

attentive to the young; and erected school-houses for their instruction. All his efforts were accompanied with fervent prayers for their success, and he had the firmest faith in the promises of God. He received help from various quarters, so that he had soon the satisfaction of seeing a school-house in each of the five villages, and the inhabitants, of their own accord, offering to support them. He was careful to educate suitable persons as teachers in these schools. Observing that the younger children lost a great deal of time before they could be admitted to the usual instructions, he established *Infant Schools*, which were probably the first ever known. With the assistance of his wife he appointed female teachers for each village, where the children were collected and taught in the same manner that is now followed in the infant schools of Europe and America. They had also Sunday Schools, in which after the usual lesson, Oberlin conversed with and instructed them. One day in every week all the children in these schools assembled at Waldbach, where they were examined in their studies, and received the advice of their pastor, whom they called by the affectionate name, their "Dear Papa." He had books prepared and printed for them, which were either given as prizes, or lent to read, as is done with our Sunday School libraries at this day. Oberlin knew how to blend amusement with instruction in the wisest manner; and while his principal objects were to ground the youth in the principles of Christian faith, and to bring them to Christ, he also diffused among them the taste for agricultural life which, in their situation, was so necessary; they were taught the names and properties of plants, and encouraged to bring them from the woods, to cultivate them in gardens, and to draw the flowers, in which some of them became very skilful. Each one at a

certain age was required to plant at least two trees; but this they were to do from a sense of their duty towards God, as well as to their country.

For the religious improvement of his flock, Oberlin formed, in 1782, an association called *The Christian Society*, of which all the members were enjoined to watch over each other for good, to exhort and to warn each other with sweetness, charity, humility, and patience, to allow of no idleness or negligence among them, to promote the happiness of all, and to appropriate a part of their earnings, at stated intervals, to works of Christian benevolence or the public good. Prayer and religious conversation were principal objects in the institution of this Society, which soon numbered more than one hundred and thirty members. Oberlin drew up a number of mottos, rules, and topics, to be thought of and kept in mind by the members; but finding that the plan was violently opposed by those who found no pleasure in spiritual exercises, he thought it necessary to dissolve the Society after it had existed a year and a half. He feared that its continuance might destroy the influence which the intercourse of the religious and irreligious might otherwise produce. Here we are convinced the good man was in an error, though we doubt not the purity of his motives. If we are to relinquish every thing which men who possess no spiritual religion cannot enjoy or approve, we shall soon have nothing left by which the cause of Christ may be promoted in the earth. The Society while it continued appears to have been useful both to those who were members, and those who were not; and in his closing address, Oberlin endeavoured to perpetuate and extend the good that had been accomplished by its means. It is worthy of remark that one of the rules of this Society was, that, on the