

county—peaceably if they could—forcibly if they must.

From that day to this, our persecutors have been pretending to act under color of law so far as to hold men while they could be murdered. They would employ a few troops or a mob, under the pretence of legal authority, and hold men still while the assassin could do his work. This has been the course pursued by our enemies all the time up to the present hour.

Inasmuch as we observed the laws of God, we had no occasion to violate the laws of our country; and, as a matter of course, pretexts were sought in vain from the beginning to the end, and the hue-and-cry of treason has been raised from one end of the country to the other. Hence we see the importance of our Elders understanding the national force of laws of kingdoms, the laws of empires, the rules of nations, the relationship of institutions one to another, and the relationship of subjects to their rulers.

An old principle, laid down from the earliest ages of British jurisprudence, from which we received our national institutions, is that allegiance is that ligament or thread which binds the subject to the sovereign, and that, for this allegiance, the sovereign, by an implied contract, owes, in turn, protection to the subject; and the very moment that the Government withholds its protection, that very moment allegiance ceases.

This is as old as the British Constitution, and it is recognized as natural and eternal both in America and Great Britain; and you may trace this principle back through history to the earliest ages of man. The very moment a government ceases to protect its subjects, that moment they are at liberty to protect themselves.

Whenever national powers were exerted to crush the rights of their

own subjects, then the right was founded in nature that they should stand up in their own defense; and the principle of self-preservation is in a greater or less degree binding, and it has been acknowledged from the earliest ages that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

For something like a hundred years the kings of Great Britain, as you will see in King James' translation of the Bible, claimed the title of Kings of Great Britain, France, and Ireland—a power which they could not exercise and maintain, so far as the kingdom of France was concerned; and finally, in the reign of George III, they saw fit to disclaim it.

The assumption of this right was a mere burlesque. Could they control the organization of France and regulate its internal policy? No—they could not. The only thing was to go to war, and then France could resist and sometimes menace the very existence of the British Empire, and yet the kings of England could claim to be kings of France. But were they kings of France? Not unless the people of France said so; for the people choose their kings to reign over them.

This system of claiming authority from some distant claim has been practiced, and is at the present time; and there is now an individual who claims to be king of France, who assumes that title—an individual who does not live in France: he is expelled, but yet he claims to be the sovereign of France. At the same time the people have, by their unanimous voice, placed Louis Napoleon upon the throne, and they carry out his decrees, while a fugitive claims to be king of France, but without the consent of the people, and has not power enough to pull an old setting hen off her nest.

Circumstances might change so as