FIRE AND SWORD:

A STORY OF THE MASSACRE OF to discover to us the way out." GLENCOE.

CHAPTER XVII.

AIN ON THE ROARD.

betrayed, lads, I fear," xclaimed on jumping to his ken with the sudden resolve ight journey Invergrywards anow-capped hills. "The Earl me, and we have been betrayrealdine and Captain Druma a sacrifice of well nigh twensurs of precious time. Let us

e. While we remain here all conspire to work together for We are at the mercy of the asites, whose humanity is au the snows we are thus force l

ase is indeed extreme, and the gent," said John, the Chief's But, sire, you forget your ne difficulty and length of the ne season of the year, and the of a night journey among the, With to-morrow's dawn-

, nay, my son," hotly interruptoic old Chief, "I will not lisash counsel. You speak in ety, I truly know; but my beple's property and lives depend , expiate, if need be, my fatal vigorously forward. rastination in the matter of my sion' with my life's blood. If I whide the consequences as becomes scendant of a race of Chiefs who people, lads! my people! my ple !" and overcome with strong

m, in a firm tone of voice. "All blood into perdition!" yet lost. Come the worst re two hundred claymores in the every one of which will reek with given fair play we have someo hope for, and little to fear. langer, or come death, every man

of the brave young Highlander.

you such," he said ; "your words have real hope remains must be tested at once thieves are trapped at last." by a speedy resumption of our journey to the Sheriff's chambers at Inverary. Further suspense is maddening. To tion, the heroic old Chieftain began arranging the folds of his shoulder plaid, and, seizing up his bonnet and staff, stood presently ready to go.

"To what length shall we time our ed themselves for the road.

"To Kilchurn, and beyond it," an-Barcaldine's words-though I gravely there for the night; if not, we can push | march on the enemy. on to Cladich, and 'refreshing' there.post on to our journey's end."

the Chief's son.

-call Glenbucket to show us out.

promptly pushed up by Barcaldine, who sleeps. Requiescat in pace !" stared at sight of his guests -thus attired for the road-with unfeigned sur- mad knave!" laughingly rejoined the If the comfort of the coble could be mediate rest, and within the shortest

"Why, my dear Glencoe," he began, supper table. you don't surely tempt death by venturing the road to-night? It's madness, myself to aid and abet such foodhardi. House, ness Pray uncover yourselves, supper down, good friends, sit down."

darkened into hate as they looked on the hills which lay stretched before them shore; "but she's naething to what I've darkened into hate as they looked on the hard face of their host. His friendship hard face of their host. His friendship concealed a drawn dagger, they very recently fallen snows, which also lay stags lying in the stow end o' her, alang well knew, and the irony of fate in their deeply drifted along the uneven hill wi'her a dozen o' the Earl's gillies and case lay in the fact that their helpless paths, and down in the hollows of the there yowlin' collie dowgs alang wi' circumstances forbade their resenting it. numerous ravines and intersectingglens. them, forbye as mony bags an' guns as To openly doubt and quarrel with Bar- The different ranges of hills through would serve a haill parish. Had ye the caldine was to incur the resentment and and across which they had to pass, commalice of the Earl, whose mental slave prised, perhaps, as wild and desolate dishe was. The Glencoe men, therefore, tricts within their radius as were to be wadna escape the angry ban o' your netcould only venture on silence and sug- found in the whole Argyllshire High- tled tongueends. But here's the shore; gestive lowerings of the brows.

bed with us to-night; the Earl may yet any but thoroughbred mountaineers acbe here." added Barcaldine, affecting customed to exertion, exposure and hillreal interest in his guest's distress.

Only the cloulds of heaven will.

canopy my head to-night," replied the the Chief's son, as the party floundered of a creek a little south of Bonaw. So "We cannot even wait for supper. Every passing half hour is precious-deeply so. Pray send a domestic

"You will allow me then to share with you a deoch-an-dorris?" said Barcaldine, summoning a domestic the next

"Nay, I forbid it, sir," answered M'Ian. "We have no further time to Heaven favors our exertions-God be waste on social parley; pray, sir, show us the way out.

"You will not stay-will not await say that I very much admire your great in your urgency to formally 'submit'

"God save the King!" shouted the ed on the scene-"God save the King!"

sudden fire at the werds. "God, I could claymore the red-coat- descending on Inverary.

ed scoundrel!" he ejaculated, turning half round on the threat.

"Caution, Malcolm, caution," said M'Ian putting a gently retraining hand left it, amid the snow-covered banks of on his shoulder. "Our heads are in the furze and heather were numerous rushy ot of your own, but of my per- lions' mouths; discretion is here the truer part of courage; let us be pushing ground, across which they dragged their yont," and emerging on the main road sinking steps wearily, but with uncomsue of the journey, and I am they wrapped their shoulders and strode plaining effort. As M'Ian had predict

"The wily old fox is ill to trap, Captain," remarked Barcaldine, as the outer were concerned in the issue. I door closed on the Glencoe party. "Jacobites at heart-white-feathered

Jacobites at heart," replied the Captain. sared nor fled from death; but "I am certain I heard the old rebel Over-the-water my teast of the King's health in an under breath as he stepped on the brave and high minded old down the stairs. The devil go with them and send them as much snow and wind urage, M'Ian, courage! said by the way as will pepper their rebel

"Ay, sooth, Captain, you speak rightly," rejoined Barcaldine; "rebel Jacobites at heart they are truly. The old fox ere a hair of M'Ian's head is in- has only come out of his hole among the hills at the last moment. His proffered 'submission' manifested expediency rather than loyalty, and comes so late that then will stand or fall by the side it has not the merit of grace and sincer-Ly. Besides the date of mercy is past, I by Malcolm's passion to and the proffered oath beyond acceptance.

ing words, M'Ian threw book his lo-day the Earl left Glenorchy on a long, thick flowing locks of white hair, journey to Sir John Dalrymple, Master which had fallen over his fice in of Stair, now in London, carrying with the collapse wrought by his grief, and him news of the Glencoe party's non subgazet with admiration and pride on the mission, which will gladden Sir John's glowing countenance and animated form heart much. He will at once proceed to put the fact of M'Ian's rebellious atthe brave young Highlander.

'My noble son, for I love to think titude before the King, who will then your boat ashore," said M'Ian, thrusting caldine's treachery, he staggered forward a gratuity into the old boatman's ready a few paces, and would have fallen but formally sign a warrant of execution atung my sinking heart with energy, against the men of the Glen. Captain, All is, indeed, not lost, but with little of the old fox, his cubs and his family of

"God save the King" again shouted kinds of diplomacy were held as fair in ing Malcolm a pair of long poles, with our feet, lads, and let us boldly face the war, "and may the repelrascal and family worst," and acting on his own sugges- and adherents be forced to live on white cockades, thistle tops and boiled heather come awa, lads, come awa. until such times as the just wrath of the

King overtakes them !" "And that reckoning will come soon, Captain," answered Barcaldine, "meanjourney for the night?" asked Malcolm, time we have done the Earl a service by driven through the dark waters of the as he and John, the Chief's son, prepar. delaying Glencoe's audience of Sir Colin, the Sheriff. They will flounder broad. all night among the hill snows, and at swered M'Ian. "If there is truth in last seek the shelter of some shepherd's

doubt it-the Earl may be snowbound we have stolen a twenty-four hours' "A long, hard walk," suggested John, dine. "But come, Captain, supper an as safe's the Ben." awaits us 'butt the hoose,' as the face. In this wise the garrulous old boatman belated on the roads or what?" expressed "I shall not close my eyes-till it is actious Glenbucket would phrase it. You of the Loch ran on, alternately praising in true terms the depth and sincerity of

complished," added M'Ian, "let us go, and I shall have our curiosity satisfied the "lads" strength and skill in handlads, let us; but where's Glenbucket ! in tasting a supper served up at Barcalling the "oars" and in repeated assurdine's house which has not been prepar- ances that she (the coble) was as "safe's "Glenbucket is abed," said a voice, ed under the fussy surveyorship of the the shore, lads, and twice as comfortable, that his cousin Malcolm and the Chief of but I am here;" and the door was indispensable Glenbucket. He still moreover," and the faintest twinkle of Glencoe were his self-invited guests. "Pop the knave, Barcaldine; pop the ered lips as he spoke.

Captain, as the pair adjourned to the successfully disputed, there could be no space of time a couple of rude beds had

no, my good friends, I could not allow when the Glencoe party left Barcaldine draughted "claucht" of the loch water, but heavy sleep.

The journey they had set themselves will be on the table in half an hour: sit to face was a formidable one, considering the state of the weather and the season of the year. The giant ranges of he added, as they neared the opposite

lands; to attempt to traverse them would lads; pu' saft, an' dinna grunt her on You will sit to supper, M'Ian, and have been futile, if not, indeed, fatal, to the chuckies; therena, that's it clean;

> climbing daily. A bad night for walking," said John,

knee-deep through the drifts of snow bidding the garrulous old ferryman s lews of the road. "If the snow only holds we may be

thankful," replied Malcolm.

through in half an hour, and the snow- still distant from them several miles. dusted path be as clear as daylight.

the Earl's coming?" retorted Barcaldine Ardchattan, taking the short hills paths in a sneering tone. "Then I can only were practinable; cross Soch Etive by For the greater part of the way their guests the way out, without awaiting Awe and Kilchurn. If the Earl was Loch. the arrival of the domestic he had just there, as Barcaldine had led them to be- # It was now nine o'clock by the stroke lieve he was, he would receive the con- of a neighboring parish kirk bell, and fession of their "submission" and rest many miles still intervened between braggart Captain over their heads as them for the night. If Barcaldine's them and Kilchurn, with the little hamthey descended the steps fronting the statement was proven to have been false let of Cladich, beyond it. But resolutely outer door, he having by accident arriv- -the Earl not having been there—then they held on; and M'Ian footsore and they would push on to the little hamlet "Over the water," added M'Ian, sub of Cladich, where a shephrrd cousin of poce to Malcolm, whose eyes gleamed Malcolm's would provide them with rest success of his self-imposed mission, he and refreshment for a brief space before

> The open road, when they held by it, was rough and rocky, and when they morasses and wet boggy patches of ed, they had now advantage of a clear moonlit way, and the manifold intersections of the endless chains of hills. and dales, and glens, which surrounded them, heap upon heap, were everywhere visible for miles of country, as often as

The journey was a long and weary one

vation of the road. In little more than an hour they had come within view of Loch Etive, and rousing up the old boatman of the Loch, whom they had found asleep in his turf-happit hut before a smouldering fire of peat, they expressed, in brief words, their wish to be straightway fer-

their feet surmounted some natural ele-

"A cauld nicht, gentlemen-a cauld in a homely Gaelic; 'and wha may your honors be ?" and, shaking the chill out of his body by a violent shrug of his on M'Ian and peered inquisitively icto light in the hut other than what resided in the red glow of the peat fire, or was refresh for the night?" reflected from the moonlit snows outside

hand.

"Och, yess, to be surely, sirs; I'll be ready with her in twa winks," promptly replied the old boatman. "Here, my the braggart Captain, with whom all good lad, tak' ye doon the oars" (handspread ends, which the lagging fancy reluctantly construed into oars). "Noo,

In a few minutes the party were seated in a flat bottomed coble, and John and Malcolm taking each an oar, the boat by a sheer exercise of muscle, was heavily Loch, which was better than a mile

the old boatman, "but haud at her lads, oot till the day break, and in this way she'll put the shiver oot o' your blood. Whew! but that's a cauld blast that's sweeping doon the Loch, and there's a "Outflanked him," said the Captain, bit white cap on the water, too, but deil "Outflanked him," acceded Barcal a fears o'us, lads ; the boat's as steady

humor twitched the old boatman's puck-

rational doubt of its prevailing safety. been hastily extemporised; and throwing The coble it is true, might possibly sink their exhausted bodies on them, the Glen-The night had set ed on the hills under a sheer dead weight, but it's deepas the old ferryman phrased it, put the capsizing of it at any time out of all rational consideration.

"She's sair to lift, lads, sair to lift," the chuckies; therena, that's it clean; mild stimulant, will always find Electric took the bank like a weel whuppit Bitters the best and only certain cure

which the wind had whirled into the hol- kindly goode en, they presently resumed their journey by the road.

They were new in the parish of Muckairn, and the top of Ben Cruachan-the "There will be more snow to-night, lord of the surrounding hills-was already lads," added M'Ian; "the moon will be descried in the clear night air, though

The lonely and desolate pass of Brander-its natural loneliness and desolation intensified into awa-inspiring sull'imity It was M'Ian's intention, if his by the time of night and season of the strength held out, to pass southwards to year-now lay stretched snake-like before them for the length of several miles. the ferry emerging on the Muckairn dis- path lay paralled with and ran close by devotion to our common King, as shown trict; then hold south-eastwards along the course of the river Awe, whose the wild and lonely pass of Brander, hourse flood was heard filling the deep yourself to him," and moving towards the door, he proceeded to show his Cruachan; and descend thus on Loch wards to fling itself into the waters of the

weary, uttered no weak complaint, but, feeling that life or death awaited the pushed heroically on till at length the mighty shadow of the Ben lay behind them, and they once more stood within view of the district where, under different circumstances, they had the previous midsummer attended Breadalbane's con ference at Glenerchy. They did not, however, turn up the

road leading round by the head of Loch Awe, which now lay spread before them, but sought to be ferried across the Loch water, as before they had crossed Loch

Lights were seen gleaming about the arched moatway which gave access to the massive insular Castle, and the Glencoe men "hillor'd" lustily from the shore.

In quick response a boat put off from the Castle, and in a few minutes had approached to within hail of them. Three men were aboard, two of whom wrought the oars, while the third man, who seemed from his dress and manner to be their superior, sat at the tiller.

"What's your commands?" asked the man at the tiller, having previously ordered the gillies to cease rowing.

"If the Earl of Breadalbane's within nicht," said the old boatman, speaking the Castle wall," spoke M'Ian "tell him

massive shoulders, he approached close Kilchurn," promptly replied the other, "nor has he been with us for a month his plaid-muffled face-for there was no He left Glenorchy this morning for London on court business. Will you rest and

M'Ian waved his handforbiddingly, and turned sharp away from the spot. Smit-"Ask no questions, goodman, but bring ten to the heart at the discovery of Bar for the support lent him by his sons.

Then, suddenly recovering possession of his mind, he firmly shook humself free of the supporting arms which were round him, and turning once more his gaze to wards the boat on the loch, he signalled its approach, and asked for a conveyance across the lake.

The request was promptly acceded to and within a quarter of an hour the party found themselves on the east shore of Loch Awe, and were presently struggling once more forward on their journey in the direction of Cladich.

They had still half-a-score of weary miles to cover ere seeking their much needed rest for the night, and the shepherd of Cladich was roused from a deep sleep by the barking of his dogs, and a loud knocking at the door of his hut between one and two o'clock on the following morning, to admit strangers whose importunity was unceasing and demonstrative; and on opening his door his ferhis astonishment.

Still greater was his amazement to find after a moment's suspension of his senses,

There was no time for parley, however. The party very obviously all wanted im-

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found themselves at the innermost end fifty cents a bottle by J. Wilson. [4]

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