

contend for the rights of every American citizen, which are our rights.” We have not cut ourselves off from the rights of citizenship. Our fathers fought to help obtain and bled to help establish the blessings and privileges, the liberties and powers of this glorious government to all its loyal citizens; and when this Church was established, it went on for more than thirty-two years—no law of the Church conflicted with the laws of the land, until it became necessary in the opinion of some politicians that the Saints should be made offenders in the eyes of the nation and of the world. Then it was that Congress passed a law—the law of 1862—prohibiting plurality of wives, polygamy, or bigamy, as they choose to call it. Now, then, we have not risen up against the laws of the land; it is the laws of the land and the men of the land that have risen up against the people of God, and have brought their offensive warfare in this matter, and we are thereby placed on the defensive. The nation have been pleased to say that we shall not worship God according to the dictates of our consciences, as required by some of the laws and ordinances of His Church; and have made laws to prevent us from so doing, if possible. Hence it is that, while we go before the courts we do not go as suppliants for something extraordinary, or for something that other people have not got. We ask to be preserved our rights, the rights that belong to every American citizen. It is for this that we go through the courts, appealing from the District Court to the Supreme Court of the Territory, and then to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Now, is not this a great and an important lesson of experience and

instruction, and yet there is occasion, for all this is required in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. The Lord has said through the Prophet Joseph to us, that we must importune at the feet of the judges—do you remember it?—and at the feet of Governors—do you recollect that—and at the feet of the President, and then, says He, if your importuning does not prevail, and you do not obtain all things which you have a right to, He will come out of His hiding place and take the matter into His own hands. So you see we have some importuning to do before, or at the feet of Judges, Governors, and Presidents, in order to maintain the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of our country.

Right here I want to say a word or two especially in regard to the way we have to do our importuning. I refer to a discourse by President Young, in which he said he wished he had five hundred young lawyers full of the spirit of the Gospel who would rise up and help to maintain and defend our rights before the courts of our country. The discourse was published in the *Deseret News* and republished in the *Journal of Discourses*. It is public matter for anybody to read that wishes to. But a few days ago, however, a Bishop remarked that it looked very singular for one of the Apostles to raise up a lawyer, and thought there must be a screw loose somewhere. It happens, however, once in a while that some Bishop wants my son or someone else’s son to help defend them before the courts. (Laughter.) I wonder if there is any screw loose there. Excuse me, brethren, for this reference; but I wish we could have a goodly number of substantial young men growing up in our midst who would become skilled and