

## LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE.

### The Green Lynching.

Asbury Green, a colored man, came to his death at the hands of what is generally denominated "a lawless mob." He was charged with having criminally assaulted, in her own home, in the dead of night, in the absence of her natural protector, the wife of one of our humble but peaceful, respected and quiet white citizens and farmers. Like a wolf upon the fold, he came at night when the husband was temporarily absent, and he knew it, invaded the home and desecrated it by the indulgence of his wicked and unhallowed lusts. He ruthlessly violated female chastity and honor in the person of a wife and mother—he became the despoiler of female purity. He was tried, ably defended, his defence patiently considered by twelve respectable citizens and jurors of his own selection. There was no palliating circumstance attending the commission of the crime; it was a wanton, cruel and wicked act.

There was but one sentiment abroad in the community, but one uniform judgment and conviction, and that was that death should be the penalty, if convicted of the crime, *as it should be in all similar cases*, chiefly and principally, apart from and independent of the shocking atrocity of the act; that it is a *necessity for the preservation of the safety and security of the "homes of the people."* Unpunished with death, the conviction rested deep in the hearts of every small farmer in the county that the protection of his home and the safety and security of his wife and children had ceased to exist during his absence, either day or night, in the performance of the pressing duties of life. A man living among the dense population of a crowded city, or even in one of our towns, with neighbors near at hand to hear a cry of alarm or distress and to lend a helping hand, cannot conceive of the helplessness of a wife, or mother or a daughter down in the country, separated from any neighbor by miles of intervening territory, isolated and cut off from help.

The poor man, the man of small means, the small farmer, either by land or by water, feels in the inmost convictions of his heart and soul that the security, the safety of his home, the preservation of his little *castle* by the roadside, the waterside, at the foot of the hill or in the secluded grove, at a distance, apart from his neighbor, is involved in the infliction of the death penalty in all such cases. In this case it was not the cry of vengeance that called for the death penalty, but the cry for the preservation of home with all its homely virtues and sacred associations. The city man or the townsman, or the large proprietor, with the many about him, by their presence giving his family security in his absence, cannot realize the situation. It is the small farmer, the laborer, the necessities of whose daily lives call them from home, leaving wives and children unprotected, except in the protection that the knowledge that the death penalty will be meted out to any invader of the sacred precincts of home and despoiler of its honor and chastity, as dear to the poor man and his family as to the rich man and his family, who alone can properly appreciate the situation in a case like this.

Asbury Green had been tried and convicted. The verdict of twelve jurors, after, a patient hearing, was that he had committed the crime. They had solemnly and legally passed on the question of his identity, and *this was no longer an open question.* The commission of the act proven; the identity of the perpetrator established; so heinous and terrible an act as rape accomplished on a virtuous female, a wife and a mother; race interests and prejudice set at defiance; a home invaded and its rights, privileges and immunities ruthlessly violated—there could be but one explanation and atonement in the very necessities and requirements of the case, and that was *death by hanging*, and the great popular heart felt it and beat in unison with this sentiment and conviction.

We have confidence in our judges, in their integrity, ability, uprightness and conscientiousness in the discharge of their duties, but we have confidence in our jurors as well, and recognize them as component parts of our courts, and their verdicts as a general rule entitled to respect, and we have confidence in the universal sentiment which pervaded all classes of our people and held possession of all minds in this particular case.

The judges questioned the proof of the identity of Asbury Green as the perpetrator of the crime. A jury of twelve men had determined this, and it was no longer an open question.

The judges said identity established and death in this Judicial Circuit always has been and always will be the penalty in such cases. A jury said his identity had been proven. The popular verdict, outside of the jury box, was that the identity had been proven.

Identity having been proven and established, death by hanging was the penalty in the very necessities of the case, admitted and agreed to on all sides. Where, then, is the reason for drawing the distinction between this case of lynching and the New Orleans case. In the New Orleans case the jury failed to do its duty and the prisoners were acquitted, because, as alleged, the jury had been tampered with. In this case the party was not acquitted, but convicted, and the judges failed to impose the death penalty, because over-careful of human life, they failed to be impressed with the proofs of the identity of the party convicted of the crime, which crime they—the judges—said was an act deserving of the death penalty. Asbury Green was identified to the satisfaction of the people most interested in the proper punishment of the crime. He deserved, identity being established, the death penalty.

Prisoners charged with assassination and murder, acquitted by a New Orleans jury, were put to death and the universal sentiment, in the light of that great luminary, the *Baltimore Sun*, is justification and approval on the ground of public sentiment. A prisoner convicted of the most heinous crime known to the law by a Queen Anne's jury, the requisite punishment for which is the death penalty, as admitted on all sides, is simply sentenced to the Penitentiary, which is conceived in such a case to such a man to be no punishment at all and to embody no deterring influences to persons of similar character, is in behalf of the great principle of self preservation put to death, and the cry of condemnation is raised. Is this right?

He came like a wolf on the fold in the night time when the sheppard was away; the people came from their homes in the night and overpowered the guardians of the jail and visited on Asbury Green the proper penalty of his crime.

He showed no mercy and he died without mercy. He committed his crime in the night time and he exalted it in the night time. Let his fate serve as a warning in the future to all people disposed to the commission of like crimes. The people are determined to and will at all hazards protect their homes and their families.

A PINKY NECK FARMER.