

How far in its blindness has not our poor world strayed from the Gospel of Christ ! With that matchless and divine code every man is a freeman, even when subjected to authority. There is nothing, indeed, in that subjection which is degrading, for, the Christian sees God in the person of him who commands, while the latter holds his power from God alone. Should the ruler enjoin on the freedman of Christ something contrary to God's law, he feels it his right, nay, his duty to resist. Such was the lesson that Peter, the first supreme ruler of Christ's Church, taught us by word and example : " The high-priest asked them, saying : Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in His name : and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and you have a mind to bring the blood of this Man upon us. But Peter and the Apostles, answering said : We ought to obey God rather than men . . . And every day they ceased not, in the temple and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus" (Act. v, 27-29, 42).

It is in Holy Church that we find the true school of respect for authority. There the faithful are taught to yield to the powers that be what is their due, but not to the detriment of the rights of God ; to show a bold and determined front, an uncompromising bearing to those who, having no mission from above, would substitute their own servitude for the yoke of Christ ; but there also they are taught to revere all who have a rightful claim to their obedience, and to recognize parental rights and the authority of those to whom such rights are delegated.

To belittle, vilify, or ridicule rulers whom we should obey, may be accepted as evidences of wit by the irreligious world, which is often at fault, and in this particular as in much else, but it is something wholly irreconcilable with the teachings of the Divine Master.

" There is no power but from God," says St. Paul (Rom. xliii, 1). Authority, in its fountain-head, derives from the creative act, and in this most rigorous sense God is the sole