

in malice and maintained by force. That is the only way you can account for it. No man if he is familiar with natural science or with the history of his country, that did not hate somebody, that was not biased, would ever commit such a crime as that. It was in keeping with the spirit of the age at that time. Vengeance was in the air. The evil genius of mankind was at the throttle. He had dethroned judgment and punctured the great sympathetic human heart, and had set in operation these engines of destruction, and that was the condition, Mr. President, that we had to deal with, a few years after the war. And have we dealt with it? I think we have. It is true we had to deal with many embarrassing situations; it is true we had to deal with Federal bayonets; it is true we had to deal with Federal marshals; it is true before us were prisons, it is true before us was the gibbet or the gallows, it is true before us was the annihilation of our property and perhaps death. But the intransigent potentiality that inheres in the white man was equal to the occasion to fight it off and for twenty-five years he has remained supreme and in control of the county, State and municipality. How did he do it? Potentiality that is supreme will always find a method to overcome the potentiality that is weak and insignificant. The very fact that three white men in a beat can control the politics of 600 negroes is an illustration along that line. Do you suppose that three negroes could control the politics of 600 white men. Not at all and we are here today, Mr. President, to make a supreme and final effort to throw off these forces. We are here today to avail as nearly as we can, this technical inhibition that is written in the fifteenth amendment, that we may set in operation this natural force that has controlled the world and will continue to control the world by fair, just and honest methods. Now, let me say here, as I have said before. I have said it upon the stump and I have said it elsewhere, that necessity to commit these little irregularities for the purpose of maintaining the civilization in this State and the counties in it, I believe it to be right. But the purpose is to maintain the right by legal methods, technically legal if you please, but being measured by the laws of nature and by God himself the methods already in use are right. That is the purpose for which we are here. Now I believe, Mr. President, that the report of the majority of the committee has solved the problem. I have heard so much talk about the granddaddy and the grandmamma that I have been almost ashamed for the old people, and to be a legitimate descendant, why that was disgraceful compared to an unlawful spontaniety. There has been some talk about this grandfather clause and about descendants. A great deal. I am going to read you—this is the criminal code—but I am not going to say anything about crime on this occasion, except the great crime of the fifteenth amendment of which I have already spoken, but in this book I find the Constitution of 1787, and now I want to read you a very