

LEGEND OF ALLAN WITH THE RED JACKET.

As a prelude to the legend of the Raid of Killychrist, or Christ's Church, I must condemn you to listen to a considerable portion of the previous history of the great rival clans of MacDonell and MacKenzie, which led to that event. A deep-rooted feud had existed for many years between those two neighbouring Highland nations, as I may well enough call them. So savage was their mutual hatred, that no opportunity was lost, upon either side, of manifesting the bitterest hostility towards each other. They were continually making sudden incursions with fire and sword into each other's territory,—burning cottages—destroying crops—driving away cattle—levying contributions on defenceless tenants—carrying off hostages, and mas-

sacring such unfortunate individuals or straggling parties as might happen to fall in their way, without always showing much regard to age or sex. It was one unvarying history of rapine and bloodshed, uninterrupted except at such times and for such periods when both parties happened to be too much exhausted to act on the offensive.

It was fortunate for the MacDonells, that about the beginning of the seventeenth century, Donald MacAngus MacDonell of Glengarry, chief of the clan, had so harried the MacKenzie country in one dreadful and destructive raid, and had so swept away its wealth and thinned its people, as to have rendered them comparatively innocuous for a number of years; for, during the lapse of these, he became so old and infirm, as to be not only quite unable for any very active or stirring enterprise, but he would have been unequal to the defence of his own territories against the inroads of his neighbours. He had two sons, but neither of them was old enough to relieve him of the cares and fatigues incidental to the government of such a clan. Angus the eldest, indeed, although only some fifteen or sixteen years of age, was extremely bold and impetuous. Like the most forward and best-grown

eaglet of the aery, he would have often rashly braved, with unpractised wing, the storms which raged around the cliff where he was bred, had it not been for the wholesome restraint which the old man was with difficulty enabled to put upon him, and which he could hardly enforce, even with the assistance of his nephew, Allan MacRaonuill MacDonell of Lundy, who being then in the prime of life, acted as captain or chief leader of the clan Conell.

Allan of Lundy, so called from the loch of that name near Invergarry, was the pride and darling of the clan, and it was not wonderful that he should have been so, for he possessed all those qualities which were likely to endear him to Highlanders in those savage times. He was remarkable for his great activity of body, for his wonderful agility in leaping, and his extraordinary swiftness of foot, and endurance in running. But these were not the qualities which the clansmen most especially prized in him; for, whilst he was kind to every one who bore the name of MacDonell, he was ever ready to visit those who were their enemies with the most ruthless and remorseless vengeance. He delighted in wearing a splendid jacket of scarlet

plush richly embroidered with gold, and when the day of battle came, the brave MacDonells always looked to that jacket as to a rallying point, with as much devotion and confidence as they looked to the banner of the chief himself, for they were always certain to see it in the front of every charge, and in the rear of every retreat. It was from this that he acquired his most distinguished cognomen, that of *Allan with the red jacket*.

It was not surprising that a youth of a haughty and impetuous temper, like that of Angus MacDonell could ill brook the well intended admonitions which he received from a cousin, upon whose interference in the affairs of the clan, he was taught by the vile insinuations of certain sycophantish adherents, to look with a jealousy which was but an ill requital for all Allan of Lundy's affection towards him. That affection, though it came from a bosom which was capable of nursing that fierce and cruel spirit which animates the tiger, was deep and sincere. It was an affection which had its basis in gratitude, in love, and in veneration, for the old chief, his uncle, who had been to Allan as a father, and, therefore, it was born with the birth of the boy Angus. It was an affection

which had grown stronger and stronger every day with the growth of its object, on the development of whose character the future happiness and glory, or misery and disgrace, of the clan, must depend. It was an affection, in short, which nothing could shake, and which even the often unamiable conduct of Angus towards him could never for one moment chill.

It happened one rainy and tempestuous night, that whilst a party of clansmen, returning from some distant expedition, were approaching the gate of Invergarry Castle, they suddenly encountered a tall man wrapped up in an ample plaid. He started when the MacDonells came upon him.

“Friend or foe?” cried the leader of the party.

“A friend!” coolly replied the other, “unless you are prepared to tell me that the days are past when a MacIntyre may claim hospitality from a MacDonell.”

“The day can never come when a MacIntyre shall not be welcome to a MacDonell,” replied the other. “Are they not but as a limb of the goodly pine stock of clan Conell?—say—what wouldst thou here?”

“I am a wayfaring man,” answered the stranger,

“ and all I would ask is shelter and hospitality for an hour or twain, till this tempest blow by.”

“ Thou art come in the very nick of time, my friend,” said the MacDonell, “ for, hark!—the piper has gone to his walk, and he is already filling his drone as a signal for us to fill our stomachs. The banquet is serving in the hall, so in, I pray thee, without more delay,—trust me, we are as ready as thou canst be for a morsel of a buck’s haunch, or a flaggon of ale.”

The old chief of the MacDonells had already occupied his huge high backed chair on the *dais*, at the upper end of the hall, and his eldest son Angus, and his cousin Allan of Lundy, the captain, and the other chieftains of the clan, had taken their seats around him, and the greater part of the places at the board had been filled, as rank might dictate, down to the very lower end of it, when the stranger was announced,—

“ Give him entrance!” cried the hospitable old chief, “ This is a night when the very demons of the storm seem to have been let loose to do their worst. No one would drive his enemy’s dog to the door in such a tempest. Were he a MacKenzie we could not see him refused a shelter

from so bitter a blast. A MacIntyre, then, may well claim a hearty welcome."

The door of the hall was thrown open, and the stranger entered. He doffed his bonnet, and bowed respectfully to the chief, and to those assembled, yet his countenance remained partly shrouded by the upper folds of his plaid, which had been drawn over his head as a shelter from the fury of the elements, and it now hung down thence so as entirely to conceal his person. There was enough of him visible, however, to show that he was a tall, broad-shouldered, and very athletic man, in the prime of life, with large fair features, small sharp eyes, overhanging eye-brows, severe expression, and a profusion of yellow hair and beard that very much assisted in veiling his face. The retainers who were nearest to him eagerly scrutinized his plaid, as such persons were naturally enough wont to do ; but it was so soiled with the mud-water of the mosses in which it seemed to have been rolled, that knowing, as some of them were in the tartans of the different clans, they could not possibly make out the set of that which he wore. They saw enough, however, to satisfy them that it was

green, and as they knew that to be the prevailing hue of the tartan of the MacIntyres, they examined no farther.

“ Friend, thou art welcome !” said the chief ; “ a MacIntyre is always welcome to a MacDonell. Take your seat among us as your rank may warrant, and spare not the viands or liquor with which the board abounds—*Slainte !*” and with this hospitable wish of health and welcome, he emptied the wine cup which he held in his hand.

“ Thanks !” said the stranger, bowing his head with an overstrained politeness ; and without more ado he seated himself in a retired and rather darksome nook, near the lower end of the board, where he immediately engaged himself deeply, and without any very great nicety of selection, with such eatables and drinkables as came within his reach, so that he speedily ceased to be any farther interruption to the conversation which had been begun at the head of the table, to which every one had been most attentively listening when he came in.

“ What sort of hunting had you to-day, Angus ?” said Allan of Lundy.

“ I brought down a stag royal,” replied Angus, with an air of sullen dignity.

“ That was well,” replied Allan of Lundy; “ it was as much as I did.”

“ And why should I not do as much as you, cousin ?” demanded Angus somewhat peevishly.

“ When you come to your strength, Angus, you may perhaps do more,” replied Allan.

“ My body,” said Angus haughtily, “ aye, and my mind, too, are strong enough for every thing that a chief of Glengarry may be called upon to perform. And now I think on’t, father,” continued he, turning towards the chief. “ I grow tired of this wretched mimicry of war which I have so long waged against the deer of our hills. I would fain hunt for bolder game. It is time for me to be hunting the *Cabar Fiadh** of the MacKenzies ! Why should our ancient enmity against them have slept so long ? We seem to have forgotten the disgrace of that ignominious day, never to be washed out but in rivers of MacKenzie blood, when fifty gallies of our clan fled from before the

* *Cabar Fiadh*, the head of the wild deer, the crest of the clan MacKenzie.

Castle of Eilean Donan, defended as it was by no other garrison than Gillichrist MacCraw and his son Duncan alone, when a single arrow from the boy's quiver pierced our chief, and dispersed his formidable armament. Let us hasten to wipe away so foul a disgrace."

The speech of the young chief of Glengarry had been repeatedly cheered during the time he was speaking; and he finished amidst vociferous applause. The stranger in the green plaid halted in his meal to bend an anxious attention to every thing he uttered.

"Angus," said the old chief, "you have spoken unadvisedly boy. These are subjects fitter for the private chamber of council than for the festive board. You, moreover, seem to have forgotten that the quiet which the MacKenzies are forced to keep, is owing to some successful enterprises of my own, from the humbling effects of which they have not even yet recovered."

"If that be the case, father," cried Angus energetically, "let us keep them down when we have them down! Let me finish what you so nobly began. Promise me that you will grant me to

lead a raid against these *stags-heads*. Promise me, dear father !”

“ A raid ! a raid led by the young chief !” cried the vassals, starting up from the table as one man with enthusiastic shouts.

“ Aye,” said Angus, “ and the young chief shall not go unattended. Every warrior of the name of MacDonell,—nay, every marching man who can trace one drop of his blood to the clan Conell, shall share in the glory to be gathered in the first raid of Angus MacDonell against the MacKenzies !”

“ All shall go ! all shall go !” cried the clansmen who were present.

“ Aye, all shall go !” cried the young chief, warming more and more with the applause he was receiving. “ And here, as a good omen of our success, here have we this night a MacIntyre among us. You, sir,” continued he, addressing himself to the stranger in the green plaid, “ you shall bear a message from me to your chieftain. Tell him to whom you owe service, that the tenth day of the new moon shall be the day of our gathering. It is long since our war cry of

Craggan-an-Fhithick has rung in a MacKenzie's ear!"

"*Craggan-an-Fhithick!*" shouted the clansmen.

"Tell him to whom you owe service, that *Craggan-an-Fhithick* shall once more rend the air," said Angus; "and that the young chief of Glengarry shall lead a raid against the MacKenzies, of the fame of which senachies and bards shall have to speak for ages to come."

"I shall surely bear your message to him to whom I owe service," said the man in the green plaid, after rising slowly, and making a dignified but respectful bow. And then putting on his bonnet, and gathering his plaid tightly about him, he paced solemnly and silently out of the hall, and departed.

"Methinks you have been somewhat rash and hasty in this matter, Angus," said the chief, with a cloud on his brow. "I have as yet given no consent. What think you of this affair, Allan of Lundy?"

"Much as I am wearying to wreak my vengeance on the MacKenzies," replied Allan of Lun-

dy, "I do think that my young cousin has been somewhat precipitate in this matter. A year or two more over his head would have confirmed his strength, and made him fitter for enduring the fatigue of such an enterprise. He is too young and unripe as yet to be gathered by death in the bloody harvest of the battle field. The loss of one of so great promise would be a severe blow to our clan."

"The loss of me indeed!" cried Angus, with a lip full of a contempt which it had never before borne towards Allan of Lundy, and which Allan of Lundy could not believe had any reference to him. "If you did lose me, you would only thereby be the nearer to my father's seat."

"Speak not so, Angus!" said Allan with a depth of feeling to which he was but little accustomed. "Speak not so even in jest."

"Come then, MacDonells," cried Angus again, "let our gathering be for the tenth day of the new moon, and let the dastard MacKenzies once more quail before our triumphant war cry of Craggan-an-Fhithick!"

"Craggan-an-Fhithick!" re-echoed the clans-

men, with a shout that might have rent the rafters ; and deep pledges instantly went round to the success of the expedition."

At this moment Ronald MacDonell, the chief's younger son, a shrewd boy of some eight or ten years of age, entered the hall,—

"What has become of the stranger in the green plaid?" cried he eagerly.

"He is gone," answered several voices at once.

"Then was he a foul and traitorous spy," said the boy. "When my brother was speaking about the raid, I perceived that he was devouring every word he was uttering. His grey eye showed no friendly sympathy. I resolved to watch him, and the more I did so, the more were my suspicions strengthened. I was struck with the dirty state of his plaid. As it was green, it might have been MacIntyre. But to make sure of this, I borrowed old nurse's sheers, and whilst he was intent on what Angus was saying, I contrived to get near to him unperceived, and I clipped away this fragment, which nurse has since washed—and see!" said he, holding it up to the light of a lamp that all might have a view of it. "See! it has the

alternate white and red spraiuge of a base and double-faced MacKenzie !”

“ MacKenzie, indeed, by all that is good !” cried the old chief. “ Out after him, and take him alive or dead !”

“ Fly !—after him !—out ! out !—let us scour the country !—haste, haste !—out, out !” were the impatient cries that burst from every one in the hall, and in an instant there was a rushing, and a running, and a mounting in haste, and a flying off in all directions. Shouts came from different quarters without the castle walls ; and by-and-bye all was silence, for those who had gone in various ways after the fugitive were already out of hearing ; and after a night of fruitless toil, they returned in wet and draggled parties of two and three, each expecting to hear those accounts of success from others which they themselves had it not in their power to give, and all were equally disappointed.

It now suits my narrative best to leave the Castle of Invergarry for a while, in order to notice what passed some little time afterwards in that of Eilean Donan, where Kenneth MacKenzie, Lord

Kintail, was seated in his lady's apartment, trifling away the hours. A page entered in haste.

"My lord," said he, "Hector MacKenzie of Beaully is here, and would fain have an audience."

"Hector of Beaully!" exclaimed Lord Kintail, "what I wonder can he want? With your leave, my lady, let him be admitted. Hector," continued his lordship as his clansman entered, "where have you come from, you look famished and jaded?"

"'Tis little wonder if I do, my lord," said Hector, "for the last meal of meat that I ate, and though good enough of its kind, it was but a short one, was in the Castle of Invergarry."

"The Castle of Invergarry!" cried his Lordship in astonishment.

"Aye, in the Castle of Invergarry, my Lord," continued Hector; "and if my meal there was short, I have had a long enough walk after it to help me to digest what I ate."

"Are you in your right mind, Hector?" demanded his Lordship. "Quick, explain yourself."

"I cannot say that I altogether intended to honour the Glengarry chief's board with my pre-

sence," said Hector, drawing himself up; "but having some trifling occasion of my own to pass through the Glengarry country, I rolled my plaid in a moss-hole, and took the wildest way over the hills; and thinking that I might pass unnoticed amidst the darkness and howling of a most tempestuous night, I ventured so near to the castle, that before I knew where I was, a band of MacDonells were suddenly upon me. Seeing that there was nothing else for it but to brave the danger, I had presence of mind enough to pass myself for a MacIntyre,—was invited into the castle,—sat at the same table, and feasted with the old raven and his vassals, and heard that young half-fledged corby Angus MacDonell, plan and arrange a raid of the whole clan Conell and its dependant families against the MacKenzie country. Taking me for a MacIntyre, he told me to bear his message to him to whom I owed service. To give obedience to his will, therefore, I have travelled without stop or stay, or meat or drink, save what I took from the running brooks by the way, in order that I may now tell you, my Lord, to whom I owe service as my chief, that the MacDonells' gathering is to be for the tenth day of the moon,

when their fire and sword will run remorseless through our land."

"Hector, you are a brave man," said Lord Kintail, "you shall be rewarded for this. Meanwhile hasten to procure some refreshment and repose; for assuredly you must sorely need both."

I presume that it is scarcely necessary for me to tell you that Lord Kintail and his lady had a speedy and very anxious consultation together. She was a woman of very superior talents, of quick perception, and equally ready in devising expedients, as prompt in carrying them into execution. It was at once agreed between them, that this was too serious and impending a danger to admit of delay in preparing to resist it. Feeling, as they did, that the clan had not yet altogether gathered its strength since the last sweeping raid which old Donald MacAngus, chief of the clan Conell, had committed on their territories, both saw the necessity of losing no time in procuring all the foreign aid they could obtain. It was therefore agreed between them as the best precaution that could be taken, that Lord Kintail should forthwith set out for Mull to procure auxiliary troops from his friend and kinsman MacLean. Preparations

were instantly made accordingly in perfect secrecy for his departure ; and in the course of little more than an hour after the communication of Hector's intelligence, his Lordship's galley stood out of Loch Duich and through the Kyles of Skye, and left the straits with as fair a north-eastern breeze as if he had bought it from some witch for the very purpose of wafting him to Mull. But secrets are difficult to keep ; for notwithstanding the privacy of all these arrangements, not only Lord Kintail's destination, but the cause and object of his voyage was known. Had the discovery been traced, perhaps it might have been found to have originated with my lady's woman, from whom it gradually spread, until it was quickly whispered, with every proper and prudential caution as to silence, into every ear in the Castle of Eilean Donan, whence it spread like wildfire over the whole district.

The MacDonells too, could have their scouts as well as the MacKenzies. When the hubbub occasioned by the hurried and hopeless chase after the false MacIntyre had subsided, a patient, painstaking, and most sagacious Highlander set off to try what he could make of it ; and having once found

a trace of the track the MacKenzie had taken, he never lost sight of it again, until he had followed him so far into the enemy's territories, that he had to thank a most ingenious disguise which he wore for saving his neck from being brought into speedy acquaintance with the gallows tree of Eilean Donnan. This man returned immediately to Invergarry with the intelligence that the projected raid of the MacDonells was as well known in Kintail as it was in Glengarry, and that Lord Kintail himself had gone to Mull to procure the powerful aid of his cousin MacLean.

Young Angus of Glengarry was furious when he found that all his schemes, so well laid as he thought they had been, for establishing his own glory and that of the clan, had been thus baffled.

"If that yellow-bearded buck's-head shall ever chance to cross my path again," said he, "young as my arm is, he shall have a trial of my sword."

"Thy spirit is good, boy," said Allan of Lundy; "'tis like that of your father and your grandfather before you. But it will be wise in you to check its rashness, until your sinews are better able to back it up. That same Hector MacKen-

zie whom we saw here among us, is moulded for some other sort of work, than to give and take gentle buffets with a boy."

"Thank thee, kind kinsman, for thy care of me," replied Angus, in any thing but an agreeable tone.

"'Tis true what Allan says," observed the old chief. "I rejoice in thy spirit, boy; it recalls to me mine own early days. But for the sake of the Clan Conell, to whom your life is precious, and," added he, with a voice that age, or perhaps some strong feeling operating upon age, made falter,— "and for the sake of your old father, who doats upon you,—for the sake of your sainted mother,—let me not have to mourn over the too early fate of her first-born!"

"I shall not be rash,—I shall be prudent, father," replied Angus, considerably touched by the old man's appeal. "But why should we not hasten to strike some blow ere their succours shall have time to arrive?"

"There is something in that," said Allan of Lundy. "And since my young cousin so burns to flesh his maiden sword, there can be no safer

way of his doing so, or with the certainty of a more easy victory, than by making a sudden attack on the shores of Loch Carron."

"Safety!—easy victory!" muttered the young chief, with an expression of offended dignity and ineffable contempt. "But 'tis well," added he, too much filled with joy at having any enterprise at all in prospect, to allow any other feeling to occupy his mind for a moment; "let us not lose time in talk. If we are to move with the hope of a surprise, it were fitting that not one moment be lost. Let all within reach be speedily summoned. By to-morrow's dawn we must march to Loch Hourn, where our galleys are lying. Said I not well now, father?"

"Let it be so then, my son," said the chief, with a sigh which he could not check; "and oh! may all that is good attend and guard you!"

The sun rose with unclouded splendour over the mountains to the eastward of Loch Carron, and poured out a stream of golden radiance over the surface of its waters, which were gently lifted into tiny waves by a western breeze. The whole of this Highland scene was glowing and smiling. The early smoke was tinged with brighter tints of

orange, blue, and yellow, as it curled upwards from the humble chimnies of the cottages which were scattered singly or in small groups among irregular shreds of cultivation, that brightened the stripe of land bordering the shore. The whole happy population was astir, and little boats were pushing forth from every creek amidst the sparkling waves, their crews eagerly engaged in preparing their nets and lines for fishing. Already had some of the old men taken their seats on their accustomed bench, to inhale the fresh breath of life from the pure morning air, and to look listlessly out to sea, that they might idly speculate on the wind and the weather. It was hardly possible that eye could have looked upon a more peaceful scene.

Suddenly some two or three boats, which had gone down the little frith during the night, for the purpose of reaching a more distant fishing ground by the early dawn, were seen returning with all sail, and toiling with every oar. Curiosity first, and then alarm, brought out the inhabitants from the interior of their lowly abodes. The nearer fishing-boats drew their lines and half-spread nets hastily in, and there was one general rush, each individual crew making towards that point of the

shore which was nearest, without any regard to the consideration whether it was the point most adjacent to their home or not. By this time, all eyes were straining seaward, to discover what it was that created all this panic, when, one after another, there came sailing round the distant point, galley after galley, till a considerable fleet of them had appeared, their white sails filled with the favouring breeze, and shining with a borrowed lustre from the rich stream of light that poured aslant upon them from the newly-risen sun.

What a scene of dismay and confusion now arose!—Clamorous discussions began among the timid spectators,—all action seemed to be paralyzed. None appeared to think of arming, where the force of the armament that was advancing was manifestly so resistlessly overwhelming. There were but few who had any doubts as to what clan it might probably belong; and these doubts were speedily removed as the fleet came on, by the appearance of the displayed red eagle, with the black galley that formed the bearings on the broad banner of Glengarry, together with the crest of the raven on the rock, with the appalling motto of *Craggan-an-Fhithick*.

And now a bugle was heard to blow shrilly from the leading vessel, and in an instant the several galleys darted off from one centre towards different parts of the loch ; and the defenceless inhabitants of the hamlets and cottages might be seen abandoning their dwellings and flying inland. And no sooner did the prow of each vessel touch the bottom, than the armed men which it contained were seen rushing breast-deep through the tide towards the shore, the broadswords in their hands flashing in the morning light. One band was led by the brave young chief of Glengarry, shouting his war-cry, with the faithful and affectionate Allan of Lundy by his side, intent on little else but to protect his precious charge from harm.

There were but few men of the MacKenzies there to make a stand, and those who tried to do so were scattered, overpowered, and cut down. Wild were the shrieks that arose, as the miserable and comparatively defenceless people, leaving their wretched houses and boats to destruction, and their effects and cattle to be plundered, fled away towards the mountains. The impatient Angus no sooner reached the dry land, than he rushed impetuously after the flying MacKenzies,

—and soon indeed did he overtake the rearward ; but it was composed of the women, the aged, and the young ; and these he passed by and left unharmed behind him to press on after those who might be more worthy of his sword. On he hurried for miles after the fugitives, calling on them from time to time to halt and yield to him but one fighting man as an opponent. But his appeal was in vain ; and tired, and disappointed, and chagrined, he stopped to breathe, and he gnashed his teeth in a disappointment which even the friendly counsels of Allan of Lundy could not allay.

“ I’ll warrant I could soon catch those caitiffs who are disappearing so swiftly over the hill-top yonder,” said he ; “ but I care less to-day about taking the life of a MacKenzie or two, than I do about keeping the MacKenzies from taking thine.”

“ Thank ye, cousin,” replied Angus, his mortification by no means moderated by this well-meant speech. “ I hope this arm will defend the citadel of my life’s blood from all harm, without other aid.”

As Angus returned slowly towards the shore, he was somewhat shocked to discover that some of his followers had been less scrupulous in the use of

their swords than he had been ; and he met with spectacles which informed him of deeds of atrocity and of blood wantonly perpetrated. He beheld those cottages in flames which were lately smoking in peace ; and his heart smote him that he was now too late to prevent that carnage in which the grey hairs of the old were blended in one common slaughter with the fair locks of the young and helpless.

There was no glorious triumph or splendid achievement to gild the horrors of this day, or to stifle that disgust which they naturally excited in a young man even of these times. Little pride or pleasure had he in the miserable articles of plunder which he saw his ruthless clansmen bearing off with blood-stained hands to their galleys ; and he sat him down with Allan of Lundy, in a faint and feverish state of disquietude of mind on one of those patriarchal benches, which had been so lately and so placidly occupied by some of those elders of the hamlet whose lips were now cold, and whose hearts had now ceased to beat. I need not tell how long the young chief was compelled to tarry there, in the endurance of thoughts that bid defiance to all repose of mind, until he beheld the various bands

of skirmishers return each to its own vessel, after having spread ravage and devastation, and fire and sword, and murder, far and wide around that which was lately so happy a district.

It happened that the Lady Kintail had gone on the battlements of her castle of Eilean Donan, in order to enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful scenery of those twin sea-lochs which branch off from one another at the spot near to which that rocky island lies which gives name to the building that stands upon it, when, as she cast her eyes northward, she beheld a scattered crowd of people rushing down towards the point which creates the narrow ferry of Loch Ling. Some boats were moored there, and as she saw them hastily loose and put to sea to cross over to the castle, her anxiety to know what news they bore became so great, that she hurried down to the little cove where the landing-place was, that she might the sooner gain the intelligence they brought.

“The MacDonells!” cried these scared and unhappy people. “The MacDonells are upon us, lady! They have burnt and harried all Loch Carron! and, och hone! we are ruined men!”

“Och aye, my lady! och hone! we’re all har-

ried, and murdered, and burned !” cried some half a dozen of them at once.

“ Answer me like rational men,” said the Lady Kintail impatiently, “ and do not rout and roar like a parcel of stray beeves. How is ’t, say ye ? the MacDonell !”

And then proceeding to question them, she, by degrees, gathered from them that which had at least some resemblance to a true statement of what had happened.

The lady was nothing daunted by all she heard. Her first step was to despatch certain trustworthy scouts to reconnoitre, and to bring her accurate information how matters stood ; and then she retired to hold council with some of those leaders among her clansmen in whom she had most confidence. With their advice and assistance, every precaution was immediately taken to secure the safety of the castle, as well as to receive into it such a garrison and stock of provisions as might enable her to hold it out until her husband’s return, against whatever force might be brought to attack it ; and her heroic heart beat so high with the resolute determination of resistance, that she felt something like a pang of disappointment, when

her scouts returned with intelligence that taught her to believe she had no reason to expect any assault. One of her people, who was no other than Hector of Beauly, brought back the most perfect information regarding the motions of the enemy. They were already glutted with slaughter, cumbered with spoil, and, in a great measure, sickened of their enterprise; and, from the top of a hill, he had seen their gallies weighing to stand out of Loch Carron.

“ They are tired of their raid for this time,” said the lady with bitterness. “ It has been undertaken, I’ll warrant, but as a first fleshing for that young corby of an evil nest,—that Angus MacDonell; and his young beak having been once blooded by this mighty exploit done against women, old men, and children, he will be carried home to croak his triumph to his dotard old sire, and then he will be mewed up in safety till his wings grow long enough to admit of his flying in earnest. Would I had a good man or two who would deliver him a message from me, as he passes homewards through the Kyle Rhea in his dastard flight to Loch Hourm.”

Now, as we have no map here, I must remind

you that there are three sea-lochs on that part of the coast of Scotland, all of which debouche into the western sea. Of these Loch Carron is the most northerly, and Loch Hourne the most southerly, and that Loch Duich, which lies between both, opens through the expansion at its mouth, which is called Loch Alsh, into the narrow strait between the Isle of Skye and the mainland, which is called the Kyle Rhea.

“ Would I had a good man or two who would deliver a message from me to that young chough Angus MacDonell as he passes through the Kyle Rhea,” repeated the lady.

“ That most willingly will I, most noble lady,” cried Hector of Beaully. “ Have I not carried one message from the young Glengarry to my lord, and shall I not claim the honour of carrying that which the Lady Kintail has to send to the young Glengarry ?”

“ Thanks, gallant Hector !” replied the lady. “ Then shalt thou speak it from the mouth of a cannon ! Trust me thou shalt make him hear on the deafest side of his head.”

Then calling him aside, she quickly explained to him the scheme she had conceived ; and desiring

him to select the individuals whom he should most wish to have in his party, and to choose the boat which he considered best fitted for such an expedition, she ordered two small cannon to be put on board, together with sufficient ammunition for their use ; and as no time was to be lost, he and his brave and well-armed companions leaped immediately into the little craft, and pushed off. They pulled with all their strength, and with the utmost expedition, down through Loch Alsh to that isolated rock called the *Cailleach*, which lies close off the eastern angle of the Isle of Skye, and near to the northern entrance of the narrow strait of the Kyle Rhea. There they secretly ensconced themselves to await the return of the MacDonells.

The night fell cold and calm, and the moon arose clear and bright, illuminating every part of these narrow seas, and every headland and rock that projected into them from either shore. It was in the latter part of the year ; and by slow degrees some fleecy clouds arose from the horizon, and, after spreading themselves like a film of gauze over the expanse of heaven, they thickened in parts into denser masses, whence, as they passed overhead, some small, thin, and light particles of

snow began to fall gently and rarely, such as the sky usually sends down as its first wintry offering to the earth. This was enough to complete the concealment of the party, hid as they were beneath the shadowy side of the rock, without much obscuring the surface of the sea elsewhere. There then they lay, with every thing prepared, waiting impatiently for their prey.

At length a distant sound of oars was heard, for there was not a breath of air in these land-locked seas to render a sail available; and the breaking of the billows on the shore, though hoarse, was neither so loud nor so frequent as to disturb the listeners. All ears, and all eyes too, were on the stretch. The measured sound of the oars grew stronger, keeping time to a low murmuring chaunt which proceeded from those who pulled them; more for the purpose of preserving the regularity of the stroke, than for any music that they might have made. By-and-bye a galley appeared, dimly seen at some distance, and, as it drew nearer, it was at once known to be that which contained young Angus MacDonell, from the broad banner that floated over it, though there was not light enough to descry the bearings of Glengarry.

“ Now, my gallant cannoneers,” said Hector to those who had the charge of the small pieces of artillery, “ be prepared. Remember, when I give the word, you go first, Ian, and then you are to follow, Hamish, in about as much time as you might easily count ten without hurrying yourself. But fail not to attend to my word. In the meanwhile, see that you level well.”

On came the young chief’s galley. It approached the rock with a course which pointed to pass it clear at some fathoms distance to the westward of it. But whilst it was yet in progress towards it, Hector, with great expedition and adroitness, pointed his first piece, and watched his time ; and his fatal

“ Now !” resounded over the surface of the deep.

Ere yet the lintstock had been applied to the touch-hole, the galley was seen to quiver. Every motion of it indicated the alarm that had already been struck into its crew and helmsman by this ominous word. But the *boom* ! of the first gun followed with the quickness of lightning ; and the accuracy of the shot was told by the crashing of the balls with which it had been crammed upon the timbers of the hull and upper works, as well as by the curs-

ing and confusion of the people on board, the groans and plaints of the wounded, and the swerving of the galley from its course.

“ That has done some small work, I’ll warrant,” said Hector as he stooped to point the second piece. “ Are you ready, Hamish ? Now !”

And *boom!* went the second gun with yet more decided effects. In the panic produced by this shot the helm was left to itself,—the oars were abandoned,—the galley swung round with the tide, and in a few seconds it was driven full upon the rock.

“ Angus of Glengarry !” cried a voice like thunder. “ I, Hector MacKenzie, bore thy message to him to whom I owe service, and I have now brought thee the answer !”

Singling out the young chief, and springing upon him like a tiger, he stabbed him to the heart with a left-handed blow of his dirk, ere the unhappy youth had recovered his footing from the shock which the little vessel received on the rock. The next moment saw his corse floating on the waves.

But Hector’s broadsword was instantly needed to defend his own head. Desperate was the conflict which Allan of Lundie maintained with this

hero of the MacKenzies. There was something awful in the wild yells of the combatants,—the clashing of their claymores,—the groans of the dying,—and the choking and gasping of the drowning. The very sea-birds, which had been roused in clouds by the flash and roar of the two cannon shots, and which had soared about for some moments, screaming in affright at this rude and unwonted intrusion upon their solitary slumbers, now winged themselves in terror away. The crew of the galley were in a few seconds overpowered from the vantage ground possessed by the assailants, as well as by the sudden nature of the assault itself; and the slaughter was dreadful. The fearless Allan of Lundie fought furiously hand to hand with Hector, backed as the MacKenzie champion was by those who came to aid him after putting their own opponents to death. Terrific were the blows he dealt around him, and murderous were the wounds inflicted by the broad blade of his sweeping sword. But the number of those who were thus opposed to him individually went on increasing as his people fell around him, until all were gone; and he saw that he must be overwhelmed and taken if he should any longer at-

tempt to continue his resistance. At once he took the resolution, and bounding boldly into the air, he dived into the bosom of the sea, leaving his astonished enemies filled with doubt and suspense as to his fate.

“He’s food for the fishes like the rest of them,” said some of the MacKenzies.

“The foul fiend catch him but yonder he goes!” cried one of them, as he saw him rise to the surface at some distance from the rock.

“To your oars, men of Kintail!” cried Hector, “to your oars I say, and let him not escape!”

Meanwhile stoutly did Allan of Lundy breast the tide, and so great was the confusion that prevailed among the Kintail men, that ere they could push off the boat, man the oars, and make her start ahead, the powerful swimmer had made considerable way against the billows. Soon, however, would they have diminished the distance he had gained, and soon would he have been the prey of those who thirsted so eagerly for his life, had not the other galleys at that moment appeared; their prows bearing gallantly onwards with the favouring tide, making the sea foam and hiss again with the sweep of their numerous oars, and the rapid

rush of their course. In an instant the Kintail boat altered the direction of her head, and shot away off in a westerly direction; her rowers bending to their work like men who were anxious to escape from a pursuing danger. Allan with the Red Jacket was easily recognised amid the waves; but ere they could get him into the galley that first came up, the boat of the MacKenzies was already lost to their eyes in the gloom that brooded over the more distant part of the straits. Hopeless of overtaking her, the MacDonells, after bewailing the calamity that had befallen them, and looking for some time in vain for the remains of their young leader, pursued their sad and darksome voyage, with the pipes playing a wailing lament, until they reached Loch Hourn, whence most of them were to prosecute their melancholy march back to Invergarry Castle.

The lady of Kintail was no sooner informed of the success of her enterprise, than she dispatched a quick-sailing boat to the island of Mull to bear the news to her lord. This boat was observed to pass southwards by the MacDonells, as they were lying by for a short repose. The object of its voyage

was quickly guessed at, but Allan of Lundie judged it unwise to interrupt it.

“It is toiling to work out our revenge,” said he to his people. “It goes to invite the lord of Kintail homewards. See that ye who are to tarry here, keep a lively watch for him, and so shall his blood pay for that of our lamented young chief. Would that I could have remained to have wreaked my vengeance on his head! But I have other duties to perform,—I must go to sooth a bereaved father’s sorrow. Alas! how shall I break the news of this sad affliction to the old man!”

I need hardly tell you that the old chief of the MacDonells remained in a state of extreme mental anxiety after the departure of Angus with the expedition. He felt that not only the honour of the clan, but the honour and the life of his son, were at stake. He was restless and unhappy; yea, he cursed himself and his feeble limbs because he had not been able to go, as he was once wont to do, at the head of his people. Twenty times in the course of every hour did he fancy that he heard the triumphant clangour of the pipes played to his son’s homeward march, and as often was he disappointed.

At last something like their shrill music at a distance did strike upon his ear.

“Hah!” cried he with an excited countenance, “heard ye that?—my boy comes at last. Heard ye not the sound? Though I be old, yet is mine ear sharp when it watches for the coming of my gallant boy! Help me to the barbican, that I may behold him! Well do I remember the time when I first came back in triumph! It was on that memorable occasion when——Merciful Heaven!” exclaimed he after a pause, occasioned by the unexpected appearance at that moment of Allan of Lundy, who had come on before the rest, and who now entered the hall with downcast and sorrowful looks, and with his arms folded across his bosom. “Merciful Heaven! Speak Allan! Tell me why look ye so sad? Where is my Angus? Where is my boy?”

“Alas! alas!” said Allan of Lundy, “I cannot—cannot tell thee that it is well with him.”

“What!—wounded?” cried the old chief, “so was I in my first field. He must look for such fate as fell to the lot of those who have lived before him.”

“Alas! alas!” cried Allan of Lundy, weeping

at the old man's words, "Alas ! his fate has indeed come too soon !"

"Hush !" said the old chief, suddenly starting and stretching his ear to listen. "What strains are these the bagpipes are playing ?—a *coronach* ! Ah ! then am I a bereft father ! Oh ! my boy !—bereft !—bereft !—bereft !" And springing convulsively from his chair, he smote his breast violently, his head turned convulsively round to one side, his neck suddenly stiffened, his eyes rolled fearfully, and then protruding themselves from their sockets, they became horribly fixed and glazed, his breath rattled in his throat, and sinking back into his chair, he had died before Allan of Lundy could rush forward to his aid.

Now indeed did the *coronach* raise its wild lament on the pipes, the women mixing with it their wailings, and the men their groans. It was for their old chief—their ancient strength, Donald MacAngus MacDonell, and for the young and promising flower of their hopes, Angus, the eldest son and heir of Donald. The days of mourning, though not long, were sad, and the funeral obsequies of the chief were performed with all the solemnity, and pageantry, and ceremonial that were due to

them, whilst those of his son were denied to them by the unhappy nature of his death.

The council of the clan had already determined that Allan of Lundy should govern for the young Ronald, who being in boyhood was deemed quite unfit for so weighty and important a charge. The experienced warrior assumed the important trust with his usual boldness and confidence, though altogether overpowered by that honest and unfeigned grief which oppressed his heart for the loss of these relatives whom he had so long held dear. But his warlike and revengeful spirit was not long suffered to remain so clouded, for he had hardly been installed in the situation, to which the universal suffrages of the clan had raised him, when a breathless messenger from Loch Hourn entered the hall.

“What news?” cried Allan impatiently—“say, has the young blood of our lamented Angus been avenged? Has the red tide from Kintail’s heart been mingled with the angry currents of the narrow seas?”

“Alas, no!” replied the messenger, “no such good fortune has attended us!”

“How then?” demanded Allan, “methinks

that if your leader had but followed the simple guidance which I gave him ere we parted, our grief might have been now somewhat assuaged, by the thought that we had made that woman a widow, who hath caused our woe, and that clan mourners who were rejoicing over the grief which they have wrought to us. But speak quickly, what hath happened?"

"Your counsel was strictly followed," replied the messenger. "Our fleet of boats were all ready to be launched, and our men were lying prepared to embark at the first signal. Whilst all were on the watch, a galley appeared in sight, and we began to hurry on board. Suddenly we perceived that she was steering directly for the island where we lay, and we all went on shore again in the belief that she was the vessel with those friends we looked for from Ardnamurchan."

"Quick, quick!—what then?" cried Allan of Lundy.

"On she came with her prow direct towards the port," replied the messenger, "and she continued to keep it so till she came within hail of the very entrance of it. Then the pipes played up *Cabar Fiadh*, and, ere she tacked to bear away again

with all her oars out and hoisting her canvass to the uttermost, a hoarse voice came thundering from on board,—‘The Lord Kintail here sends you his greeting by the hands of his captain, the captain of Cairnburgmore ;’ and in the same moment, they poured out so murderous a storm of bullets from their falconets, upon us who were then actively launching our boats to be after her, that many of our men were killed and wounded. The confusion among us was great, and she escaped to so great a distance before we were ready to pursue, that all pursuit became vain.”

“Curses be on her and on her crew !” cried Allan of Lundy, gnashing his teeth in bitterness ; “it seems as if some fiend helped them ! Curses be on Cairnburgmore ! and curses be on the freight his galley carried ! But I will be revenged on these MacKenzies ! Here I swear,” continued he drawing his sword and striking it against the banner of the MacDonell, that was then floating at the upper end of the hall. “Here do I solemnly swear to make so terrible a reprisal on the MacKenzies, that men’s flesh shall creep upon their bones as they listen to the tale of it ; and yet shall it be but as an earnest of what I shall inflict on

that accursed clan for the grief and sorrow they have so lately wrought us !”

These then, gentlemen, were the circumstances that preceded and gave birth to the celebrated Raid of Killychrist, and after so long a preliminary history, I shall now hasten to give you the particulars of that horrible piece of atrocity.

It was Saturday, and the most active preparations were instantly ordered by Allan of Lundy to be made for a night-march. He had heard that there was to be a numerous gathering of the MacKenzies next day in the church of Killychrist, or Christ's Church, a short mile or two above the little town and priory of Beaully. Putting himself at the head of a determined band of followers therefore, he took his way across the mountains with inconceivable expedition, so that he found himself, early on the Sunday morning, in the heart of the MacKenzie country, and crossing the river Beaully, he was soon at the church of Killychrist, and he surrounded it with his MacDonells before any of his miserable victims were in the least aware of his presence.

The church was filled with all ranks of the clan, but there was a great proportion of the higher class

among them. Psalms were singing, and all within the sacred building were absorbed in that attention or abstraction which attends real or pretended devotion.

Suddenly the doors were taken possession of by the armed MacDonells, with the grim and unrelenting Allan of Lundy at their head. In an instant the nasal chaunt of the psalmody was drowned by the screams of the timid, who already saw nothing but death before them, and by the exclamations of those who sought to make resistance, and to fight their way through their foes. But utterly impervious were the serried spear points that bristled through the low-arched doorways, as well as through every narrow lancet window of the holy fane; and stern and resolute, and utterly devoid of feeling, were the war-scarred countenances of those whose ferocious eyes glared in upon them.

All was now panic and confusion among the MacKenzies, who filled the area of the church, where individuals crowded and jostled so against each other, that few could draw a dirk, much less a claymore from its sheath. Meanwhile shouts were heard without, and immediately afterwards those of the MacDonells, who kept the doors and

windows, gave way for one single instant,—but it was only to admit of the approach of a number of their comrades, who speedily threw in heaps of blazing faggots, together with stifling balls of rosin and sulphur, and other combustibles. In an instant the ancient carved screens and other wood-work of the interior were ignited, and the very clothes of the unfortunate people caught fire; and still heaps upon heaps of inflammable materials were hurled incessantly inwards, until all within was in one universal blaze.

“They have light enow within I trow,—they lack not light from without,” cried the remorseless Allan of Lundy; “shut and fasten the doors and windows, and block them up with sods.”

His orders were speedily obeyed, and those within were now left to their agonizing fate; but well I ween, that the fancy of no one can imagine what were the horrors conveyed in those sounds that came half stifled from within the walls of that church. Even to Allan of Lundy, they became utterly intolerable.

“Alister Dhu!” cried he to the piper, “play up, man!—up with your hoarse melody, and drown these sounds of torture and death that fill

our ears, as if we had been suddenly transported to the regions of hell. Play up, I tell you !”

The piper instantly obeyed his command and blew up loud and shrill ; and, after having made his instrument give utterance to a long succession of wild and unconnected notes, altogether without any apparent meaning, he began his march around the walls of the church, playing extemporaneously that pibroch, which, under the name of Killychrist, has ever since been used as the Pibroch of Glengarry. For a brief space of time, the horrible sounds which came from within the building, continued to mingle themselves with the clangour of the pipes ; but by degrees these became fainter and fainter, and the piper had not made many circles around the church, till the shrieks, the groans, and the wailings had ceased ; their spirits had been released from their tortured bodies, and all was silent within its walls.

Allan of Lundy had no desire to unbar this scene of horror, that he might look upon his work ere he went. The preservation of his people, moreover, required that he should retreat as expeditiously as he possibly could. He was well aware that the whole MacKenzie country must very speedily be

alarmed; that all of the clan, who were within reach, would be immediately in arms, and that the body of MacDonells which he had with him would be as a mere handful compared to that of his foes, if he should allow them time to assemble. He moved off therefore with the utmost expedition; but, with all the haste he could use, he could not shake off the MacKenzies, who collected in irregular numbers and followed him, harassing his rear and his flanks, whilst, like a lion retreating before the hunters, he marched on boldly, endeavouring to beat away the assailing crowds, by halting from time to time as he went, and charging back upon them with resistless fury, making many a brave MacKenzie bite the dust. But still they continued to increase in force by fresh accessions.

At length he had recourse to a manœuvre which he hoped might have distracted the attention of his foes. He hastily divided his little band into two parties, and having given secret orders to a trusty leader to start off at the head of one band in the direction of the Bridge of Inverness, and so to pursue his way homewards by the south side of Loch Ness, he commanded the other to follow himself, intending to hold directly onwards over the hills by

the route which they had come during the preceding night. This plan so far succeeded, that the MacKenzies were for some time much baffled and perplexed. But after some considerable delay, they recovered themselves so far as to divide their men also in the same manner; and one large body, under the command of Murdoch MacKenzie of Redcastle, followed hard after the first party of the MacDonells, whilst MacKenzie of Coull, pressed onwards on the retreating steps of the captain of Glengarry.

Availing himself of the temporary check which his pursuers had thus met with, Allan of Lundy and his party made extraordinary exertions, by which they gained so much ground on their pursuers, that they fairly left the MacKenzies out of sight. They were thus enabled to rest for a little while like a tired herd of chased deer, in the hills near the burn of Altsay. But their repose was short. The pack of their enemies, who were following on their track, soon opened in yells like those of hounds when they came in view of them, and they were compelled to stand to their arms. A very sanguinary skirmish was the consequence, fought with great success on the part of the MacDonells, who slew numbers of their enemies; but this availed them little, for still

the MacKenzies came crowding and gathering on in fresh numbers, whilst the ranks of Glengarry were every moment growing thinner and thinner. Retreat, therefore, became again expedient.

Allan of Lundy made one desperate charge that scattered his foes over the hill-side, and then his bugle unwillingly gave the word of command for his brave MacDonells to retire. They did so with the utmost expedition, and at the same time with all the steadiness and coolness which became them. But as they moved on, many among their number were, from time to time, prostrated and sprinkled, man by man, on the earth, by the distant shots fired at them by their pursuers; and many a gallant clansman fell whilst endeavouring to cover from harm the scarlet-clad body of his leader, that conspicuously attracted the aim of his enemies. At length the number of the MacDonells became so much reduced, and the pursuit waxed so hot, that even a show of resistance was rendered utterly vain.

“Men of Glengarry!” cried Allan of Lundy, “nothing now remains for us but flight. But ere we fly, let us make one more furious onset against these cowardly *Bodachs*. Let us first scatter them to the four winds of heaven, and then, when

I give you a bugle blast, see that ye in your turn flee off suddenly apart, and so let each try to find his own way home. I shall shift well enough for myself. Now charge on them."

Unprepared for this instantaneous assault, the effect of it was tremendous. Many of the MacKenzies were slain, and the whole of the remainder were dispersed like a flock of sheep. The MacDonells had hitherto kept together like a ball, but no sooner did they hear the shrill blast of Allan of Lundy's bugle, than they burst asunder, and each individual bounded off in that direction which seemed to offer him the best chance of baffling his pursuers. As hounds are astonished and divided by the sudden appearance of a trip of hares starting all at once from some well-preserved patch of furze; so were the MacKenzies confused by this new expedient of their enemies. For some time they stood confounded, until at last they gathered into little irregular bands, each of which followed that fugitive to whom the eyes of those that composed it were accidentally directed. But the splendid scarlet jacket of Allan of Lundy, which was as well known to the MacKenzies as to the MacDonells, and which upon this occasion particularly

struck them as participating in the hue of that element which had recently done so cruel work upon the miserable wretches at Killychrist, drew on him the fixed attention of by far the greatest body. This was exactly what he wished for, as he saw that in this way even his flight would be the means of contributing to the safety of his men.

“After the firebrand!” cried a powerful and athletic champion of the MacKenzies. “It is Allan with the Red Jacket himself. After him! See where he flies along the slope! But I’m thinking that there is something yonder afore him that will bring him to a check! After him!—after him!”

Like greyhound freed from the slips, did this leader of the MacKenzies, and a great mass of those who followed him, burst away after Allan of Lundy, who seemed to devour the very ground by the rapidity of his flight, and the crowd of those that were after him, very soon showed a long tail like that of a comet.

The MacKenzie champion, who had cheered them on to the pursuit, soon shot far a-head of the great body of his party, some five or six of whom only could keep at all near him. He was well

aware that the MacDonell had taken a course which must lead him to a fearful ravine,—a yawning chasm, something not much less than twenty feet in width, that seemed to sink black and fearful into that eternal night which may be supposed to exist in the bowels of the earth. The very stream that was heard to rush through it was there invisible. It was this that the MacKenzie leader had counted on as certain to prove a check to the flying Allan of Lundy. But little did he know that the bold hero of the MacDonells, trusting in his wonderful powers, had taken this very course with the hope of being thereby enabled to rid himself entirely of his pursuers. As Allan flew with a velocity that seemed to vie with that of the heathcock, as he skimmed over the heather tops on a hillside, he looked now and then over his shoulder to ascertain the state of the pursuit ; and perceiving, as he came within a few yards of the ravine, that the MacKenzie leader was considerably in advance of the handful of stragglers who toiled after him, he halted, and planted himself firmly in a position to await his assault. Nor was this halt of his altogether unseasonable ; for his breathing came somewhat hurriedly for a few moments ; but be-

fore his enemy came near to him, his lungs were again playing easily ; and if his erect bosom heaved at all, it did so more with indignation and contemptuous defiance, than from over exertion. The MacKenzie champion came to a stop within ten paces of him whom he had been pursuing.

“ Now !” cried he, whilst his words came thick and half-smothered by the exhaustion under which he laboured. “ Now !—Now, Allan of the Red Jacket !—Now I have got ye !—The last time we met, you escaped from this good claymore by diving like a duck. Do so now, if ye can. Dive now, if ye dare, or stand like a man, and face Hector MacKenzie of Beaully,—Hector MacKenzie, who slew”——

“ Villain !” cried Allan of Lundy, “ you need say no more. I thank thee for thus recalling to me thine accursed visage and name. The very sight of thee gives a new edge to this reeking blade of mine.”

Allan of Lundy rushed furiously at his foe, who advanced a step or two to meet him. A terrible single combat ensued. But active and adroit as the MacDonell leader had ever proved himself to be as a swordsman, he found in Hector MacKen-

zie of Beauily a cool, an experienced, and a powerful opponent. Conscious that his adversary had at that moment the advantage of him as to wind, and being aware that some five or six stark fellows of his own clan were fast nearing the scene of action, he saw that his game lay in protracting the fight, till numbers on his side might make his enemy an easy prey. He contented himself therefore with guarding and parrying the furious and not always well-directed cuts and thrusts of Allan of Lundy, until his aid should arrive to render his victory sure. They did come up at last, panting like overrun blood-hounds; and the brave Mac-Donell had just presence of mind enough to see, that if he meant to save his life from that certain destruction that awaited it, from the fearful odds by which he was so speedily to be surrounded, he had no time to lose. With one desperate cut, which, though guarded, made his adversary reel beneath the very weight of it, he turned suddenly from him, and ran three or four steps towards the ravine—halted—threw back on his enemies a withering look of rage and scorn,—and then darting towards the yawning gulph, he sprang over its fearful separation with the bound of a stag, and

uttering a taunting laugh, he quietly leant upon his sword on the opposite bank to await the issue. The followers of Hector MacKenzie shuddered involuntarily as he sprang, but impelled by the rage of disappointment, Hector himself flew towards the chasm. He checked for a moment on the very brink, with his plumed bonnet thrown back, and his arms and sword high in air; and then casting one wild and searching look into the abyss that yawned beneath his feet, he retreated a few steps, and nerving himself with all his resolution, he flew at the desperate leap.

“ He is over !” shouted one MacKenzie.

“ God be here, he is down !” cried another.

Neither of them were accurately right. He had failed in clearing the chasm by a single inch. His toes scratched away the loose earth and moss, and down indeed went his feet. His naked claymore dropped from his hand; but he caught at a young birchen sapling that grew from the very verge of the rock. It bent like a rope with his weight, and he hung over the black void into which his trusty weapon had disappeared, and down which it was still heard faintly clanging as it was dashed from side to side in its descent. Allan of Lundy looked re-

morselessly downwards upon the wretched man, whose eyes glared fearfully amidst his convulsed features, as with extended jaws he uttered some incoherent and guttural sounds, which even the horrors of his perilous situation and impending fate could not compel his indomitable spirit to mould into any thing like a petition for mercy from a MacDonell.

“Hector of Beauly!” cried Allan of Lundy, “would that thou hadst but reached this solid ground, claymore in hand! Then, indeed, might my revenge have been sweeter and more to my mind. But thy weird will have it so, and vengeance may not longer tarry. You it was who reft from us young Angus, the hope of our clan; and this day hast thou taken many of my brave fellows from me, and many trophies too hast thou taken. So thou mayest e’en *take that too!*”

With one sweep of his claymore he cut the sapling in twain; and the agonized visage of his powerful foe dropped away and disappeared from his eyes. No shriek was heard; but Allan of Lundy started involuntarily backwards, as a heavy muffled sound came upwards from the descending body, as it grazed against the successive projec-

tions of the chasm ; and when the prolonged plunge that arose from an immeasurable depth below, told him of the utter annihilation of what had so lately been a man, as full of life, of action, and of courage, as he still felt himself to be possessed of.

Allan of Lundy stood for some moments as if transfixed to the spot. Wheresoever he gazed around him, the glaring eyeballs and the convulsed features of Hector of Beauly still haunted his imagination. But at length a shot from an arquebuss, that passed very near to him, and cut down a tall plant of *bracken** immediately behind him, brought him back to his recollection. He then saw that a great mass of the pursuing MacKenzies had already joined those two or three men who had so closely followed Hector of Beauly, and these were now gathered on the opposite side of the ravine, raging with fury for the loss of their champion. He felt that it was no time or place for him to halt, to be a butt for them to shoot at. He sprang again like a deer to the hill. But as he climbed its steep face, many were the bullets that were sent whizzing after him. By one of these random shots he was wounded in the leg, not very severe-

* Fern.

ly, but so as to produce a considerable effusion of blood. The MacKenzies saw that he was hit, and likè huntsmen marking the effect of their discharge against a deer, they stood for some moments to observe him as he made his way up the hill-side.

“ He flags !” cried one.

“ He faints !” cried another.

“ He is mortally wounded !” cried a third.

“ He moves on !” cried a fourth.

“ Away ! away !” cried another. “ Away to the ford above the waterfall. He cannot last long. We shall soon come up with him !”

But the game was of a very superior description to what those who hunted him supposed ; and they soon found that he was not quite so easily secured as they had calculated. Before they had made their circuit, in order to cross the stream that poured itself headlong into the ravine which had been so fatal to their champion Hector of Beaully, the red jacket of Allan of Lundy had disappeared over the hill top. But he had left his blood upon his track. A consultation was held as to what was best to be done.

“ Let us have Rory Bane’s trusty sleuth

hound," said one of them. " See!—yonder is his cottage on the other side of the moss."

The advice was approved of, and with one consent they hastened to procure the dog. The animal was no sooner put upon the trail of the fugitive, than he was like to pull down the man who held his leash. But the steady Highlander kept his hold of him, for he was well aware that if once let slip, the keenness of the animal would lead him on hot foot till he overtook the MacDonell, in which case the creature's death would be sealed long ere they could come up to lend him their aid. In order to benefit by his sagacity, they required to keep with him, and they found it hard enough work to do so. With his leash stretched till its collar almost choked him, he went bounding and yelling after the chase, whitening the very heath as he passed along with the foam of his mouth, and keeping not only the man who held him, but all those who were with him, going at a desperate pace. But still the temporary breathing which the Glengarry leader had enjoyed at the ravine, and the long start which he had gained whilst his pursuers were making their circuit to avoid it, and going out of their way to procure the dog, toge-

ther with the time which the hound took in picking up the scent in parts where Allan of Lundy had forded the mountain streams, enabled that hero, who was so swift and enduring of foot, to reach the great valley of Loch Ness, even before the deep baying of the hound had first struck upon his ear.

Then it was that a shout rang from the echoing face of the mountain that overhung the lake, for his red jacket had been descried by his pursuers, and they redoubled their speed. But Allan of Lundy was now incapable of increasing his. The blood that had continued to drop from his wound as he ran had now left behind it that incipient faintness which the MacKenzies vainly thought had fallen on him at the time when they saw that the shot had told on him. But many miles of rough ground had he since fled over with little diminution of speed; and now the blue waters of Loch Ness stretched as it were from his feet far up between its retreating mountains. And only now it was that he felt a growing weakness, that told him that the chase could not endure a much longer time. Yet still he urged his flying steps, and still the baying of the hound, and the shouts of his pursuers, came nearer and nearer to his rear;

and now and then a bullet would whistle among the foliage of the bushes that grew to right or left of him, or would tear up the turf in his very pathway, as circumstances gave those who followed him a chance view of him, whilst the echoes reverberated the sound of the discharge which had sent it.

Already had he fled for some miles along the rocky and wooded faces of those mountains which arise from the northern side of Loch Ness, stopping from time to time for a few seconds on some knoll-top, to inhale the western zephyrs that blew on him with refreshing coolness from the wilds of Invergarry. But his exertions were so great and so long protracted, that even these, his native breezes, ceased to afford sufficient renovation to his wearied lungs and beating temples. He felt himself growing fainter and fainter, and this, too, when his pursuers, many of whom had but recently joined in the chase, were every minute gaining upon him more and more. Yet still he laboured on until even the very mountains seemed to conspire with his enemies against him. His path became reduced to a narrow and confined track, by the crags which towered above him on one hand, and the precipices that stooped sheer down into

the loch on the other. All chance of escape seemed now to have departed from him. In his despair he flung a hasty glance over the waves that danced below him, and, as he did so, he descried a little boat about half way across the sheet of water, with two or three individuals in it employed in fishing. The shouts of the MacKenzies now pressed closer and closer upon him. Like a stricken stag, he took his desperate resolve, and scrambling down to a pointed cliff that jutted out into vacancy over a deep and still part of the lake, he stood for a short time to breathe on its giddy brink. The yells of his enemies rent the air as they rushed wildly onwards to secure their prey, whilst the hoand gave forth his deep bass to complete their terrific music. They were almost upon him. He cast his eyes once more downwards, then clasped his arms tightly over his breast, drew in one full draught of breath; and as the MacKenzies were clambering hurriedly along the dangerous path with their eyes fixed eagerly and intently upon his figure, they were astonished and confounded to perceive Allan of Lundy's well-known scarlet jacket shooting like a falling star through some fifty or sixty feet of air into the profound below! So perfectly had he

preserved his perpendicular position during his descent, that he entered the water like an iron rod, so as scarcely to produce a ripple ; and the simple action of stretching out his arms having instantly brought him like a cork to the surface, he was seen breasting his way towards the distant boat, with a vigour only to be accounted for from the circumstance, that the action he now used had brought a fresh set of muscles into play. Several random shots were fired at him by the MacKenzies, but unsuccessfully ; and he was soon beyond the reach of their bullets.

Grouped upon the point whence he had thus so miraculously sprung, stood his panting and toil-worn pursuers, wondering at this extraordinary effort of his desperation ; whilst the disappointed sleuth hound continued to rouse the echoes with his prolonged howlings. And now they eagerly watched the fate of him whom they not unnaturally believed to have escaped from their weapons only to be drowned in the unfathomable depths of the loch. For the little boat was still far from him, much farther than any strong swimmer could well hope to reach ; and although he swam stoutly enough at first, they began to perceive that he was striking out

more and more heavily, as if death was fast shackling his powerful sinews.

But now again, to their grievous disappointment, they saw that those in the boat had perceived him, and were pulling lustily towards him.

It happened that the owner of the boat was no other than Fraser of Foyers, who had come out from his own place near the celebrated waterfall of that name, on the south side of the lake, to waste a few idle hours in fishing. He was the staunch ally of the MacDonell; and although he was at a considerable distance from the spot at the time, the meteor descent of the red jacket had struck his eyes so forcibly, that he immediately suspected that something had befallen Allan of Lundy, whose garment he guessed it to be. Having ordered his men to row in the proper direction, he soon began to recognise the red speck forcing its way through the water, and leaving a long line of wake behind it, while the hostile tartans that waved from the verge of the cliff, and the echoes that were awakened by the baying of the hound and the shouts of the men, told him enough of the story to induce him and his rowers to strain every nerve to save the gallant captain of Glengarry. And great as

were their exertions, they were no more than were necessary for effecting their object ; for they reached him as he was on the eve of sinking from very exhaustion. Fraser of Foyers had no sooner saved his friend, than he stood up in his boat and gave three hearty cheers, and then hoisting his tiny white sail, he availed himself of a favourable breeze, and bore away for the upper end of the lake, whilst the MacKenzies followed it with their eyes, and continued to pour out maledictions upon it, till it was lost in the yellow haze of the sun-set in the western distance.

The captain of the MacDonells returned to Invergarry Castle, to brood over the dire, though dear-bought revenge he had reaped in this terrible raid. His heart was especially filled with savage joy, whilst ruminating on the dreadful death which he had bestowed on him who had killed his nephew Angus MacDonell. But these triumphant thoughts soon gave way before that ideal phantom of Hector of Beauly, which never ceased to haunt his fevered imagination, and which exhibited the last, despairing, yet resolute look of that bold man, ere Allan of Lundy had cut the only remaining hold he had of earth,

and sent him, as it were, into the very bowels of the infernal regions. Nor did the cries which arose from the burning church of Killychrist ever leave his ears.

But few of the MacDonells who partook of this expedition, survived with their leader. Even those who went round by the bridge of Inverness did not escape ; and it was somewhat remarkable that they died by a fate worthy of those who had been engaged in so cruel an expedition. Having been overcome with fatigue, they stopped to refresh themselves in a house of public entertainment near Torbreck, where they supposed that they were beyond all risk of farther attack. But they were woefully mistaken ; for MacKenzie of Redcastle having followed them thither with his party, suddenly surrounded them, and burned every one of them to death.

END OF VOL. I.