

agly consented; the hours of attendance were increased, and now at one time, might be seen children and parents, grandfathers and grandmothers, learning to read from the same books.

Stuber's next object was to circulate the Bible, and he procured chiefly at his own expense, a number of French Bibles from Basle, such, that they might be more extensively useful, he ordered to be bound in three parts. He distributed them in the schools, and allowed the children to take them home to read. The Steinthalers had known hitherto nothing about the Bible, but that it was a large book which contained the word of God; and for a long time they could not believe that these small books could be indeed the Bible. Of the difference between the Old and new Testament, or what was meant by a book, a chapter, or a verse, they were entirely ignorant; for one of their best schoolmasters had never given his employment for twenty years, been in the possession of a Bible. Now however, the poor Steinthalers carried his Bible to church, and was soon able to find the text, and follow and understand the discourse. It was Stuber's method to explain the books of the scriptures in order; but whatever was the nature of his exposition, he ceased not on every occasion, to call upon them to become the people of God; assuring them that the Lord was waiting to be gracious to them; that he would do great things for them; that, separated from the world, in retirement and simplicity, they needed only the grace of God, to make them happy in life and death; that God's arm was not shortened, and that, notwithstanding their poverty, and distressing situation, he would protect, assist and bless, all who sincerely sought his favour; he would then point to them the happiness of the individual, who through faith became one of the redeemed of the Lord, and of the beauty of that church which walked in the fear of God.—Stuber adopted in his discourse, more the style of confidential friendly conversation, than that of regular sermons. He often asked them from the pulpit, if they understood what he wished to impress upon them, and if they would pray to be instructed by the spirit of God. From time to time he altered the forms of worship, that their attention might be kept alive, and convinced that in the public worship of God, singing hymns to his praise is a means of great excitement and edification, he endeavoured to teach them some simple melodies; though at that time, neither the old nor young ever attempted to sing, even for amusement. He succeeded so far, that in a few years most of the general tunes were sung.

Stuber had laboured for six years with unceasing diligence in the field of usefulness, when he was invited in the year 1756, to a much more lucrative cure, in the small town of Barr, on the other side of Haut Champ or Hochfeld. He left Steinthal; yet he never ceased to remember it with the greatest interest, more particularly as the person appointed as his successor, was a man every way unworthy of his office. After a lapse of four years, the clergyman was again removed; and Stuber offered to return and recommence his exertions, as the poor pastor of Waldbach. To those who were unacquainted with the influence of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of man, this conduct was perfectly incomprehensible. "What?" said they, "will he exchange so advantageous and comfortable a living, for the miserable desert of Waldbach?" His request, however, could not with propriety be refused, and Stuber once more set out for his beloved Steinthal. It was a day of jubilee for the whole valley; old and young went to meet their spiritual father to the top of the mountain where they had taken their leave of him; every one who had the opportunity, brought some produce of their land as an offering, the only gift they had in their power to bestow; tears of joy filled every eye; and when their revered pastor stopped as he passed through the different groups, to salute first one and then another, their delight burst forth unrestrained. It was during this second period of Stuber's residence, that his labours were so abundantly blessed; the seed was sown in tears, for it was then, that he lost his much lamented wife, who had united with him in all his plans for the benefit of the people, and with whom he had been one in heart and mind. She died at the early age of twenty, having been married three years.

Several years after this event, this faithful minister received a peculiarly honourable call to St. Thomas' church, at Strasburg; which he could conscientiously accept, from its giving him the

power to choose for his successor in Steinthal, some one who would carry forward the work he had begun.

### *Oberlin's Childhood and Early Years.*

John Frederic Oberlin was born at Strasburg, on the 31st of August, 1740. His father was a very learned professor in the gymnasium of that city, and his eldest brother was the well known antiquarian of that name. His parents had nine children, of whom seven were sons. His father was a man of exemplary piety, combined with the cheerful animation of a child, and in his intercourse with his children, during their hours of recreation, he condescended to all their sports; and it is said, that when they every Thursday in summer, visited a small family estate at Schiltigheim, he used to sling on a drum, set his boys in a row, drill them, and teach them their manual exercise. Yet familiar as were his manners at these times, he required unreserved obedience, and serious application at others, and his children early learned to yield implicitly to his wishes.

A neighbour calling one day, when M. Oberlin sat at table surrounded by his children, and knowing him possessed of but a limited income, seemed inclined to pity him in having seven boys, apparently too full of health to be easily kept in restraint. "I," said he, "have only two, and they embitter and shorten my passage to the grave." "My dear friend," answered M. Oberlin, "mine are very different, for they have learned to obey and willingly submit. If death should now enter my door and ask me for one of my children, I should answer, 'Fellow, who has made you believe I have one too many?'"

The necessary expense attendant on so large a family, might at times, indeed, have proved a burden to one whose resources were so confined, but the disposition and character of his children never allowed him long to feel the weight of pecuniary sorrow. Every Saturday each child received from their father two pfennigs, about the worth of an English farthing, with which they could purchase fruit, cakes, or any other trifle; or if they were disposed, save till it became a larger sum. Most of the children, but particularly Frederic, were in the habit of laying up this money, and any other present they might receive, as a kind of fund, and if at any time they saw sorrow on the brow of their father, because he was unable immediately to pay, as was his usual custom, without making any deduction, the tailor, shoemaker, or any one else who had brought home work, they walked to each other, and then ran to fetch their savings, and gave them to him, which their father seldom accepted, but declined with tears of grateful joy. Their pious mother related one day the distress of a poor but worthy family, saying at the same time, that she intended to contribute something towards their relief. The children ran to their money boxes, and begged that they might be allowed to add something from their little stores; and so excellent is the force of good example, that the old servant, who had lived with them for a trifling consideration for many years, begged also that some of her wages might be given to the same object.

But several anecdotes are recorded, more particularly of Frederic, which exhibit in embryo those qualities and dispositions which were so beneficially developed as the pastor of Steinthal. Some mischievous boys had thrown down a basket of eggs, which a country-woman was carrying on her head. The unfortunate woman sat down, weeping on account of her misfortune, and Frederic passing at the time, reprimanded the boys with great spirit, then returning home as quickly as possible, brought his money box and poured its contents into the lap of the poor woman, and ran away without waiting either for commendation or thanks. At another time, he saw a poor old woman at the booth of a hawk, bargaining for some common article of wearing apparel; the hawk asked a few kreuzers more for it than she was able to give, and as he would not, or could not, take so little as she had to offer him, she turned sorrowfully away. Frederic sprang forward, put the money of which the old woman was deficient into his hand, and whispered to him to call her back and let her have the article for which they had been bartering, and then ran away with all possible speed.

He once saw in the street a headle ill-treat a poor cripple who had received alms; fired with indignation, the brave little fellow thrust himself between the beggar and the man, and upbraided the latter with his inhumanity. The man then tried to seize the