

2. The Soldier Life

THE Christian life is often compared to that of a soldier in the service of his country. We are familiar with the thought in the baptismal service, where the minister of Christ says : " We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign *him* with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner, against sin, the world, and the devil ; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end, Amen." It was St. Paul's favourite figure. Like his great Master, the apostle used many illustrations to make the meaning of the truth clear to the mind, and to enforce its obligations in the sphere of practical life. Military life in its various forms was very familiar to St. Paul. The Imperial troops were to be found almost everywhere throughout the Roman Empire. The Apostle had often watched during the sad days of his imprisonment, when he was bound with a chain to the soldier, the troops on parade, while under drill, on the march and on guard ; and he