

## Young People's Department.

### ROMAN SOLDIERS.

**D**URING the events of Holy Week and Easter we read several things about Roman soldiers. "Go, soldier and prepare the cross," was the command given when a criminal was to be put to death. And our blessed Lord was put to death as a criminal. Roman soldiers surrounded him as he hung upon the cross, and then when he died one of their officers, a centurion, standing near it and observing the words and actions of the dying Lord, said "Truly this man was the Son of God."

Roman soldiers again were set to watch the tomb of Jesus, and though they were very brave men they quaked with fear when the angel came down and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the sepulchre. Well, indeed, was it for them to quake, for they witnessed then the greatest event of history, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

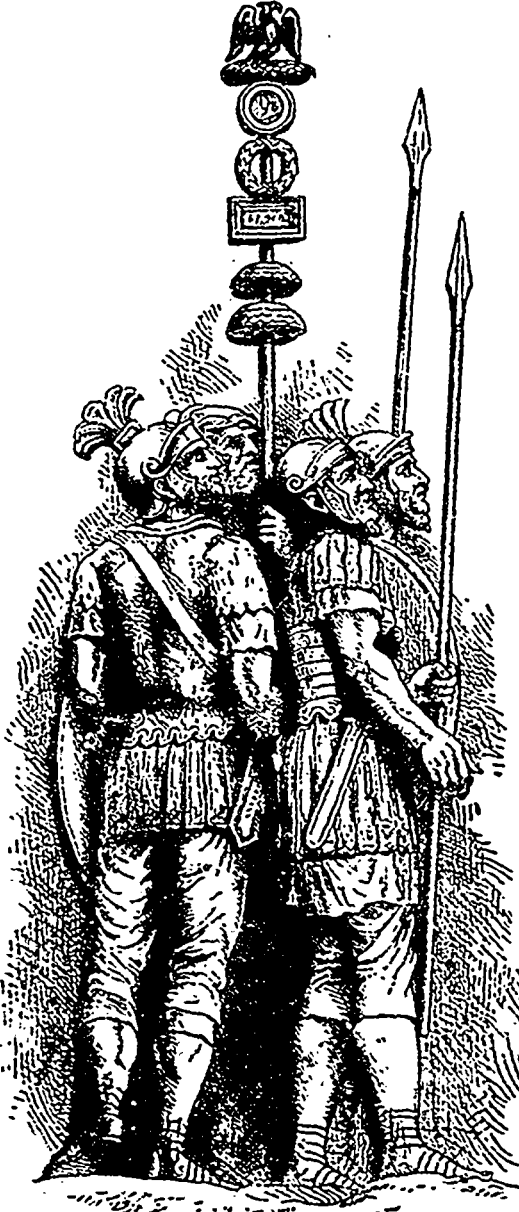
In many other places of the New Testament also we read of Roman soldiers. Some of their officers were excellent men. There was Cornelius, for instance, who prayed and made his offerings to God, and he was so good that even before his baptism as a Christian his prayers and alms were acceptable to God. There was also Julius, the Centurion of of Augustus' Band, or Royal Regiment, ment, who had charge of St. Paul on his way to Rome as a prisoner. When the Roman soldiers, in the midst of shipwreck, wanted to put the prisoners to death for fear they should escape, he would

not allow such a cruel act to be done, chiefly because he wanted to be kind to Paul. And when the Apostle was a prisoner he had Roman soldiers to guard him. It is said that one man who

helped to guard him was converted by him to the cause of Christ; but while the aged Apostle was in prison he had good and many opportunities of studying these soldiers. They were evidently brave men and men of good discipline. They were also well armed, both for defence and attack. There they were before him from time to time standing in their whole armour, ready to resist the attacks of the enemy. There was the strong belt about their loins and the shining breastplate upon their breast; the stout sandals upon their feet and massive helmets upon their heads; there was also the shield which protected them from adverse weapons and blows, and then the spear firmly grasped in the hand.

Thus, thought the Apostle, should every Christian be, clad in the "whole armour of God, the loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness and their feet shod with the Gospel of Peace; provided with the shield of faith wherewith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

Thus may all Christian children fulfil the prayer of their baptism, and "fight manfully under Christ's banner against sin, the world and the devil, and continue His faithful soldiers and servants unto their lives' end."



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