

the forest lands, and Oberlin's anxiety to put an end to the contention, equally disadvantageous to both parties; and having at length overcome the obstinacy with which they at first opposed him, he went himself to Strasburg to effect an accommodation, which he was enabled to do by the assistance of his friend M. Lozay de Marne, Prefect of the lower Rhine, much to the advantage of the parish of Steinthal. Thus after nearly a century of litigation, the process was amicably adjusted, and the Prefect, desirous that the people should never forget to whom they were indebted for this blessing, requested the magistrates to present, in an official manner the pen with which the agreement had been signed, to Oberlin, requesting him to accept it as a trophy of the victory he had been the means of obtaining over contention and animosity; and give it a conspicuous place in his study.

With much benevolence of feeling for their temporal improvement, and unceasing exertion for their spiritual welfare; it was impossible that Oberlin should not have the gratification of preceiving a rich harvest following his labours. Many who had been driven by idleness and necessity, to steal wood from the forests which were private property were induced by his precepts and remonstrances, to bring the value of what they had stolen that the proprietor might be remunerated for the injury he had received; and after the lapse of some years the inhabitants were not guided alone by the rule of justice, but by the innate principle of Christian love. Following the example of their Pastor's liberality, who, particularly in the time of the revolution, had so often entertained and sheltered those who fled to him for refuge; kindness and hospitality became predominant features in the character of the Steinthalers.

As their Pastor was the father and protector of the orphan, in like manner his people displayed benevolence and kindly feeling. When the father or mother of a numerous family died in indigent circumstances, the relations, friends, and neighbours of the deceased took the children and provided for them as their own; almost in every house these adopted children were to be found; and it was scarcely possible to perceive that they were not all of one family. A poor young woman, named Sophia Bernhard, had in this way, rescued nine children from the evils attending extreme poverty. With the approbation of her parents, she had at first undertaken the charge of three helpless children, who had been inhumanly treated by their father, when, pressed by the cravings of hunger, they had cried for bread. She afterwards took three, and again two more, and then rented a cottage, where she resided with her orphan children, teaching them to assist her in spinning wool, by which she maintained both them and herself. A young man made her an offer of marriage, which upon her declining, he expressed his willingness to wait ten years were it necessary, to prove the strength of his attachment; upon which she acknowledged, that her refusal was occasioned from the grief it would give her, to part from her orphan children. "If that is all," replied the young man, "he who takes the mother, takes the children also of course." They were married; and the young man not only fulfilled his promise of taking charge of the nine children, but this excellent couple afterwards adopted several more. Numerous as were the instances in Steinthal of such sacrifices and exertions; there were still more examples of Christian benevolence and sympathy, which were less striking, though equally lovely. Did any one lose a cow, who was unable to replace this useful animal by his own means, a subscription was immediately raised to repair his loss. Would any one build a house, the young people were ever ready, after the labours of the day were over to assist in the work, and the young and robust, were constantly in the habit of cultivating the land of the old and afflicted.

During the first ten years of Oberlin's ministry, his attention was particularly drawn to the missionary society, who sent messengers of glad tidings to the slaves in the West Indies, and to other heathens, comforting them under their troubles, and preaching to them the only refuge from the wrath to come. It appears to have been Oberlin's anxious desire, to have given himself to this work, and that he was willing to renounce his country, friends, and home, and all that makes home so dear for this purpose. Mrs. Oberlin united with her faithful partner in these sentiments, and they agreed to dispose of all their plate as a contribution for this society. The wretched condition also of the negro slaves, who were employed for the cultivation of sugar and coffee, made such a strong

impression on Oberlin's feelings, that he formed the resolution of entirely relinquishing the indulgence of this colonial produce, in which he persisted till a very late period, and his example was followed by most of his parishioners. A missionary spirit being thus cultivated, an auxiliary society was formed, and a stated period fixed for the subscription. The members assembled in the evening, a portion of the Scriptures was read, and prayer offered for the outpouring of the Spirit of God over the village, the whole parish, the world, and His especial blessing upon all institutions which were conducive to His glory—then the contributions were gathered, both for the Bible and Missionary Societies. But far above the worth of the sum collected, was the value of the spirit with which it was given, and many followed the advice of their good Pastor, who wished them to set apart the tenth of their income, for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

(To be continued.)

"WHOSOEVER SHALL RECEIVE THIS CHILD IN MY NAME, RECEIVETH ME."

By Rev. A. P. Peabody.

What is it to receive a little child in the name of Jesus? It is to look upon him as the subject of Christian instruction, discipleship, and salvation. It is to regard the infant not as the object of indiscriminate caresses and indulgence, but as an embryo immortal; as a new-born angel; as the embodiment of powers and affections, which have no limit short of the throne of God; as a life more precious than the whole outward universe. It is to watch the dawn of intellect, that the child may know his God and his Saviour; to mark the unfolding of his affections, that they may twine in their freshness about his Creator; to impart to his earliest aims, and his first resolves, a heavenward direction. It is to plant the germs of virtue and piety in the virgin soil, before the enemy of souls can sow tares there, and then to water the precious germs with tears of love; to breathe over them the prayer of faith, to cherish and guard their growth, and to make them thrive like trees planted by the water-courses.

And can earth or heaven afford a nobler task, one worthier of the loftiest mind, one greater in the sight of God and by the standard of eternity? When a child is born, there has issued from the fountain of life a stream which is never to return whence it came, but which is to flow on forever, widening and deepening in an ever-growing ratio. And the Christian mother stands at the head of this stream, where it is narrow and shallow, and may be turned at pleasure; directed toward the shores of Paradise, or toward the abyss of woe and death. Does the mother give it a heavenward direction? That same direction it will most probably retain forever, and she will have acted upon a boundless eternity; will have performed a work, the magnitude of which no mind but the infinite can measure. Who then so truly great, who wields a power so god-like, as she, who thus receives her own little child in the name of Jesus?

Your office, Christian mother, is indeed an humble one, in the usual sense of the word; for it abhors display, and demands patience and cheerful self-sacrifice, without offering any need of earthly glory. You must look for your reward to conscience and to heaven; for the record of your fame to the Lamb's book of life. But do you feel it a priceless privilege, and at the same time an overwhelming trust, to have the earliest handling of the young spirit, to stand between its Maker and a tempting world, and to shape it, perhaps, for eternity? In thus viewing your duties, so far from deeming them trivial, and such as need no preparation or peculiar fitness, you might well exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" You might retire in despair from a work so vast, were it not written, "If any of you lack wisdom, ask of God, and it shall be given."

But let me beseech you to magnify your office? to make it what it means; to give it the full scope and power, which it has in the purpose of the Almighty. Realize the immortal destiny of the child intrusted to your care. Realize that he is subject even now to the powers of the world to come. Fill your mind with the momentous importance of the opening season of life, of the starting point for an unending career. Cherish a godly love and solicitude for the souls of your children. Accustom yourself to feel, that it were "better that heaven and earth should pass away, than that one of these little ones should perish."