

defrauded and oppressed their miserable victims. No government, for any consideration, least of all, a money consideration, has a right of any sort, to transfer to its citizens its divine trust of enforcing law by punishing its violators. That the punishment of crime may be undertaken as a legitimate business is untenable. When the government transfers to individual citizens the executions of the sentences of criminal courts for money, it is wrong; it dishonors the subjects and betrays the trust committed to it by the Almighty God. It does such a thing to avoid the trouble and burden of caring for its criminals; it is weak and cowardly. The convict's lease system would never have existed, would never have been thought of, but for money considerations. If it was devised for the sake of the hire of convicts, or to save the government the expense of caring for the criminals, in either case, it was the consideration of money. Nobody ever voted for such a system; it was thought better for the convicts, or because it was thought to be safer for society. I appeal to you as Georgians to come to the front in this matter, and help to rid Georgia of this foul blot. We owe to Georgia, to ourselves to the world, and to suffering humanity. Georgia's honor and glory are at stake. Will you come up at the ballot box and help the grand old Empire state of the south?

Rev. E. K. Love was intensely moved by the speech of Hon. A. Wilson. He declared that the present penitentiary system of Georgia must be revised or abolished. It must go. He declared that he never had known the barbarities and cruelties practiced upon the convicts of the state. His very blood boiled within him. The Negro of Georgia must put his foot down upon this penitentiary system of our state, and never rest until it is rooted up, if it has to be rooted up with a crowbar. This penitentiary system is doomed to-night, and doomed to die. After hearing the words of this eye-witness, he felt as he had never felt before.

Capt. A. F. Hawkins said for the young men that the funeral sermon of the penitentiary system is being preached to-night. We must not vote for any man who will not pledge himself to do everything in his power to remove this monstrous evil and foul blot from our State.

Col. W. A. Pledger said three-fourths of the members of this body are ministers, and the preachers say they are going into politics enough to lift this people from the slough of despond and place them on a plane of equality with any other race. They say that the sun of our progress will reach its zenith ere long, and, please God, those of us who are here to witness the realization of hopes and aspirations for which our fathers have spent their lives working will shed tears of joy, and honor those who have given their lives for these things.

Mr. Hamilton Brown spoke strongly in regard to the importance of paying their taxes and utilizing their privileges as tax-payers by either sending men to the legislature to do our biddings or going ourselves.

J. F. Long, Esq., said that until our people learned how much it cost the government to place the ballot in our hands, we would not be worthy of the right to vote. He would ask this Convention, are we going home better and stronger to vote and work for the elevation of the race, or are we going home to sell out? He sometimes wondered what the colored man was coming to and declared that we were often our own worst enemy. He declared that the Republican party established the chain-gang in Georgia. He urged that every county in the State do as Bibb county had done—by sending to the State Legislature such men as Hon. A. Huff and Hon. Mr. Scofield.

W. R. Gray, Esq., said we need men who will stand up for the race whether they live or die. We need men whose backbone is so strong that they may sink to their neck, but will never break.

Bishop H. M. Turner replying to the charge made by Mr. Long