

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

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## FAIR ANNIE MACLEOD.

A TALE.

By Mrs Crawford.

THOSE attachments that take place in early life, contrary to the wishes of tender and not ambitious parents, seldom, if ever, end happily. The *ignis fatuus* of passion, which leads the young and trusting maid to the arms of her lover, vanishes when the cares of her own creating press upon the heart of the wife and mother.

In my native village, before I had entered upon that world which owes, like some descriptions of beauty, half its enchantment to the veil that shades it, I was acquainted with a young maiden, whose personal and mental attractions were of that cast which romance loves to portray.

Annie Macleod was the belle of our little hamlet. She had a bright and loving eye; a cheek ever dimpling with the smiles of gladness; and a fairy foot, which was as elastic as the stem of the bonnie blue bell, her favourite flower. Annie had many lovers; but one, a stranger at Roslin, was the chosen of her heart. To him her hand was often given in the dance; and many were the inquiring glances at, and frequent the whispered surmises about him, by kerchieved matron and snooded maid. Annie's was a first love; and, like every thing that is rare and beautiful, when seen for the first time, was irresistible. Just emerging from the girl into womanhood, with all the unweakened romance of nature playing round her day-dreams, and colouring the golden visions of her sleep, the manly beauty of the stranger's countenance, and the superior refinement of his speech and manners to the youth of that sequestered hamlet, came with all the power of enchantment to ensnare and bewilder her innocent mind.

Rumours about this favoured stranger at length reached the ears of Annie's mother—unfortunately, she had no father. Questioned by her parent, her answers were in character with her youth and simplicity. She knew nothing of the stranger; but was sure he was a gentleman, for he had offered, and really meant to marry her. Mrs Macleod, upon this information, acted without delay. She forbade Annie, on pain of her maternal displeasure, to see the stranger again, unless he, by his own conduct, proved himself to be worthy of her. But on a fine Sabbath morning, when going to kirk, dressed out in all her pretty bravery, and blooming as the rose-coloured ribbons that tied her bonnet, Annie met the stranger at the place where they had so often held tryste together; and there Robin Bainbogle, as he crossed the rude bridge that leads over a wild ravine to Roslin Castle, saw, as he said, "the bonnie lassie for the last time, wi' a face like a dripping rose." Tears Annie might, and probably did shed—but that day she fled from her home.

Years passed away. The mother of the lost girl sank under this blow to her parental hopes. The young maidens, Annie's compeers in age and beauty, became wives and mothers; and the name of "fair Annie Macleod" was seldom mentioned but by sage matrons, to warn their daughters, or by chaste spinsters to draw comparisons to their own advantage.

It was on a dark and stormy night in November, 1792, that the pious and venerable pastor of — was sent for to attend a dying woman. Wrapped in his plaid, the kind man walked hurriedly along the common footway to a settlement of squalid cottages, such as vice and poverty usually inhabit. In one of these cottages, or rather huts, he found the object of his search. Pale, emaciated, and sinking away, like the flickering light of an exhausted taper, lay the once beautiful—the once innocent and happy Annie Macleod. What had been her fate since she left her mother's roof 'twas easy to imagine, though the veil of secrecy rested upon the particulars of her history. Her senses were at times unsettled; and it was only during the short gleamings of a sounder mind, that she was able to recognise in the Rev. Dugald Anderson, the pastor of her sinless youth, and to recommend to him, with all the pathos of dying love, the pretty, unconscious child that slumbered at her side. That done, her heart, like the last string of a neglected lute, broke, and the spirit that had once so joyously revelled in its abode of loveliness, fled from the ruined tenement of beauty for ever.

"And these are the fruits of love!" said Anderson, bitterly, as he eyed the cold and stiffened features of Annie. "Oh! monstrous violation of that hallowed name!"

"Of a troth, 'tis a sair sight!" said an old woman, the owner of the hut; "and I count me the judgment o' the gude God winna sleep nor slumber on sic doings, as the ruin of this pair lassie."

"No," said Anderson, emphatically, "the justice of God may seem to slumber, but is awake. Accursed is the seducer of innocence: yea, the curse of broken hearts is upon him. It shall come home to his heart and to his spirit, till he lie down and die, in very weariness of life."

The pious pastor took home the little Alice to the Manse; and after the remains of her mother were decently interred in the village kirkyard, a simple headstone, inscribed with her name, told of the last resting-place of "fair Annie Macleod."

Some years subsequently to this melancholy event, the good pastor of — went out, as was his wont, to "meditate at eventide." As he stood leaning over the white wicket gate, that opened from his garden into the churchyard, thoughts of early days and early friends came trooping to his mind.

No after friendship's e'er can raise  
The endearments of our early days;  
And ne'er the heart such fondness prove,  
As when it first began to love.

The last rays of the setting sun shone full upon the windows

of the chapel, reflecting from them a thousand mimic glories. His eye glanced from the holy edifice to the simple tombs, partially lighted by the slanting sunbeams, as they quivered through the branches of the patriarchal trees, which here and there hung over the forgotten dead. Suddenly a man habited in foreign garb advanced up the broad pathway leading from the village. Looking about him, he at last stood opposite a white headstone, over which a decayed yew threw its melancholy shadow. It was the headstone that marked the grave of the once joyous Annie. As if oppressed by some sudden emotion, he sank rather than leaned against the hollow trunk; but soon again returning to the grave, he knelt down, and burying his face with both hands, appeared to weep. The good pastor, interested in the scene, stood gazing unobserved at the stranger, who, after the lapse of a few seconds, rose up from his knees, and turned away as if to retrace his steps. Then again coming back, he stooped down, and plucking something from the green sward, kissed it, hid it in his bosom, and with rapid step left the churchyard.

Anderson returned into the Manse, drew a chair to the hearth, sat down, took up a book, laid it down again, and walked out into the little court that fronted the village. A feeling of curiosity perhaps led him to glance his eye over the way, where stood the only alehouse in the hamlet, when he saw the same stranger come out, and, crossing the road, stop at his own gate. To his inquiry if the Rev. Dugald Anderson was at home, the good pastor, answering in the affirmative, courteously held back the gate for the stranger to enter; while the little bare-footed lassie who opened the door, seeing the visiter with her master, bustled onwards, and ushered them into the best parour, carefully wiping with a corner of her blue-checked apron, the tall, spinster-looking elbow chair, and then withdrew to tell the young Andersons what "a bra' gallant the master had brought home wi' him." The stranger's appearance justified Jennie's encomiums. Though past the summer of his life, the unextinguished fire of youth still lingered in his full dark eye; and his tall athletic person accorded well with the lofty bearing of his looks, and the refined courtesy of his manners.

"I believe," said he, addressing Anderson, "you have the care of a young girl, whose mother died some years since?"  
"You mean the daughter of Annie Macleod?" "The same; and it is to ascertain her situation in your family, that I have taken the liberty to wait on you." "Her situation in my family, my good sir," said the worthy man, "is that of daughter to myself—a sister to my children. The calamity which robbed her so early of her mother was an inducement, but certainly not the only one, to my becoming her protector. I was acquainted with her mother in the happier years of her life; and the friendship which I had felt for Annie Macleod revived in full force when duty conducted me to her death-bed. I there pledged myself to be a father to the fatherless; to keep her unspotted from the world—the pitiless world, as the dying mother called it, in the lucid intervals of her wandering mind."

"What!" said the stranger; "did sorrow overcome her reason?"  
"Alas! yes; for many weeks before her death they told me that her senses were completely gone; and when I saw her in the last mortal struggle, he delirium of mind was only partially broken in upon by flashes of reason."

The features of the stranger became convulsed, and he seemed to wrestle with some violent emotion.

"You were a friend—perhaps relative, of the unfortunate Annie?" rejoined Anderson. "Yes—I was a friend;—that is, I—knew her," said the stranger.

"Then you will like to see my little charge?" and without waiting reply, the good pastor left the apartment; but almost immediately returned, holding by the hand a pretty fair-haired girl, with dark blue eyes, that seemed made for weeping. "This," said Anderson, leading her towards the stranger, "is Alice Macleod, or, as she calls herself, Birdalane."

The stranger drew her to him; and taking her hand, gazed long and earnestly in her blushing face. "Why do you call yourself Birdalane, my pretty child?"

"Because nurse called me so, when she used to cry over me, and say I had no mother and no father to love me, and give me pretty things, like Donald and Ellen Anderson."

The stranger's eye fell, and tears hung upon the dark lashes that swept his cheeks. He rose, and walked to the window; and Anderson heard the long-drawn sigh that seemed to burst from a heart laden with old remembrances. Presently turning to the pastor, he said, "I am satisfied, good sir, fully satisfied, that this friendless one cannot be in better hands, to fulfil her mother's wish, and keep her 'unspotted from the world.'" Then presenting a sealed packet, he added, warmly grasping Anderson's hand, "Be still a father to that orphan girl, and God requite you tenfold in blessings upon your own!" He stooped down, kissed the wondering Alice, and hastily left the apartment. Anderson went to the window, and in a few moments he saw a groom lead out two horses. The stranger mounted one, and putting spurs to his steed, Anderson soon lost sight of him in the windings of the road.

The worthy pastor, dismissing the little Alice to her playmates: prepared to open the packet. In an envelope, upon which was written—"A marriage portion for the daughter of Annie Macleod," was a draft for one thousand pounds; and on a paper folded round a small miniature, the following words: "A likeness of Annie, such as she was when the writer first knew her. 'Tis now but the shadow of a shade. The beauty, gaiety, and innocence it would perpetuate, are gone, like the hopes of him who still clings to the memory of what she was, with all the tenacious regret of an undying remorse."

Some time after this event, business called Anderson to Edinburgh. One day, while perambulating the streets on his various engagements, he saw the self-same figure, which remained indelibly imprinted on his memory—the identical, mysterious stranger, who had visited him at the Manse, issue from the

castle gates, and descend with a slow step and melancholy air down the high street. Curiosity, or perhaps a better feeling, prompted Anderson to follow at a distance, and ascertain who he was. It was Lord —. "'Tis even as I thought," said the poor pastor; "poor Annie fell a victim to the arts of Lord —. Alas! he was too accomplished a seducer, for such artlessness as her's to cope with."

The sweet ties that bind the sons of virtue to their social fireside, are too simple for the epicurean taste of the libertine: the tender interchange of wedded minds, the endearing caress of legitimate love, are simple wild flowers, that wither in that hot-bed of sensuality, a corrupt heart. Never can the proud joy, the refined pleasures of a faithful husband, be his.

For high the bliss that waits on wedded love,  
Best, purest emblem of the bliss above:  
To draw new raptures from another's joy,  
To share each pang, and half its sting destroy,  
Of one fond heart to be the slave and lord,  
Bless and be bless'd, adore and be ador'd,—  
To own the link of soul, the chain of mind,  
Sublimest friendship, passion most refined,—  
Passion, to life's last evening hour still warm,  
And friendship, brightest in the darkest storm.

To conclude. The little Alice never left the Manse, where she lived as her mother wished, "unspotted from the world." As she grew to womanhood, her simple beauteous and artless manners won the affections of Donald Anderson, the son of her benefactor. They were married, and often when Alice looked upon the smiling cherubs that climbed her maternal knee, the silver-headed pastor, as he sat by the ingle in his elbow chair, would put on an arch expression, and ask her where was Birdalane now? while Alice, blushing, and laughing, would draw her little nestlers closer to her womanly bosom, and so answer the good man.

After a life of active charity, full of years and good deeds, the venerable pastor of — slept the sleep of peace, in that church where he had often roused others from a darker slumber than that of death. After his decease, and written in the neat old-fashioned hand of his father, Donald Anderson found amongst his papers a manuscript, dated many years back, containing the history of Annie Macleod; which, with some slight alterations, and the omission of particular names, (for obvious reasons,) is now submitted to those readers, whose hearts will not permit their heads to criticise a simple and unadorned tale.

## STORM AND CALM AT SEA.

The following description of a Storm at Sea, succeeded by a calm, is taken from a posthumous work written by G. M. Lewis, and inserted in the last number of the London Quarterly Review:—

"At one this morning, a violent gust of wind came on; and, at the rate of ten miles an hour, carried us through the chops of the channel formed by the Scilly Rocks and the Isle of Ushant. But I thought that the advance was dearly purchased by the terrible night which the storm made us pass—the wind roaring, the waves dashing against the stern, till at last they beat in the quarter gallery, the ship, too, rolling from side to side, as if every moment she was going to roll over and over! Mr J—— was heaved off one of the sofas, and rolled along till he was stopped by the table. He then took his seat upon the floor as the most secure position; and, half an hour afterwards another heave checked him back again upon the sofa. The captain snuffed out one of the candles, and both being tied to the table could not re-light it with the other; so the steward came to do it, when a sudden heel of the ship made him extinguish the second light, tumbled him upon the sofa on which I was lying, and made the candlestick which he had brought with him, fly out of the candlestick, through a cabin window at his elbow; and thus we were all left in the dark. Then the intolerable noise! the creaking of bulkheads! the sawing of ropes! the screeching of the tiller! the trampling of the sailors! the clattering of the crockery! Every thing above deck and below deck, all in motion at once! Chairs, writing desks, books, bundles, fire-irons and fenders, flying to one end of the room; and the next moment (as if they had made a mistake) flying back again to the other with the same hurry and confusion! "Confusion worse confounded!" Of all the inconveniences attached to a vessel, the incessant noise appears to me the most insupportable. As to our live stock, they seem to have made up their mind on the subject, and say with one of Ariosto's knights, (when he was cloven from the head to the chine,) '*or convien morire.*' Our fowls and ducks are screaming and quacking their last by dozens.

I understand that in these latitudes nothing can be expected but heavy gales or dead calms, which calms are by far the most disagreeable of the two; the wind steadies the ship; but when she creeps as slowly as she does at present (scarcely going a mile in four hours,) she feels the whole effect of the sea bearing against her, and rolls backwards and forwards with every billow as it rises and falls. In the meanwhile, every thing seems to be in a state of the most active motion, except the ship. While we are carrying a spoonful of soup to our mouths, the remainder takes the "glorious opportunity" to empty itself into our laps, and the glasses and salt cellars carry on a perpetual domestic wa-