

In the mean time, Gerhard, a distinguished painter, who was travelling to perfect himself in his art, paid a visit, for a week, to Bergheim, saw Angelica and her beautiful paintings, and conceiving an ardent wish to make her his wife, wrote to Bergheim on his return to his own country, after his travels, and solicited Angelica's hand. With the letter, he forwarded a painting, executed by himself, as a present to Bergheim.

Bergheim knew not how to express his admiration of the painting. It was really a most exquisite piece. It represented two children, three or four years old, sitting on the grass under a group of alder trees, and drinking milk out of an earthen bowl. 'It is inimitable!' said Bergheim. 'The little faces of the children are really charming. The lovely brown eyes and dark hair of the boy; the mild blue eyes and light locks of the girl; and the blooming ruddy cheeks of both children could not be more beautiful. In what brilliant relief do the bright figures of the children stand out from the deep green shade of the alder trees! Every thing, down to the most delicate detail, is perfect; even the hue of the earthen vessel, and the pale tints of the spoons, filled with milk, are exhibited in masterly style. Angelica, I certainly will not compel you; that is not right; it would be a sin; but how happy would I not be, had you this excellent painter as your husband!'

Angelica was in great affliction; on the one hand, because, she had not yet forgotten Baron West, though she had heard nothing from him for a long time, and on the other, because it was most painful to her, not to comply with the wishes of her father. She knew not what to do, and asked some time for consideration. But, one morning, the Baron unexpectedly arrived. Bergheim, himself, was from home, with an altar-piece which he had painted for a distant church, where he was also to retouch some faded pictures. The delighted mother instantly conducted the Baron to the gallery where Angelica was painting. She started from her work, with a loud exclamation of joy.

'Now, my dear mother, and Angelica,' said the Baron, after the first salute, 'I trust that you both, and your father himself, will be content with me. I return to you a painter, and though I be not very eminent, yet I trust I am not unworthy of the name.'

He had brought with him two little pictures, which himself painted; the subject of one was flowers, the other was a fruit-piece.

He first exhibited the fruit-piece. The fruits were elegantly arranged in a little fruit basket. Angelica was enraptured.

'O, how charming!' said she, 'inimitable! This bunch of grapes is like transparent gold. These ones especially, from which the skin is

partly stripped, are so clear, that you can see the inner texture and kernels! You can count the veins in this dark green vine leaf; and that other one has the true autumnal yellow and purple tint! And see this pale green peach! It is, as it were, veiled over with the loveliest red, and appears softer and more delicate than velvet! So true, so like nature does it look, that one almost feels inclined to pluck and eat it. The purple streaked apple, with its bright green leaves; the yellow pears; and the blue coated plums, are scarcely inferior to the grapes or the peach! and, then, the wasp there, it is so life-like, one is almost tempted to drive it away.'

The Baron next showed his flower-sketch. 'It is beautiful!' exclaimed Angelica; 'this basket of flowers is more delightful than even the basket of fruits. This rose is perfectly real—it wants nothing but the smell. The large dew-drop which hangs on the green leaves actually reflects the red hue of the rose, and the drops look as if they would fall every moment. How beautiful are those soft blue gilly-flowers! Each flower ruffles its neighbour; and the leaves and flowers are all most delicately shaded. How rich the hues of these pinks!—here dark-red, and there snowy-white; and here, on one of them, is a speckled butterfly—a butterfly, finished to perfection! You almost fear to touch it, lest you shake the dust from its wings. Every moment you expect to see it move them and fly away. Ah, dear Charles, you have made a wonderful proficiency! it astounds me. The extraordinary pains you must have taken, are to me the most convincing proofs of your affection.'

'It certainly costs much toil, and many long years' practice,' said the Baron, 'to be able to paint even a rose or a gilly-flower. A flower has always appeared to me a beautiful subject for this art; for every flower is a benevolent design of the Supreme Artist—a work of the Creator, who first sketched it in all its beauty, then painted it before us, and has drawn its outlines in the little, sequent, invisible to our eyes. But, alas!' continued he, 'what are these paintings of flowers and fruits, when compared with the beautiful portrait of the heavenly Friend of children, at which you are engaged? How poor are they when compared to the pictures in this hall; these soul-exciting images of illustrious men, of holy angels, and of Him who is exalted above all men and angels? Ah! when I look around upon the Angelical Salutation, the Nativity, the Holy Family, the Resurrection of Lazarus, the Last Supper, and our Saviour, expiring with His crown of thorns reeking with blood, or arisen and standing in the midst of his rejoicing disciples—how deeply do I feel the dignity and power of this art? What heavenly inno-