

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES.

A Novel.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

PART II.

CHAPTER III. (Continued.)

They had finished with the arching of the ceiling. The walls they proposed to leave plain, and only to cover them over with a bright brown color.

It was still looking rough and disorderly. The scaffolding poles had been run together, the planks thrown on the top of the other; the uneven pavement was yet more disfigured by the partitioned stains of the paint which had been spilled over it.

The Architect begged that the ladies would give him a week to himself, and during that time would not enter the chapel; at the end of it, one fine evening, he came to them, and begged them both to go and see it.

"Whatever surprise he may have designed for us," said Charlotte, as soon as he was gone, "I cannot myself just now go down there. You can go by yourself, and tell me all about it. No doubt he has been doing something which we shall like. I will enjoy it first in your description, and afterwards it will be the more charming in the reality."

Ottile, who knew well that in many cases Charlotte took care to avoid everything which could produce emotion, and particularly disliked to be surprised, set off down the walk by herself, and looked round involuntarily for the Architect, who, however, was nowhere to be seen, and must have concealed himself somewhere.

A solemn beautiful light streamed in through the one tall window. It was filled with stained glass, gracefully put together. The entire chapel had thus received a strange tone, and a peculiar genius was thrown over it.

Seats had been provided as well. Among the relics of the old church some finely carved chancel chairs had been discovered, which now were standing about at convenient places along the walls.

She did not hide from herself the strange epoch at which this surprise had occurred to her. It was the evening of Edward's birthday. Very differently she had hoped to keep it. How was not everything to be dressed out for this festival?

And then she had to remember the impetuous eagerness with which Edward had kept her birthday feast. She thought of the newly erected lodge, under the roof of which they had promised themselves so much enjoyment.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"I have been struck with an observation of the young architect.

"In the case of the creative artist, as in that of the artisan, it is clear that man is least permitted to appropriate to himself what is most entirely his own. His works forsake him as the birds forsake the nest in which they were hatched.

The fate of the Architect is the strangest of all in this way. How often he ex-

pends his whole soul, his whole heart and passion, to produce buildings into which he himself may never enter. The halls of kings owe their magnificence to him; but he has no enjoyment of them in their splendor. In the temple he draws a partition line between himself and the Holy of Holies; he may never more set his foot upon the steps which he has laid down for the heart-thrilling ceremonial; as the goldsmith may only adore from afar off the monstrance whose enamel and whose jewels he has himself set together.

"There is a conception among old nations which is awful, and may almost seem terrible. They pictured their forefathers to themselves sitting round on thrones, in enormous caverns, in silent converse; when a new comer entered, if he were worthy enough, they rose up and inclined their heads to welcome him. Yesterday, as I was sitting in the chapel, and other carved chairs stood round like that in which I was, the thought of this came over me with a soft, pleasant feeling. Why cannot you stay sitting here? I say to myself; stay here sitting meditating with yourself long, long, long, till at last your friends come, and you rise up to them, and with a gentle inclination direct them to their places.

"We may imagine ourselves in what what situation we please, we always conceive ourselves as seeing. I believe men only dream that they may not cease to see. Some day, perhaps, the inner light will come out from within us, and we shall not any more require another.

The year dies away, the wind sweeps over the stubble, and there is nothing left to stir under its touch. But the red-berries on yonder tall tree seem as if they would remind us of brighter things; and the stroke of the thrasher's flail awakes the thought how much of nourishment and life lies buried in the sickled ear."

CHAPTER IV.

How strangely, after all this, with the sense so vividly impressed on her of mutability and perishableness, must Ottile have been affected by the news which could not any longer be kept concealed from her, that Edward had exposed himself to the uncertain chances of war! Unhappily, none of the observations which she had occasion to make upon it escaped her. But it well for us that man can only endure a certain degree of unhappiness; what is beyond that, either annihilates him, or passes by him, and leaves him apathetic.

Charlotte's daughter, Luciana, had scarcely left the school and gone out into the great world; scarcely had she found herself at her aunt's house in the midst of a large society, than her anxiety to please produced its effect in really pleasing; and a young, very wealthy man, soon experienced a passionate desire to make her his own.

This incident in her family had been for some time occupying Charlotte. It had engaged all her attention, and taken up her whole correspondence, except so far as this was directed to the obtaining news of Edward; so that latterly Ottile had been left more than was usual to herself. She knew, indeed, of an intended visit from Luciana. She had been making various changes and arrangements in the house in preparation for it; but she had no notion that it was so near. Letters, she supposed, would first have to pass, setting the time; and then a final fixing, when the storm broke suddenly over the castle and over herself.

TO BE CONTINUED.

"What is your secret?" asked a lady of Turner, the distinguished painter. He replied, "I have no secret, madam, but hard work."

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LETTER FROM BISHOP SIMPSON.

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