

**ANNALS OF A QUIET
NEIGHBORHOOD. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. III**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649056408

Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood. In Three Volumes, Vol. III by George MacDonald

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

GEORGE MACDONALD

**ANNALS OF A QUIET
NEIGHBORHOOD. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. III**

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

By GEORGE MAC DONALD, M.A.,
AUTHOR OF "DAVID ELGINBROD," "ALEC FORBES OF HOWGLEN,"
ETC., ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1867.

The right of Translation is reserved.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. AN ANGEL UNAWARES,	1
II. TWO PARISHIONERS,	17
III. SATAN CAST OUT,	38
IV. THE MAN AND THE CHILD,	66
V. OLD MRS TOMKINS,	88
VI. CALM AND STORM,	120
VII. A SERMON TO MYSELF,	142
VIII. A COUNCIL OF FRIENDS,	177
IX. THE NEXT THING,	200
X. OLD ROGERS'S THANKSGIVING,	223
XI. TOM'S STORY,	239

ANNALS OF
A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

AN ANGEL UNAWARES.

FEELING rather more than the usual reaction so well-known to clergymen after the concentrated duties of the Sunday, I resolved on Monday to have the long country walk I had been disappointed of on the Saturday previous. It was such a day as it seems impossible to describe except in negatives. It was not stormy, it was not rainy, it was not sunshiny, it was not snowy, it was not frosty, it was not foggy, it was not clear, it was nothing but cloudy and quiet and cold

and generally ungenial, with just a puff of wind now and then to give an assertion to its ungeniality. I should not in the least have cared to tell what sort the day was, had it not been an exact representation of my own mind. It was not the day that made me such as itself. The weather could always easily influence the surface of my mind, my external mood, but it could never go much further. The smallest pleasure would break through the conditions that merely came of such a day. But this morning my whole mind and heart seemed like the day. The summer was thousands of miles off on the other side of the globe. Ethelwyn, up at the old house there across the river, seemed millions of miles away. The summer *might* come back; she never would come nearer: it was absurd to expect it. For in such moods stupidity constantly arrogates to itself the qualities and claims of insight. In fact, it passes itself off for common

sense, making the most dreary ever appear the most reasonable. In such moods a man might almost be persuaded that it was ridiculous to expect any such poetic absurdity as the summer, with its diamond mornings and its opal evenings, ever to come again; nay, to think that it ever had had any existence except in the fancies of the human heart—one of its castles in the air. The whole of life seemed faint and foggy, with no red in it anywhere; and when I glanced at my present relations in Marshmallows, I could not help finding several circumstances to give some appearance of justice to this appearance of things. I seemed to myself to have done no good. I had driven Catherine Weir to the verge of suicide, while at the same time I could not restrain her from the contemplation of some dire revenge. I had lost the man upon whom I had most reckoned as a seal of my ministry, namely Thomas Weir. True there was Old Rogers; but Old Rogers

was just as good before I found him. I could not dream of having made him any better. And so I went on brooding over all the disappointing portions of my labour, all the time thinking about myself, instead of God and the work that lay for me to do in the days to come.

“Nobody,” I said, “but Old Rogers understands me. Nobody would care, as far as my teaching goes, if another man took my place from next Sunday forward. And for Miss Oldcastle, her playing the *Agnus Dei* on Saturday afternoon, even if she intended that I should hear it, could only indicate at most that she knew how she had behaved to me in the morning, and thought she had gone too far and been unkind, or perhaps was afraid lest she should be accountable for any failure I might make in my Sunday duties, and therefore felt bound to do something to restore my equanimity.”

Choosing, though without consciously intending to do so, the dreariest path to be found, I wandered up the side of the slow black river, with the sentinel pollards looking at themselves in its gloomy mirror, just as I was looking at myself in the mirror of my circumstances. They leaned in all directions, irregular as the headstones in an ancient churchyard. In the summer they looked like explosions of green leaves at the best; now they looked like the burnt-out cases of the summer's fireworks. How different, too, was the river from the time when a whole fleet of shining white lilies lay anchored among their own broad green leaves upon its clear waters, filled with sunlight in every pore, as they themselves would fill the pores of a million-caverned sponge! But I could not even recall the past summer as beautiful. I seemed to care for nothing. The first miserable afternoon at Marshmallows looked now as if it