

## DISCOURSE.

ROMANS xlii, 1-7.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

Any one who carefully notes the course of nature around him, must be impressed with the conviction that we live in a world of law and order. The God who made the world still governs it, and the regular course of events under His administration is expressed in the well-known adage, "order is Heaven's first law."

In the material universe, the government of God is carried on by certain fixed, unalterable laws,—that is, unalterable save by the interposition of Him who ordained them. These laws, however, do not rule by any power inherent in themselves: they owe their power to the immediate presence and energy of God. Any law is, in itself, a lifeless and powerless thing; and its active operation is proof of an intelligent Power above and behind it, by whom it is enforced.