

Hear us, oh heavenly Father, for the sake of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ! Amen. And thou, oh Bridegroom to thy church, O may we love thee, and have constant intercourse with thee. Allow us not to place confidence in our own works and righteousness, but alone in thy sufferings and death. Dwell with us; keep us in the faith, and may our faith in due time be turned to sight. O thou Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with thyself; teach us to sigh for more grace and communion with our heavenly Father; give us strength when we are weak; give us comfort in tribulation; and to thee, with the Father, and the Son, be glory, honour, and praise, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen."

During sixteen years of a union highly spiritual and rich in blessings, Magdalene became the mother of nine children. Of her labours and her end we shall speak hereafter. The other friend of whom we have before spoken, who supported Oberlin at the commencement of his ministry with his advice, was his forerunner in this wilderness, the noble-minded Stuber. Some extracts from two letters written at this time, may form an interesting paragraph in our short memoirs.

#### *Oberlin as Pastor and Teacher.*

On his first entrance upon the ministry, with ever increasing zeal, and in later years, with greater ability and success, it was Oberlin's earnest desire and unceasing endeavour to win for Christ the souls of the flock committed to his care, and to encourage both old and young in the way of eternal life. For this he daily supplicated at the throne of grace. Every hour, every leisure moment which his numerous engagements left him free, he bowed the knee to Him who alone can grant those gifts and graces, which were necessary for his station. He poured out his affectionate heart in petitions for the salvation of his charge, and in the latter period of his life, it was his peculiar custom to pray individually for every one of his parishioners in rotation, and for this purpose, he every morning referred to his registry also, that he might be reminded more particularly of their several necessities. Thus ardently did this man of God, daily and hourly supplicate for his church before the Lord; and the errors and inconsistencies which he noticed in them, occasioned him such distress, that he has been heard through a whole night to pray for them, repeatedly crying out, "oh my church, oh my church." It was after having awakened by prayer every energy of his soul, and fanned his love into a flame, that Oberlin went forth on his Master's service, and preached those words of truth, which alone can bring true salvation. His sermons were exceedingly simple, peculiarly adapted to the capacities of his hearers, at times interspersed with similes, which though they would have been inappropriate to a fashionable auditory, accomplished here their entire aim. He very often brought forward the lives of eminent Christians; and nature afforded him constant comparisons for every transitory good. But still every thing was made subservient to the honour of the Holy Scriptures. This was the ever flowing spring, from which he drew the waters of life, the subject of his unwearied researches, and it might very properly be said, that all his sermons were scriptural truths in scriptural language, for he was persuaded that the simple recitation of the words of truth, was one of the best means of obtaining a blessing and insuring attention. The afternoon was always devoted to catechising the children. In this he was even more simple and more easily comprehended than in his sermons. Oberlin spoke as a child to children, choosing often the most singular but always applicable comparisons, to make himself understood. Every Friday morning he held a meeting for instruction and edification, at his own house, for those of his congregation who only understood German. It wore the appearance of a large family circle, and in later years Oberlin might have been taken for a grandfather, entertaining his children with his adventures. Even the very entrance into the house might become instructive; for there was scarcely a place in which a text of scripture, written in plain characters, did not meet the eye, and by the purport of these texts, it was his custom to prepare the minds of his people for any thing to which they were much opposed. To give an example of this; wishing to inculcate the inexpediency of continuing a very lengthened lawsuit against the overseer of the parish, he wrote over the door of his house, "O God have mercy upon the Steinthalers, and put an end to the process," till at length having disposed

their minds to his object, and convinced the various opposing parties of the folly of persisting in their course, even where it was just and their claim lawful, they consented to relinquish further proceedings.

The care which he bestowed upon the parents, was equally bestowed upon the children. By the contribution of other friends, and by the aid of a part of his own scanty income, Oberlin was enabled to erect another school, in addition to the one built by Stuber, in Waldbach, and one in each of the hamlets belonging to his parish. He was himself the soul of the whole undertaking. Every week he had a meeting of all the children from the different schools, that the emulation of the teachers as well as scholars might be awakened by a public examination. He was assisted in this encouragement of his young flock and their masters, by an endowment of 1000 florins, which had been vested during the residence of Stuber, by a benevolent individual of Strasburg, for the benefit of the schools. The interest of this money was distributed in prizes to the teachers, in proportion to the number of their pupils who had made more than the usual progress; for the younger children their received a rather larger sum, and for those of inferior abilities, if they made equal progress, double. Oberlin also formed a very useful library for the children, which passed every quarter of a year from one village to another.

But it was not alone those children who could participate in the instruction of the schools, that enjoyed his fatherly care, but also those who could scarcely walk. From the first year of their lives, he endeavoured to educate them as Christians, and to lay the foundation of their becoming useful members of society. As many of the people were constantly employed during the day in the fields, or other business, and could not give that attention to their children which was necessary, and were therefore obliged to leave them to play alone, either in the house or street, by which their morals, as well as their lives, were endangered; Oberlin hired at his own expense commodious rooms, and fitted them up with every thing necessary. The children were here assembled, especially in bad weather, under the superintendence and friendly care of some female, whom he, with the assistance of his excellent partner, had trained to the duty of blending instruction with amusement, and inculcating even into infant minds, the first Christian principles of love to God and man. The younger children were allowed to amuse themselves, and those who were able were taught knitting, spinning, sewing, &c. and for change and recreation maps were provided, in which the younger children could trace the Steinthal and its neighbourhood, and where each child could find its father's house and garden; pictures descriptive of Scriptural histories, or engravings of animals, or other subjects of natural history, by which the conductress gave the necessary explanation. It was a rule in these infant schools, that none of the children should speak the Patois, but only pure French, by which means especially, the disagreeable dialect which had been hitherto spoken, was in a short time almost exploded.

In addition to the instruction given to young and old, both by himself personally, and others whom he employed, Oberlin made use of that never-failing primary means of improvement, which could work when and where his presence was impossible; this was the circulation of the Scriptures. The Bibles which had been distributed by Stuber, were now insufficient to supply the increased population, and many, from constant use, had become very much mutilated. He therefore in the prosecution of this object, commenced a correspondence with the British Bible Society, and his pious zeal was so well known, that they immediately became desirous of forming in Waldbach a central point for the distribution of Bibles; and with the assistance of his excellent son Henry, and Mr. Daniel Legrand, a society was organized for the circulation of the Scriptures in France; and they were enabled before the formation of the Paris Bible Society, to circulate more than 10,000 Bibles and Testaments.

A letter written by Oberlin to the Committee of the London Society, first awakened in the minds of the latter, the idea of forming Ladies' Bible Associations in England; to which the Secretary, Mr. Owen, alludes, in his History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the following paragraph:—"We owe the formation of this branch of the society to that extraordinary man, who, with patriarchal simplicity and apostolic zeal, has effected so much for the temporal and eternal welfare of his flock." The letter of Oberlin to which Mr. Owen alludes, contains an al-