but on the afternoon of New Year's Day, 1875, a heavy snowstorm came on. The writer, who was skating in mid-loch when the storm began, promptly headed for the shore, as did others. Those who lingered had most unpleasant experiences, completely losing their reckoning on the wide, white tract, being baffled and bewildered by the blinding and whirling flakes. In 1879, the Loch was frozen from 12th January to 27th February, and again, strangely enough, in the following winter. On this occasion—1880-1—it was frozen for over five weeks, and there was a magnificent sheet of ice as far up as Camstradden Bay, about eight miles from Balloch and a short mile below Luss, above which it was supposed that the Loch could never freeze—a popular delusion which was dispelled during the next great frost, that of 1895. The result of that winter's phenomenal severity was that Loch Lomond was frozen over for nearly two months. The ice began to bear on the 10th of January, and the last walkers and skaters were upon it as late as the 4th of March. Beginning at Balloch, it stretched from shore to shore, girdling and clasping the islands as far north as Rowardennan, some

miles above Luss. At the foot of Ben Lomond the ice ended sharply and completely, leaving a clean edge running across from Inverbeg to Rowardennan, above which the open water stretched blackly away between the mountains to Ardlin, its surface alive with water-fowl.

It need hardly be said that skaters who adventure recklessly upon ice which covers such awful gulfs do so at the peril of their lives. Several fatal accidents have occurred, while the hair-breadth escapes have been numerous. Even when the ice is bearing well, there are always treacherous spots, notably where currents run, springs bubble up, or streams push into the Loch. The islanders naturally welcome their first visitors across the ice, as it is a sign that communication with the shore is restored, and will last till the thaw begins. On Loch Murrin the earliest skaters to arrive are presented with a trophy of deer's antlers, as a "reward for valour." When Loch Lomond is frozen over for a long period, the water in falling

away shrinks from the ice, which has, in consequence, great strain put upon it. Booming reverberations signal the tremendous cracks which split the ice as it relieves the strain by settling down. The pressure against each other of the edges of these great cracks forces them upwards from the water. The ridges of ice thus formed rot rapidly and collapse, leaving long fissures a foot or more in width. The lower end of frozen Loch Lomond, when once the ice is surely and safely bearing, presents a beautiful and animated scene, day after day, while the light lasts. Skaters flit hither and thither, bold cyclists dare dangerous side-slips, cautious pedestrians make a long procession between Balloch and Loch Murrin, and the roaring game of curling goes on amid the shouts of the players on carefully swept rinks. Over all, robed with the radiant snows, uplifts the great Ben, dignified with a new majesty, while the Luss hills and the slopes above Balmaha loom near and vast as they gleam whitely in the winter sunshine.

THE HEART AND THE SOUL.

MY garden was broad, and the flowers were fair,
 And the glittering lawns were gay,
 And my Heart and my Soul were walking there,
 In the blaze of a Summer's Day.

And my Heart leapt high in the Morning's pride,
 And he lilted a lightsome lay;
 And he said, "O Soul! how the World is wide,
 And how brave is a Summer's Day!"

Yet my gloomy Soul said never a word,
 But she moodily took her way,
 For God made the Soul for Eternity,
 And the Heart for a Summer's Day!

HOWEL SCRATTON.