

The Greek word is a strong one, indicating the urgency of the need. *More labourers*. There is always a demand for more laborers, and hence the command of this verse is always binding.

Light from the East

THE CENTURION—So little is known of the army of the Herods—Capernaum was in the kingdom of Herod Antipas—that the best we can do is to describe the Roman army organization which we do know the Herods imitated.

In the New Testament times a Roman legion consisted of about 6,000 infantry, together with cavalry and artillery. The foot-soldiers were divided into ten cohorts of 600 men each. The "band" which

arrested Jesus (Matt. 27 : 27) was probably from a cohort, like the one that kept the peace when Paul was set upon by the Jews, Acts, ch. 21. The officers of a legion were tribunes and centurions. There were six tribunes and these six were associated in the command of the legion. A single tribune also was often detailed to command a cohort. Each cohort was divided into ten companies; every company was commanded by a centurion. One centurion and his company would be doing police duty at Capernaum. We learn from the Gospel of Luke that he had lived long enough among the people to establish himself in their good-will and confidence. He may very well have been a "God-fearing" adherent of the synagogue; there were many such adherents in Gentile cities.

THE LESSON APPLIED

V. 6. *Man should not look upon his brother man as a commodity.* The centurion came to Jesus about a sick slave in whom he had a human interest. This was unusual in that cold, hard, pagan world. On one occasion Cicero followed to the grave the remains of a devoted slave and, as he remembered the long years of faithful service, his feelings overcame him and he wept. Then, suddenly recollecting himself, he saw that the people were amazed, and turning to them, he apologized for so far forgetting himself as to weep for a mere slave. The centurion instinctively arrived at that place when men realize, "All ye are brethren."

V. 7. The ready sympathy of our Lord is beautifully exemplified in this incident. He still shows that same spirit through those in whom he dwells by faith. On Tuesday, September 2nd, 1919, Dr. Grenfell, on board the *Strathcona*, received this telegram: "Please come as fast as you can to operate me in the throat and save my life."—Capt. J. N. Cote. It was a run of one hundred miles, the sea was up and the trip had to be made by night. Through the long hours, Dr. Grenfell was at the wheel, and about a quarter to five, a companion came into the wheel-house and found him singing softly. Then looking up, he smiled like the dawn of day, as he said, "Isn't it fun to live?"

V. 8. This centurion was not only a very

human, but also a very humble person. "He is worthy," said his fellow townsmen. "I am not worthy," he said himself. "Of Dr. Alexander McLaren," says his biographer, "it truly might be said that he was clothed with humility. Who could have known, from anything that he said about himself, that he was one of the foremost preachers and expositors of his age? Yet who could be for any time in his company without feeling that his presence and his words were at once an inspiration and a benediction?"

V. 9. The centurion looked upon Jesus as being a centurion in the world of spirits. We know now that he is the captain of that mighty throng. "All power," he said himself, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth." As yet that authority has not been fully acknowledged by the sons of men. But a day is coming when it shall be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

V. 9. We cannot live without faith on both the material and the spiritual levels, like Abraham to go forth every day into the unknown. "True religion," said Donald Hankey, "is betting one's life there is a God, —a God who will work out everything for good to those who love him."

V. 11. The children of the kingdom should