

spirited boy, but the neighbours, with whom he was a great favourite, interfered to prevent him. Some days afterwards Frederic met the same unfeeling person in a narrow lane. He thought for a moment whether he should turn back and make his escape; "no," said he to himself, "God is with me, I only assisted a poor infirm man, and have nothing to fear." He went forward, and the man smiling at him, went quietly past.

Strict integrity and the love of justice he inherited as well as imbibed from his excellent father, and the feeling which he ever manifested for distress, and the prompt activity which made him so beneficial to others, were an inheritance from his tender and benevolent mother; in both he witnessed the powerful example of devotion to God, and love for all that is great and good. The children generally spent the evening with their father and mother in copying drawings, which were sketched by M. Oberlin, while their mother or one of the family read aloud some instructive book, and the feelings of the younger part of the family were powerfully awakened by the hymns which Mrs. Oberlin was in the habit of singing to them at the close of the evening.

The religious impressions which may be made upon the mind of a child, by the affecting pathos of sacred music, is scarcely sufficiently prized; it is as healing medicine, and there is perhaps no better method of exciting the attention of the infant mind, than by the use of poetry and vocal music. The children in M. Oberlin's family were so accustomed to this spiritual food, that they could seldom be persuaded to go to rest till their dear mamma had raised her sweet voice in a hymn or psalm of praise. After the hymn, a prayer closed the business and pleasures of the day, and thus were these young ones brought to Him who said, "suffer little children to come unto me."

John Frederic Oberlin, the subject of our present memoir, became at a very early age, under powerful and lively convictions of the free grace of God, and when quite a child, his constant prayer was, "speak Lord for thy servant heareth? Lord teach me to do thy will;" and time only served to foster and deepen this life of God in his heart.

Added to the example and advice of his valuable parents, he was much indebted for the strength of his religious feelings, to Dr. Lorenz, whose labours at that time in Strasburg, were exceedingly useful. Even when at the high school, the sermons of this truly talented man, produced a great effect upon him, and when he became a student, attendance upon his ministry, was a source of the greatest profit as well as gratification. Among his papers a memorandum was found after his decease, in his own hand writing, dated January 1st, 1760, when he was in his twentieth year, and at that time a student. It was a dedication of himself and all his powers to God. We here insert nearly the whole of this interesting document.

"Eternal and ever holy God! I earnestly desire to enter thy presence with humility, and with a broken heart; acknowledging that I am mere worm of the earth, am unworthy to stand before the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Yet thou, oh merciful God, hast thyself invited me in thy great mercy, through thy Son Jesus Christ, and hast thyself implanted this wish in my heart, to dedicate myself to thee. I enter thy presence therefore, O Lord, and confess how many are my sins and iniquities. I beat upon my breast, and say with the publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' I come because I have been invited in the name of thy Son, and I rely entirely on his finished work. For his sake, hear my supplications, forgive my manifold transgressions, and blot out my sins, from thy remembrance. Oh how earnestly I cry unto thee, to shew favour unto thy fallen creature. I am most fully convinced of thy claims upon me, and my heart longs to be wholly thine.—I this day, oh most holy God; solemnly devote myself to thee. This day, I take the Lord to be my God. I renounce all other Lords who have had dominion over me; the pleasures of the world, in which I have formerly indulged, the lusts of the flesh, which ruled over me, with all other transitory enjoyments, that my God may be all in all, I consecrate all I am and all I have to thee. All the powers of my soul, the members of my body, my property and my time. Help me, oh merciful God, to employ them all to thy glory, and in fulfilling thy commands. To be one with thee through all eternity, is my desire; shouldst thou honour me, as the instrument of proclaiming to others, the knowledge of thee in this life, then grant me courage

and constancy, freely and openly, to assert thy cause. Give me grace, not only to serve thee myself faithfully, but to invite and persuade my brethren to do so also. I leave myself, and all that concerns me, to thy direction; not my will but thine be done.—Make me a faithful and useful servant in thy vineyard, and a living member of thy church. Wash me in the blood of thy dear Son. Clothe me with thy righteousness, sanctify me by thy Spirit, that the image of Christ may be more visibly reflected in me; visit me not as a guest, but abide with me for ever, to purify and make my heart perfect in thy sight; give me the consolation of feeling thy presence continually with me, Oh Lord my God, and when I have performed all thy good pleasure on earth, and been made meet for thy kingdom, call me when, and how, thou wilt, to enjoy my inheritance; grant that my last hours, nay even my last breath, may be spent for thee. I fervently beseech thee, in the name of my Lord Jesus, that I may be enabled to glorify thy name in my last days, and that in every affliction which thou in thy wisdom hast prepared for me, I may manifest patience and submission to thy will. Strengthen my soul, and give me confidence in that hour, when thou shalt call me to thyself, and receive me into the everlasting arms of thy love. Give me a place amongst those who have died in the Lord, in those mansions of everlasting bliss, which thou hast prepared for those who love thee, and where millions of thy redeemed, with the heavenly host, sing thy praises with unwearying delight, and are employed as thy ministering spirits, to do thy pleasure. Oh my Father and my God, thou who hast ever respect unto thy covenant, and who shewest mercy unto a thousand generations, of them that love thee and keep thy commandments; thou who knowest how deceitful is the human heart, and desperately wicked, I beseech thee in deep humility, to grant me thy assistance, and give me the spirit, that I may fulfil all the duties imposed upon me.

JOHN FREDERIC OBERLIN."

On the same date, ten years afterwards, he renewed this devout consecration of himself to God. Before taking orders he spent several years as tutor in the family of Dr. Ziegenhagen, a very celebrated surgeon. His thirst for useful information, prompted him to use this opportunity, to acquire that practical knowledge of medicine and surgery, which was afterwards so great a blessing to the poor inhabitants of Steinthal, in whose neighbourhood there was no medical assistance to be procured.

Just at the time when Oberlin was going to enter upon a chaplaincy, in a French regiment, M. Stuber, of whom we have already spoken, went to Strasburg, to choose a suitable successor to himself in Steinthal. Of the zeal and piety of Oberlin he had frequently heard, and determined to visit him, for the purpose of becoming better acquainted with his character. He found him lodging in a small garret; in one corner stood a bed with paper hangings, on which lay the young curate suffering from violent tooth ache, Stuber stepped forward, and after the customary exchange of civilities, he began to rally him upon his extraordinary circumstances; "and," said he, "what is that curious iron pan I see, hanging over your table?" "That is my kitchen," answered Oberlin; "for as I generally dine with my parents, I bring home with me a large piece of bread, which I lay in that pan at eight o'clock, with a little water and salt, I then set under it the lamp by which I study, and when at ten or eleven o'clock I begin to feel hungry, my supper is ready, which I enjoy more than the greatest dainties."

Stuber smiled saying, "you are exactly the man I seek; suitable in every respect for my poor Steinthal, to which I wish to appoint you." Oberlin was delighted with this proposition, but he would not accept it, till he had obtained an honourable discharge from his military chaplaincy, and another had accepted the charge; also that the living of Waldbach, should be first offered to the curates who had the precedence. A person was soon found to fill up the chaplaincy, and it was not probable his second demand, would long hinder his appointment, since the income to the Steinthal was exceedingly unimportant.

Oberlin's Entrance upon his Field of Labour, and his Marriage.

On the 13th of March, 1767, in his seven and twentieth year, Oberlin entered upon his work as Pastor of Waldbach. He soon perceived that the call to this sphere of ministerial labour had