

weary moments, and alone with my ever-present love, forget the world without. Say, is not my plan a good one?"

"It is, at least, truly worthy of thy pure, and unworldly nature, my Geraldine!" returned Albert, sadly; "but I say not withal that it meets my approval."

"And why, Albert? why meets it not thy approbation?" Geraldine inquired earnestly.

"Because in the first place, and above all, such a course of continued watching, must inevitably undermine the health of body and of mind. In the next place, would'st thou not by withdrawing thy sweet presence from the castle, where it has so long been as the blessed sunshine—would'st thou not, dear one, deprive my—I will say *our*—aged parents—they who fostered and cherished our youth—of all the happiness that yet remains to them?—Think of that, Geraldine!"

This difficulty, however, was got over, and Geraldine succeeded in convincing Albert that nothing could be more "fit and proper" than her determination. Just as this point was amicably settled—Geraldine having promised to devote a portion of each day to the old people—the countess awoke from her slumber, and the earl soon after making his appearance, there was no longer an opportunity for separate converse.

That melancholy evening at length drew to its close—the night (a sleepless one to our four sorrowing hearts.) passed also away, and the day-dawn found Albert and Geraldine standing side by side on the ramparts of the castle, looking out upon the gray and mist-enveloped valley, which extended for some distance before them.

"After all, Geraldine—after all, our separation may be but for a few months, and then, consider the rich harvest of glory which that short period of glory may bestow—what proud triumph will be thine, my Geraldine! when thou shalt hear of thy colours, thy delicate rose and silver, having waved high over some bloody field and, received the homage of many a doughty knight. And then my return, oh! Geraldine—my, beautiful—my own!—let us forget the passing sorrow of the present, looking forward to the exceeding joy of that rapturous meeting.—Nay, fairest one! why look so downcast—what means that doubtful and desponding look?" and he pressed with redoubled fondness the hand which rested in his own.

"Albert," said Geraldine, suddenly starting from a brief silence, "Albert I am about to ask a favour. I ask not if thou wilt grant it. I feel assured thou wilt—I wist thee to have it arranged so before-hand, that if thou art still amongst the living there may be a gay flag un-

furled at the mast-head, when thy vessel nears the Irish coast—but, if—if—" she paused—her voice trembled—if, on the other hand thou art dead, then let thy mariners hoist the emblem of mourning!" Albert smiled at what he deemed her childish fancy, but he promised, and that was enough. "And now," said Geraldine as she drew over her head a large hood, and gathered around her fairy form, the heavy folds of a walking-dress; "now let us walk to the coast, as I wish to point out to thee the spot which I have thought of for my watch-tower."

The spot to which Geraldine conducted her lover was then somewhat removed from the beach, but now the place is as, I have already remarked, close by the sounding sea,—that encroaching element having in the course of passing ages snatched a portion from the land, so that the walls of Maiden Tower are now, when the tide is in, literally washed by the ocean-wave; and the probability is that as the little building has no rock for its base, Neptune may one day, and that no distant one, sweep it away altogether in some one of his fits of fury.

While the lovers stood gazing out upon the gray waters, lying in all tranquillity before them, a vessel was suddenly visible upon the distant horizon, and Albert, rightly judging that it must be that in which he was to sail, hastily returned with Geraldine to the Castle, in order to prepare for his approaching departure.

Pass we over in silence the parting which followed—the grief of the almost broken-hearted mother, breaking out into wild and passionate lamentation—the deep yet wordless sorrow of the noble father, and the burning anguish which throbbled in the veins—in the heart of Geraldine. The hope of his return crowned with victory was but little alleviation to grief like theirs, and when he at length tore himself from their oft-repeated embrace, they, thus left behind, mourned as though without one tincture of hope.

(To be continued.)

SONNET TO SLEEP.

Hail, balmy Sleep! thou Nurse of Nature's woes!
O'er my weak eye-balls cast thy darksome veil;
Shroud me awhile from Misery's rough gale,
And, with oblivious draught, my senses close.
For on my couch Sorrow finds not repose,
And peace no longer greets me with a smile;
Nor she (whose charms forbid me to revile)
To all my griefs one pitying sigh bestows.
Oh, then, thrice valu'd Sleep! thy pow'r extend;
To ease the throbbings of my woe-worn breast,
Thy sweetly-soothing balm, in pity lend,
And let me taste one blissful hour of rest;
Or soon will Death's relentless hand remove
The direful pangs which wait on flighted love!