

terly the conviction has been borne home to me, that, if there be much in my experience which the church of God ought to know, it would be pride on my part, and not humility, to let it die with me." His brother James consented to edit the volume, "because something tells me there is a blessing in it," and that we believe will be the opinion of all who shall read it.

Mr. Paton was born in a cottage on the farm of Braehead, in the parish of Kirkmahoe, Dumfriesshire, on the 24th of May, 1824. His father, who was a stocking-maker in a small way, removed about 1830 to the ancient village of Torthorwald, near which rises the old tower of that name, frowning over all the far-sweeping valley of the Nith, and telling of days of blood and border foray. In a very antiquated cottage, consisting of a "but" and a "ben," and a small mid-room, called the "closet," eight additional children were born, making in all five sons and six daughters. One end of this home served all the purposes of kitchen, dining-room, parlour and bed-room—containing two large "box-beds," adorned with many coloured counterpanes and natty curtains. The other end was the father's workshop, and the "closet" the sanctuary of that cottage home, where often-times a day the old man retired, and "shut to the door," the children instinctively devining, "that prayers were being poured out there for them, as of old, by the High Priest within the veil in the most holy place." His father was a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church—a staunch Cameronian, deeply read in the 'Scotch Worthies,' the 'Cloud of Witnesses,' and the 'Confession of Faith,' who rejoiced to sing 'Erskine's Sonnets,' and who never once omitted family worship from his seventeenth year, till he lay on his death-bed, seventy-seven years of age. At an early age, John graduated from this pious home into one of the grand old typical parish schools of Scotland, where, in addition to further instruction in the Bible and Catechism, he was initiated into the mysteries of Mathematics, Latin, and Greek by an "accomplished pedagogue" who ruled with customary severity, amounting sometimes to "savagery." An offer to act as district visitor and tract distributor in Glasgow led our hero to leave his quiet home, his father accompanying him part of

the way, "his long flowing yellow hair streaming down his shoulders; his lips kept moving in silent prayers for me, and his tears fell fast. Reaching the appointed place, he grasped my hand firmly for a minute in silence, and then solemnly and affectionately said,—'God bless you my son! your father's God prosper you, and keep you from all evil!'"

For a number of years the young man engaged in mission work in the slums of Glasgow, at the same time carrying on his studies at the University and at the Reformed Presbyterian Divinity Hall, while all the time "the wail of the perishing heathen in the South Seas rang in his ears." At length the Synod advertized for another missionary to join the Rev. John Inglis in the New Hebrides. John Paton and a fellow-student, Joseph Copeland, offered themselves for this service. Both were formally accepted, and placed under a special course of instruction for twelve months, and in due time were ordained and solemnly set apart as missionaries. They sailed from Greenwich on the 16th of April, 1858, and on the 30th of August, arrived at Aneityum, where they met with a hearty reception from Dr. Geddie, Mrs. Inglis, Mrs. Mathieson, and the Christian natives of the island. Soon after, Mr. Paton was located at Port Resolution, on the island of Tanna, Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson of Nova Scotia, having been settled on the southern part of the same island. The natives at both stations were in a very excited state at the time of their arrival, still the chiefs willingly sold them sites for mission premises, more with an eye to the pay they were to receive in the shape of axes, knives, blankets and clothing, than from any thirst for the Gospel. In fact they were about the worst specimen of savages in the whole group—deceitful and blood-thirsty to a degree. "On beholding these natives," said the young missionary, "in their paint and nakedness and misery, my heart was as full of horror as of pity. Had I given up my much-loved people in Glasgow, to consecrate my life to these degraded creatures? Was it possible to Christianize or even to civilize them? Time would tell." They had not been four months on the island when Mrs. Paton died from an attack of ague and fever, and their new-born infant was taken two weeks later.