

obliged to walk seven miles under a perfect deluge of rain, which never abated for an instant. But though their bodies might be damped by the inclemency of the weather, their spirits were as elastic and buoyant as if they had been travelling under an Italian sky; and when the vast sweep of Loch Fine, so famous for its herring fishery, burst upon their sight, they welcomed it with an echoing cheer, which without intending it, brought along an old fisherman with his boat, who offered to take them across to Inverary—just the thing they wanted. “Now for Loch Awe,” cried Charley, “the shortest road to Loch Awe!” “If your honours pe for the loch,” said the old Highlander, “you’ll petter set oot the nicht, and pegin the fishin in the morning.” “Could we start to-night, this afternoon?” asked Frank. “Hoot, aye—Shone Campbell will tak ye oot in the drosky for twa shillin, and ye can sleep at my cousin Donald’s hoose at the Sannox!” “Capital! peat smoke, and a fire in the middle of the floor, I hope?” cried Ran. “To be shure,” said the Highlander, with perfect simplicity—“you’ll get plenty o’ fire—but what a praw doug that is! I’ll warrant your faither’s a great, gran shentleman in the Lowlands.” This was intended as a leading question by the crafty old Celt—and it is needless to say that the information he received was somewhat wide of the mark.

In the meantime they had landed in Inverary, the county town of Argyle, and the residence of the great Duke of that name. The village itself is one of the tidiest and prettiest to be seen anywhere. All the houses are covered with slate, and built with great regularity. Inverary Castle, the mansion of the Duke of Argyle, is a beautiful specimen of the Grecian style of architecture, designed by the celebrated Adams. Behind the Castle rises the steep and abrupt hill called Duniquaich, crowned by a watch-tower of other days; and how the stones of which it is built were got there, it would almost puzzle an Engineer of modern times to say; before it lay the ample waters of Loch Fine, and beyond stretched an almost boundless extent of wooded mountain, forming altogether a magnificent landscape of forest scenery. Of all this our young friends took but a passing glance. Remaining altogether about two hours in Inverary, they dined and walked about a little, and at five o’clock found themselves mounted in a car with the redoubted John Campbell, who assured them that trout were to be got in Loch Awe, as big as salmon, and pike longer than themselves. This was brave news to the young sportsmen; and though the road through which they were passing was every step becoming more wild and picturesque, they had neither eyes nor ears for any thing but John Campbell and his wonderful stories about the fish in Loch Awe.

John was an obliging, talkative, little bullet-headed Highlandman, particularly pleased with his mission, and proud to set forth the resources of the Argyle County. About seven o’clock all arrived in the most jovial good humour at the Sannox, and were kindly received by a staid old Highlander and his better half, which latter personage in the most motherly manner, set about