

of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." The same is true with regard to all laws referring to the seventh commandment and the eighth, all laws for the protection of the person, the property, the rights, or the life, of our neighbor, of all laws relating to blasphemy or Sabbath breaking, and the more fully the laws of any land are made and carried out after the model of Divine law, the more completely do these laws answer the purpose for which God instituted civil government among men.

But a question arises here that sometimes perplexes. Can those governments that are corrupt, that pass and carry out bad laws, be Divine institutions, and can those who make and enforce such laws be called God's ministers or servants? Yes. Just as there might be a very wise and righteous government at the head of the Empire, and under that a very corrupt one at Ottawa at the head of the Dominion, making many unjust laws; or in Halifax, at the head of this Province, or in Pictou at the head of this county, or in our Council room at the head of the town; doing much that the central government would not approve, yet over which they would not pretend to exercise arbitrary control: so, speaking with reverence, we have over all a King who reigns in righteousness. But the governments of the earth under Him may be very corrupt, doing much that He does not approve, and yet, although He has the power He does not choose to use that power to destroy them. But they are still His ministers. Read carefully the first seven verses of the thirteenth chapter of Romans, and remember that when Paul, speaking as he was borne along by the Holy Spirit, wrote these words and said "There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God." "The power. . . . is the minister of God, etc.," that Nero, one of the worst rulers the world ever saw, was seated on the throne of the Roman Empire.

Law is of God and law among men is but its echo, sometimes faint, sometimes clear and strong. Justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne, and justice and judgment as commanded and enforced among men are but the reflection from that throne, sometimes very dim, as reflected from corrupt rulers, sometimes clearer and brighter as reflected from wise

and righteous ones, but all law having its source in God as all light in the Sun. True, His spiritual kingdom is not of this world, but this world rightfully belongs to His kingdom, and the time is coming when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, when human laws shall be the exact reprint of the law of God, no longer blotted and blurred and dim, but fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible only to the evil doer.

Then all the mighty kings of earth
Before Him down shall fall,
And all the nations of the world
Do service to Him shall.

Among the nations He shall judge,
His judgments, truth shall guide;
His sceptre shall protect the just
'And quell the sinner's pride.

II. SOME LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE FACT THAT CIVIL GOVERNMENT IS A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

1. Since the powers that be are ordained of God, *it is the duty of every man as in God's sight, to give obedience to these powers, to obey the laws of the land.*

To those who live under the absolute monarchy of Russia, that monarchy is the *errand of God*, for there is no power but of God, and as such, the Christian subject is to give it due respect and obedience, so long as it does not tell him to do what is wrong, or come between him and his duty to God. To those who live in Britain, with its limited monarchy, that government is God's ordinance, and the man who says, "I will not obey the laws, no one has a right to be king, government should be a republic," is sinning against God. To those living in the United States, in a republic, that government is an ordinance of God, its laws to be respected and obeyed so long as they do not conflict with the laws which come direct from God or interfere with duty to Him. The man who says, I will not obey because there is no king, is resisting the ordinance of God. What saith the word: "He that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath (of the rulers, and its consequent penalty) but also for conscience sake."

Disapproval of a law is no sufficient reason for disobeying it. So long as it