

Mr. and Mrs. John Fursman, of Pensilva.



It must have been between forty and fifty years ago, when the mining industry was in full swing, that in a short time there sprang up on the slopes and at the foot of the Caradon hills in Cornwall, a large village, occupied to a great extent by the miners and their families.

In its early days this village was known as Bodmonland, but as it increased in size and became a place of some importance with its thousands of inhabitants, it threw off its old name and became known as Pensilva. With the true characteristics of genuine Cornish folk, the Pensilvians have from the beginning been noted for their warm adherence to the principles of Evangelical religion, and I suppose it is safe to say that during the past half century thousands of people have been converted in this village. Very many of those are now found in other parts of our own land, and many others in distant parts of the world, as the mining industry has almost failed.

But Pensilva is still an enterprising village, and in it are found some sincere followers of Jesus Christ. The reader will find two such



MR. FURSMAN.

persons, living in a little cottage at the farther end of the village, whose honourable connection with the Bible Christians for over fifty years entitles them to notice in the pages of this Magazine. Their names, JOHN and CATHARINE FURSMAN, are well known, and they themselves are held in high esteem by a large circle of friends. Though settled at Pensilva, where probably they will close their earthly career, they originally came from Langtree, in Devon. Mr. Fursman was converted in Siloam Chapel, Langtree, in the year 1843; when a gracious revival was in progress under the powerful ministry of Rev. W. Reeves. Shortly after his conversion he removed to the

Northlew Circuit. Here his gifts and graces were recognized, and his name was put on the preachers' plan in the year 1847. On the 12th

of December, 1848 he was married, by the Rev. Cephas Barker, to Catharine, third daughter of the late Mr. JOHN WHITLOCK, of Collacott Barton, Langtree.

Mrs. Fursman, who previously to her marriage had been a member of the Bible Christian Church for over ten years, has proved herself to be a good helpmeet to her husband. On their marriage they removed to a farm in the parish of Broadwoodwidge, and as there was no chapel within easy distance they at once opened their house for the preaching of the Gospel. In a few years they returned to the Shebbear Circuit, residing at Ashbury, in Frithelstock parish. Their zeal in good things continued, and at this period Mr. Fursman laboured with great acceptance as a local preacher both in the Shebbear and Bideford Circuits. He also interested himself in the general welfare of the Circuit and was appointed Circuit Steward, which office he held at the time



MRS. FURSMAN.

of his removal to Collza farm in the parish of St. Cleer, Cornwall. Mr. and Mrs. Fursman at once identified themselves with our church at St. Cleer, and for a great number of years were among its chief supporters. For 30 years Br. Fursman led a class at this place, and though his farm was two miles distant, and the road a most exposed one, he seldom if ever neglected it. During all these years he also travelled the hills and downs, for which the Liskeard Circuit is famous, preaching with great power and unusual acceptance the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. His home was and still is always open to the entertainment of ministers and other workers in the Lord's vineyard; and at the time when homes were scarce, brethren visiting the Circuit on missionary work found "a home from home" under Mr. and Mrs. Fursman's hospitable roof, which the writer has often found it to be. Their interest in the Bible Christian Missionary Society has been unique in its character. No sooner does the Magazine arrive than dear old Mrs. Fursman at once looks to see if there are any letters from the China Missionaries, and if so this is the first thing read. I presume that the Bible Christians never had more loyal members than the Fursman family. A great deal more might

be said concerning their worth, their interest in the Temperance cause, &c., but their record is on high. The people of the Liskeard Circuit showed their appreciation of Mr. Fursman's work by sending him as their representative to the District Meeting for more than a quarter of a century. But Mr. and Mrs. Fursman's work to a great extent is finished. The increasing infirmities of life about four years ago compelled their retirement from active life, and at present this worthy old couple live in a cottage at Pensilva, where on the 12th December they celebrated their golden wedding. Many who read this notice and know their worth will join me in the prayer that the evening of their life may be calm and peaceful, that they may ever enjoy a blessed sense of the Master's presence, and at last hear the welcome "Well done," "Enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

W. J. SMEETH.

Notes on Some of our Devotional Writers.

THOMAS HALYBURTON'S MEMOIRS.

1674-1712.

I.

"You will hold and secure your crown only by . . . increasing holiness of heart and life, by reading the very best Divinity continually, and the very best Autobiography for you, such as Bunyan, and Baxter, and Boston, and Fraser, and HALYBURTON, and Brainerd."—Dr. Alex. Whyte's Student's Classes: The Great Autobiographies.—*British Weekly*, Dec. 8, 1898.



PROBABLY the Autobiography of the "Holy Halyburton," which held a foremost place in the religious literature of Scotland for the greater part of two centuries, and which informed the spiritual life of many of the most serious and devout persons in that land, is seldom read now; and we doubt whether even Dr. Alexander Whyte's recent advice quoted above will lead to a general re-awakening of interest in its vivid and solemn pages. Yet it deserves to be preserved from becoming obsolete by all thoughtful minds valuing books that grip and wrestle with the deep problems of the soul. The present age does not produce them. It is not likely that it could if it tried. Such classics on the spiritual life as Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, *George Fox's Journals*, *Woolman's Journal*, and *Halyburton's Memoirs*, could only have been written at the time; and can only be studied and understood in the light of the history and period that gave them to us. I do not know a more instructive and interesting occupation than the perusal of the great books of former days with such an assemblage of the ideas and situation and occurrences that called them forth present to the mind as our facilities and our more accurate and popular acquaintance with historical periods afford.

Afterwards.

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full *abandon*, and should at the same time be the victim of a feverish and debilitating anxiety about the marks he will get at the next District Meeting. To speak of "a finished education," as that phrase has often been used, is an absurdity; for the greatest scholar is ever learning. Yet there is a sense in which the education of every minister should be finished before he is appointed to his first circuit. By that time he should at any rate have laid his foundations. He should have learnt how to read a book; he should have mastered the art of concentration on an intellectual task; he should have become imbued with respect for thoroughness and accuracy; he should know the difference between clean work and smattering; he should have overcome the drudgery of the earlier stages of the subjects he has studied; he should have acquired that general culture which will enable him, without over-pressure or neglect of duty, to lay the wisdom of the ages under tribute for the enrichment of his own life and that of his hearers; in short, he should have pursued his education to the point at which it begins to be fruitful. Then, instead of inflicting upon his people the processes of his training, he will give them to share abundantly in its results.

HERBERT W. HORWILL.

AFTERWARDS.

The peasant sowed, unrecompensed, in pain;
An army rode and trampled down his grain;
Another year—behold, the harvest's yield
Sprang rich and golden from the trampled field!
The miner delved in darkness and despair;
His tears concealed the trove his hand laid bare;
His orphaned child, years after, found the gem,
And lo, it glorified a diadem!
The friar sang a vesper, sweet and clear;
Without his cell a monarch paused to hear;
The friar slept, nor ever dreamed that he
Had sung to kings and sweetened history!
The brave knight rode, fameless and all alone;
The brave knight fell, and none reared him a stone;
His faithful sword, borne by another's hand,
One day brought joy and freedom to his land.
The great man lived, lonely and poor and scorned;
The great man died, and but a beggar mourned:
A thousand years—and lo, in twilight's gloom
Ten thousand pilgrims kneel beside his tomb!
Faint heart, be brave and banish thy despair;
Look to the past—find vindication there;
Our little lives make God's rewards seem late,
But recompensed are they who work and wait.

—Burrill Hamilton, quoted in "The Guild."