

According to the former prophecies concerning thee, that in the strength thereof thou mayest fight the good fight." Moved by the Holy Ghost, the Church met for the ordination of Timothy, and by the laying of the hands of the Presbytery he was set apart to the work of the Holy Ministry.

II. Consecration.

According to the text before us this involves:—

1. *Readiness to endure suffering.* Though rescued from the mouth of the lion for a time Paul felt that his work was done. And while he could truly say that he had "a desire to depart and be with Christ," he was intensely anxious that the great work which he had begun should be worthily carried on. The marvellous success of the Apostle of the Gentiles had been won at the expense of bodily sufferings, of intense mental anxiety and of exposure to cruel persecution. He was now "ready to be offered." All these things had been cheerfully endured for the sake of Him who had chosen him "to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." So his weighty counsel enjoining Timothy to proceed bravely in the Christian warfare was enforced by his equally impressive example. We may well believe that Timothy had need of this solemn exhortation, without concluding that he was timid or prone to become discouraged in the face

of difficulties. The Lord Jesus Christ had chosen him to be a soldier. The life of a soldier, especially when in active service is a hard one. The example of the warriors of the Roman Empire must have been present to Paul's mind when he thus bade Timothy suffer afflictions with him. In the warfare to which Timothy was called there is no cessation of hostilities. Sin rests not. Withal this is a mighty foe, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Christ had chosen Timothy to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." As he went forward in the performance of these duties he would meet with most determined resistance from the human heart aided by the mighty power of Satan. Timothy would, by the faithful performance of his duty, display the highest qualities of a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2. As the soldier when in the active discharge of his duties is withdrawn from all other occupations so the servant of Christ "is to devote himself entirely to *His* service, and not to involve himself in other matters which might hinder him in his proper calling." This is the doctrine of the fourth verse:—
"No soldier on service entangleth him-