

A BRAVE SOLDIER.



HE Rev. John G. Paton is a brave and faithful missionary, who has spent a long life of hardship and peril, among the fierce islanders of the South Seas. Would you like to know a few facts taken from the story of this wonderful life? He was born in Scotland nearly seventy years ago. This is what he says of his home: Our home consisted of a 'but' and a 'ben' and a 'mid-room.' Not a very large house, was it?"

We wonder how they managed for dining-room and kitchen and parlor, and we are still more puzzled when we hear that the father's workshop, and the little room where the father went generally after each meal, to pray for his family, were in that little home. And what a happy home it was, especially on Sunday!

How many of you are twelve years of age? What would you, who are twelve, think of working from six o'clock in the morning to ten at night, taking two hours for meals—an hour for dinner, and half an hour each for breakfast and supper? And what do you think he did during the few minutes he had to himself between his meals and his work? He studied Latin and Greek, for he had already given his heart to God, and resolved to aim at being a missionary of the Cross, or a minister of the Gospel. Do you wonder that such a boy became a noble man?

How hard he studied, and how many sacrifices he made, and what he did in city mission work in Glasgow, when he was a few years older, are all told in such an interesting way in his book that it is safe to say that no reader of this magazine could have a better book for the missionary book-shelf than the life of this good man. Perhaps you can find it in the Sunday-school library. Suppose you try to get it. Will you?

But I must tell you a few things about Mr. Paton's work in the far-off islands of those far-off seas.

What would you think of going to an island to live where the people were painted savages and cannibals, and very ignorant and vicious, and almost devoid of natural affection; people who were constantly at war, and who hated white people because they thought that all were like the wicked traders who came to their islands from other lands, and cheated them and killed them?

That is what Mr. Paton did, because he loved the souls of these savages and wanted to tell them about Jesus. He lived among them for nearly thirty-five years.

What do you think these natives believed when war came, or there was no rain, or sickness came, or disaster of any kind?

They thought the missionaries and their Jehovah-worship were to blame. So, if the ban-

anas or yams suffered, if there was dissatisfaction in any quarter, they thought the best and only thing to do was to kill the missionaries.

Mr. Paton gives many accounts of the uprisings of the islanders, and the peril his life was in during these exciting scenes. Here is a short account taken from the book I would like everyone to read: "One day, while toiling away at my house, the war-chief, his brother, and a large party of armed men surrounded the plot where I was working. They all had muskets, besides their own native weapons. They watched me for some time in silence, and then every man levelled a musket straight at my head. Escape was impossible. Speech would only have increased my danger. My eyesight came and went for a few moments. I prayed to my Lord Jesus, either Himself to protect me, or to take me home to His glory. I tried to keep working on at my task, as if no one was near me. In that moment, as never before, the words came to me: 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, I will do it,' and I knew that I was safe. Retiring a little from their first position, no word having been spoken, they took up the same attitude somewhat farther off, and seemed to be urging one another to fire the first shot. But my dear Lord restrained them once again, and they withdrew, leaving me with a new cause for trusting Him with all that concerned me for Time and Eternity."

Do you not think he was a brave soldier of the Cross? Such bravery and such love were used by the Holy Spirit to change the hearts of those poor people. One of these was Kowia, a chief of the highest rank, who said, when his people wanted to deprive him of his chieftainship because he worshipped the true God, "Take all! I shall stand by Missi and the worship of Jehovah!"

During Mr. Paton's illness, this brave chief watched and prayed over him with great faithfulness. "Touched to the very fountain of my life," says Mr. Paton, "by such prayers from a man once a cannibal, I began under God's blessing to revive." This chief "died as he had lived since Jesus came to his heart," and, writing of him, Mr. Paton says: "I lost, in losing him, one of my best helpers; but I knew that day, and I know now, that there is one soul at least from Tanna to sing the glories of Jesus in Heaven, and oh! the rapture when I meet him there!"—*Children's Work for Children.*

Broad and deep and glorious
As the Heaven above,
Shines in might victorious
His eternal love.

Light of light! shine o'er us
On our pilgrim way;
Go Thou still before us
To the endless day.