#### The Rival Clansmen

A Scottish Vendetta.

CHAPTER XXV.

UBLED DREAMS-AN OLD FRIEND CAUSES
CONSTERNATION—A STRUGGLE—THE
MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

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It was scarcely five o'clock in the atternoon, and both were sitting at a window which commanded a view for some distance of the approach from Dingwall to the Castle, when Cameron, who had been looking through the window, suddenly exclaimed—

"Here is Fender coming, MYKenzie; but what can be up? Who are thosewith him?"

Ian, too, had looked out, and saw to his astonishment that Fender was really approaching, but in the company of other two men, and net alone as was anticipated.

two men, and net alone as was anticipated.

"I know not who they are," he gasped.

"I—I hope it means no danger."
Cameron made no reply, but continued to gaze through the window with a dark scowling look, although there was an unusual whiteness about his lips and a trembling of his limbs. Ian was also much excited.

The two men who accompanied Fender walked, one on each side of him; the younger and taller on the right, while the other walked on his left. Both were muffled up to the eyes in platids, so that their faces could not be seen. The young man was tall and stalwart in appearance while the other was an old white-headed feeble-looking man, who walked with considerable effort, and leaned heavily upon his stick.

Saddenly Cameron sprang to his feet as he exclaimed—

"I care not who they are. Fender would not have brought them had they

as he exclaimed—"I care not who they are. Fender would not have brought them had they been enemies, and I shall go and give them admittance."

As he spoke he strode out of the room. I an watched the strangers intently until they hadarrived at the entrance, at which Cameron now stood to receive them in an excited manner, his face pale and bloodless, and his legs shaking under him, as he elenched his hands and groaned out in terror-stricken accents—

and bloodless, and his legs shaking under him, as he elenched his hands and groaned out in terror-stricken accents—
"My God! it is—it is—"
But he appeared unable to articulate more, and at once sank back upon his seat, where he sat with distended eyeballs gazing at the room door at which the new-comers were now entering, followed by Cameron. When the young stranger observed him he started violently, and an exclamation escaped his lips. Then flinging his plaid from off his shoulders, and folding his arms across his broad chest, he stood revealed to the two astonished villains as none other than our old friend, NED GORDON!

M'henzie shrank back, and stretching his hands in wildest terror towards Gordon, exclaimed beseechingly to Cameron—

"Chall me, tell me is it a horrid appari"Chall me, tell me is it a horrid appari-

Gordon, exclaimed besechingly to Cameron—
"Tell me, tell me is it a horrid appariton? or is he alive?"

Cameron seemed too much surprised to be able to answer, nor had he need, for, in a voice of thunder, Gordon stepping backwards, until both villains were before him, exclaimed—
"Na,na, Ian M'Kenzie; it's nae ghaist, but a livin, thinkin', feelia" man, wi' a heavy score against you to wipe oot."
The consternation which took possess-of Cameron and Ian was beyond all description. Here was the very man they had considered as dead, and powerless to interfere with them more, alive, and standing before them, his words and gestures showing that interference, and interference of no ordinry nature, might be expected from him. And their surprise was added to in no small degree by the circumstances under which he had appeared. How was he alive, when they bet been assured by those who had been be expected from him.

Surprise was added to in no small degree by the circumstances under which he had appeared. How was he alive, when they had been assured by those who had been sent to kill him that he was dead? How had he dared to venture within the walls of Droghdairch? and how did it happen that he was in the company of Fender? were the questions that rose to their minds. Surely Fender had not turned traitor? And who was the old man, their companion?

minds. Surely Fender had not turned traitor? And who was the old man, their companion?

But Gordon, who had observed their contusion, after a pause, continued—

"I suppose, Ian M'Kenzie, after the means ye took tae ensure my death ye expeckit tae be nae mair troubled wi'my bedily presence, whether ye waur wi'my specritual or no. Ye base, murderin' villain, ye feared oor next meetin', an' thocht nae illo'daein' murder tae prevent it. Ye suld choose safer men tae dae yer bluidy deeds, an' no send drunken babblers, wha lat the cat oot o' the bag tae the first ane wha offers them a dram. But we've met again, Ian M'Kenzie, an' I promised ye that we suldna dae sae for nacthing. I hae proofs aneuch o' yer villainy that wad rob ye o' a dizzen o' lives was ye possesst o' as mony; an' noo mind my wirds, justice and retribution 'ill veesit ye. Mr. Blaikie, let yersel' be kent tae the false-hearted scoondrel.'

As he spoke he turned to the old man, who also now undid the wrappings from his body and calmly confronted Ian.

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WM. TAWSE & SON. Guelph, Feb. 9, 187

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