

2. *The Authority of Rulers* is defined with sufficient clearness in the word of God, wherein, I think, it is plainly set forth that their just authority is *neither arbitrary nor absolute*. The laws of the realm, and not mere will of the Sovereign, is, in all cases the standard of appeal. This was manifest in the organization of the Jewish Commonwealth. "Thou shalt in anywise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose," said God to His ancient people. "And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his Kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of *that which is* before the priests and Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these Statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left." While therefore the authority of the Sovereign is wisely restricted, still it is, within the limits of the law, very great, and not to be despised. At present, I will note only one phase of it, namely, the *authority to punish transgressors*. "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." The principle laid down is that, in administering and upholding the laws of the country, the magistrate has authority to inflict such penalties upon transgressors as the law may direct. He is also justified in calling, if need be, upon the people whom he governs, or a certain number of them, to assist him in sustaining and enforcing the laws, and in punishing those who may refuse such assistance. A law without a penalty ceases to be a law, and a ruler without authority to inflict punishment upon transgressors becomes, to bad men at least, an object of contempt. Without such power, he cannot be "a terror to evil-doers," and he certainly would bear "the sword in vain" unless he had authority to use it.

3.—*The Duties of Rulers* are also set forth in the Scrip-