FIRE AND SWORD:

A Tale of the Massacre of Glencoe

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE VILLAGE INN.

The distance between Auchension and the farm at the Crags was not more than a mile, and Malcolm, on parting with Helen Cameron at her uncle's doorstep that night, at once set off to his father's domicile at Auchension. Malcolm's father, as has already been stated, was the Inn's man or ale house keeper of the

"Good evening, friends," he said, on entering the small public room, wherein about a dozen young men were convened.

"Good evening, Malcolm," responded the company almost in one voice, the handsome and universally beloved son of the old Innkeeper.

were each attired in the home-spun tartan colored garments common to the per iod. Each of them were a broad-topped worsted bonnet, and an eagle's feather picked upon the lone hillside, or a knot of tartan ribbon emblematic of the name they bore, fitly adorned their bonnets and shoulder-plaids; for they were each dressed in half-holiday attire, and had come out from their seclusion as shep herds and agricultural toilers in field, moor, hill, and upland glen to salute their beloved Chief as he passed the threshold of their lowly dwellings in the Glen on his return from the conference at Glenorchy. This duty duly performed, they had afterwards crowded into the village inn that they might hear Malcolm Macdonald's story of M'Ian's interview with the suspected and hated Breadalbane.

"And the Earl dared to put an affront on our honored Chief, did he ?-d-n him !" broke in old Allister Macdonald, the village tacksman, when Malcolm had concluded the recital of the day's adventures. "I would have drawn my dirk on him where he stood, and showed Breadalbane and his guests that a Macdonald was better than a Campbell any

day."
"Well spoken," responded Ronald, a younger brother of Allister. "Breadalbane may be a braw man and a wealthy man, but he'll never be worthy to do more than merely tie and loose M'Ian's hose-strings.

"M'Ian's health !" cried a third clansman, lifting a foam crested tankard o

"And confusion to Breadalbane! chorused all, each draining off their liquor in acceptance of the double

had been received brought in several vil- tongue at the wrong moment and in the lagers from the outside, who were curi- wrong place. For the future he would ous to learn the cause of the commotion be wary of speech, putting into daily colm Macdonald and Helen Cameron and in a few minutes the room wherein practice Malcolm Macdonald's warning had been duly prospering apace, and had and malice unopposed. the company sat was crowded with Mac- words. And if he had a favorable word at length ripened into the warmest mu

one, when the cause of the commotion glen. had been re-stated.

ing the table simultaneously, the boards any lurking suspicion they might enterseemed to leap up in answer to the bold tam regarding his fealty to MIan. He spend the afternoon with Helen at the his thoughts. and aggressive sentiment.

Brealbane's Campbells. While we are ing wildly, cried aloudominously near - when claymores will der the foot of M'lan, if he doubted me," learnt to fear and respect us !"

and manner which accompanied the the road mender acquired thereby a freedom of the heart is alone to be found.

ing upon the chorus of applause, an anst were hardly, able to decide for the mo-All eyes were turned in wiringly t

answer to half a dizen inquiries thrust in the direction of the disputants.

"And what has Red Hughie to say against us? " questioned Male don "He says Breatalbane's as co as is to be found in all the Highlands

"Yes, frae Glemarchy to List

severate I the accuse I with a definit tess of his sharry head. "The cur # said old Allister

Maldalm, as the necessal was being free. Lagit file, in the betrothal pligh.

Red Hughie to say for himself?"

who was the odd jobber and road mender of the Valley, being generally regarded as a sort of half-wit,

"He's a Macdonald in name only,"put in a voice; "his mother was a Camy-

This was so far true, and the small, cunning eyes of the accused gleamed inquiringly around the circle of faces from beneath his abnormally thick and long nificantly touching the top of his head. evebrows of red.

"What then?" insisted Malcolm, star-

"I'm a true Macdonald, friends, as them. you all must know."

"Explain ? explain !" interrupted half a dozen angry voices.

major part of them rising to receive the good! Well, you see, friends, as every-The occupants of the room were all fending the enemy, Bread Ibane. That ment had passed forward to rejoin the clansmen of the common order. They was all, gentlemen : that was all as sure group of friends a little way ahead. as death !" and wetting his right thumb with his tongue he then rubbed it against the retreating figure of the man who had the palm of his left hand in token of his thus addressed him to be none other sincerity.

puzzle. The Clansmen looked at each rier between the districts and Braemar. other with an expression of countenance suring. Then they all looked to Malter-son to M Ian he had presumably the Courage against Cunning any day best right to decide whether the recurant's explanation was satisfactory, or at all sincere.

"Some may think Brerdaltane a good man." began Malcolm, "but as Macdonalds we only know him as an ambitious and unscrupulous enemy-the purchaser of our land and property, nor at least the worthy descendant of such-but M'Ian we all know and love as the honored Chief of our tribe. Prosperity and fortune attend M'Ian, and confusion seize the tongue that would pledge in our hearing the health of a dastard Camp-

bell, titled or not." Shouts of approval succeeded Malcolm's high spirited words, in the midst of which he resumed : "As for you Red Hughie (fixing a scrutinizing eye on the cunning road-mender), we shall fitly regard you as a poor worthless creature, and forgivingly let you escape. For

the future have a care of your words." The small, keen, hard eves of the crafty road-mender shrank almost entirely frem view under the contracted brows, as the concluding sentence of the speaker caught his ear, supported as it was by a general howl of derision directed against him by the company.

He was not a bit abashed, however he was only duly forewarned.

He had been drinking unguardedly, The acclamation with which the toast and had allowed the liquor to wag his to say of the "great Earl," he would give tual love. 64A fine thing, that Macdonald's to be it to the winds that retailed no party It was, therefore, on a rich warm Sabmade bow to a Campbell!" remarked secrets as a they swept the bracken-hung leath forenoon, towards the close of the

It was at the psesent moment, how-"Never!" shouted a dozen strong ever, of pressing necessity that he should Glenorchy—that Malcolm, having comvoices and as many clenched fists strik- remove from the minds of the company pleted his simple morning devotions, had the native cunning to perceive as Crags. "Brother clansmen, said Malcolm, much. So, rising to his feet, he threw

fervid delivery of those words drew forth the road mender acquired thereby a freedom of the heart is alone to be found, warm shouts of approval.

All at once, however, and supervere the blders—superstitious by instinct—

Mechanid heart is alone to be found, the rough tract of moorland ground which divided the Crags from the main sweeter song in its throat than Malcolm path through the Glen, and the exertion of walking had heightened the rich colo beholders - superstitious by instinct -

> man, case accel to a corner, with a bump unconsciously jealous, and the shadowof wonder outsutlined on his hor head, as, a s or of local Den Nevis.

the shouldest corne seframery clause. Red Hagile had only lately come Maclonall felt that he had nothing to servance at this simple, superstitious anomest them, and his antecedents were fear. He was noted for his todily custom which the ardent lovers were very

bly dragged to the door. "What has ald of the Glen-he had removed with other clansman in the Glen, and he was was not interrupted by any outre circum-"No very much; Malcolm; no very on her death, which had but recently ocmuch, indeed," replied the recusant, curred, he returned to Glencoe, the home of his fathers.

"A strange character," remarked Malcolm to several who stood round him when the party were leaving the snuggery of the inn.

'He's like the big sea," said Allister, the tacksman, "full of shallows and bottomless depths "A slate off," responded another, sig

"Quite an abundance of native purple anyhow," remarked a third voice, huing hard at the "suspect;" "are you for merously referring to the extraordinary M'Ian or Breadalbane, answer me, shock of red hair which the road merder had suddenly spead on the board before

> A general laugh followed, and the company thereafter speedily dispersed.

"Malcolm," said a voice, and the youn "Yess, yess, friends; I will explain. | Iunkeeper felt himself confidentially tak-Gi'e me a drop o' whisky ! ah ! that's en aside by the arm, "keep a watchful body was condemning the Earl. I just him. His color suggests blood. Goodthocht I would test their loyalty by de- night !" and the speaker the next mo-

Looking about, Malcolm discovered than that of honest old Duncan Don, a The Red Hughie was obviousbly a true M'Ianite, who acted as letter car-

"A poor half wit is Red Hughie, which was generally the reverse of reas- mentally said Malcolm as he withdrew within the shelter of the Inn. "He colm for advice. He was a young man can't be dangerous of himself, but if of sense as well as spirit, and being fos- there's a plot in the bud- why, then,

CHAPTER V.

AT THE LOVER'S WELL.

The garish brightness and beauty of summer had passed into the rich and mellowing warmth of autumn, and the small patches of grain which dotted the more fertile spots of the rugged Glen were already waving ready for the sickle of the reaper.

Few were the flowers that bloomed in the Glen. The soil was much too harshand scant for the growth of the tender. floral plants, and what was of it had to be economised to the utmost for granary purposes. Into many of the deep, narrow and inaccessible ravine and chasms of the great Glen the defeated sunbeams were never able to throw a single gleaming lance. It was winter-wrapped in the mists and rains and snows-that held appropriete reign there, and summer smiled upon its gorge of gloom in pity rather than in glad love.

But if the flowers of summer were but scantily sown in Glencoe, the hills were for the most part of the year aglow with the golden glory of gorse and bloom, and with the purple flowerage of heather. It was their native covering, and they look. ed it gloriously well : and a finer carnet for his feet than the purple bells of the sweet smelling heather a true Highlander never once desired.

autumn of 1690-exactly six weeks after very naturally set off down the glen to of his feelings, and the excited hurry of

addressing the company generally, "let forward the great mass of mattedred hair elastic with vigor and a sense of real joy. The step of the young Highlander was us reserve our sentiments regarding which covered his head, and gesticulatviewed as friendly let us remain so. If . "I would freely give these hairs of my the future full of hope and beautiful prosorrow. The present was glad and happy: the hour should ever come-and it loss head, every one of them, to be put unmise. The new love which had entered and taken undisputed possession of his the fair maiden's ontstretched has have to be drawn in defence of the fam- and he swung the great mass of fiery-red ardent soul was holding him in the chains and thereafter strained her to his brealikes of the Glen, then every scabbard in hair backwards and forwards with a pethe valley, from Loch Lydoch to Achahar, chiar seesaw motion, the long-matted tinkled with music and poetry. It was a shall remain empty, until our fees have the sks trailing on the table before them. Tich, dream-invested captivity in a prison-The act. n—peculiar and striking in house of silk; sweet servitude in which, paradoxical though it seems, the highest

Macdonald had daily in his charmed heart. gry altereation occurred amongst a 2004P ment whether the figure before them ing the silver cloud of his happiness—a was the veritable Red Hughie or his shadow no bigger than a man's hand, But true and ardent love is always apprehensive of coming trouble, and oftentimes small as it was-was just big enough to dent lover, and w ich Male im could

slightly disconcert Malcolm Macdonald's he figure behind the glowing shock mind, often as the thought of it recurred. Sergeant Barber, a trusted servant of secretical "She was a minuted the false and hated Glenlyon, had shown their meeting that Subbath afterno deads he insurered out, and threw passion for Helen Cameron. Bit by bit sense of 1 langure, w' ich gladdened them. himsee head swring seast fully the ingenuous-minded maiden had cor. Their hearts lat been, from their first he subsided fessed, as if ashamed of the subject, to almost acci ental meeting mutually though silently plighted, and the in at while sear, and crime I would at the the persistency of the Sorgeant's atten- though silently plighted, and the the grade mon to her while staying at Fort-Will met on this lastions and mn Sabb th liam, and with what a revengeful darker- | day to formally | li ht their mutual troth

sis.

"Thrust black to be a long of the received and the control of the from her on the final rejection of his for the tacks and the control of the free control of th with the reckless' Fergeant, Malcoln : particularly will known. On the strength and agility. His in learm ex- naturally anxious to test, If the sun

his mother to her native Glenlyon, and defter in his use of the claymore than stance, then the omen was happy. A remany and equal to the best. But he had version of these desirable auspices was heard incidentally that the Seargeant's popularly regarded by the simple minded boastfulness and reckless swagger were tenantry of the Glen as forboding trouble only exceeded by his native malice and and disaster to the parties interested. craft, and in the tenderness of his affer- If the betrothal ceremony at the Welltion for Helen, he dreaded that the stu- which was simply a joining of hands principled Sergeant's threatened revenge across its pellucid bosom-was not cor might yet work her mischief in some summated by noon-day, it was generally secret way.

> Sergeant, whose vulgar personal pride the hour was full of mystic and quiet was badly cut, had more than once been beauty. heard to affirm with much extravagance of speech that the young innkeeper of Auchenaion would never unchallenged be permitted to lead Heien Cameron to the most important functions of the animal Economy is the departive action of the hymeneal altac. If it came to that, he Kidneys, it swore that he was ready to perjure soul work and body in an attempt to frustrate it. He was a King's soldier, he vauntingly declared, and his rival was no more than a menial. These threats and insulting expressions were only ventured on in the Kidneys, Liver, Bowels and all the Kidneys and Managerous and Managerous and Managerous and Managerous and Bowels and All the Kidneys and Managerous and fraternising social company, reaching the screetions, and speedily restores he ears of Malcolm solely by report. He classed these threats as merely drunken boasts, but even viewed as such, had they been uttered in his hearing, he would certainly have then and there dared the miscreant to open fight.

real fear of Barber's revengeful malice. lay in the fact that on account of the failure of Breadalbane's recent negotiations with the Jacobite party there was a fut, ration has received such universal ure chance of that malice being gratified to the full. The Government had just ney disc issued a "Proclamation, offering indem- Cure. Its action in these distressing nity and restitution to all such as had complaints is simply wonderful. by J. Wilson. 2m recently taken an active part in the cause of King James on condition that they subscribed to an Oath of Allegiance to William III., on or before the last day of December of that year," the logical reference of which was, that on a failure of the Jacobite Chiefs to subscribe their submission in that way, and within the prescribed time, they would thereafter be dealt with as rebels, and be driven from their homes and possessions at the point of the sword.

The storm of angry passion into which the formal intimation of this proclamation had thrown M'Ian-the recusant old lion of Gleucoe-prevented Malcolm Macdonald from even hoping that Glenne would be spared the spoiler's rage. M'Ian had privately declared that he would never sign and accept such a document, and in the event of his find reject tion of the deed of idemnity, the whole clan would, after the 1st day of January be practically proscribed; and Sergeans Barber might in that way gain a chance of working out against Helen Cameron himself the fell purpose of revenge which he secretly cherished in his callous heart.

If extremity came to the worst, and a descent of Colonel Hill's soldiery from the military station at Fort William was made on the Glen, then the clansmer would have to take to the fastnesses the hills; and in that way Helen Came ron might be left unprotected, and exposed to the insults and machinations of ne unscrupulous Sergeant, who c thus work out his pur ose of revenge

"In such an issue,' mentally a 'ue the high-minded young Hi ander, "I would, single-handed, trace in the length and breadth of the Fi till my dirk found a merit est in the craven heart ;" and the increased rapit ty of his steps as he je.i.. tion of the Crags showel the intensity

He was thus pushing forward with a impetuous step, when on passing a trewhich shadowed the path, a low, swee voice unexpectedly arrested him.

" Malcolm !" "Helen!" responded the glad lover as with a cry of recognition, he claspe

"I saw you coming along the pat! way," said the joyous maiden, "anhid myself for the moment within the shadow of the leaved bows."

She had just crossed to the road from the rough tract of moorland ground of walking had heightened the rich colo of her cheeks. It was not the pede er bloom of the delicate and fashionable beauty that her face could boast ; it was the truer and more to be admired conplexion of pure blood and health

A sudden kiss from t'e lips of he restrain, still further neighbore! owing beauty of her eyes an I fac

Perhaps the understood purpose tacksman, with strong, deriving a support of the was full or winds, and with what a revenger drawer at the "Lever's Well," situated in the sis.

Whether le was full or winds, and the brows he had turned away at the "Lever's Well," situated in the sis. Individate was the ting our chien

" I'nére was a charm attached to the ob

deferred to the gloamin'-time, when the For it was quite true that the rejected holy stars looked approvingly down and

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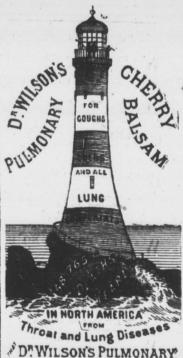
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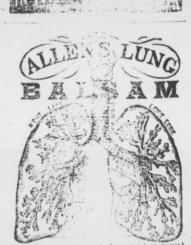
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