

Maryland May Punish Lynchers.

While it is gratifying information that the Government of Maryland has taken steps to penalize the participants in the lynching of a Negro who was dragged from a prison hospital bed where he lay suffering from two bullet wounds, and hanged, there seems to be ground for apprehension that the carrying out of good intentions will be frustrated by overdoing of the effort.

It is stated that Attorney General Lane, assured by Governor Ritchie that the whole power of the State was at his disposal, "declined to divulge his plans to bring to justice, not only the leaders of the mob, but all who participated in any way in the orgy." But the mob that was present at the lynching is estimated to have included about 2,000 persons. They must all be regarded, in the eyes of the law, as participants because their presence was presumptive evidence of endorsement of the mob crime. Somewhere the line must be drawn between the perpetrators and the onlookers, else the effort to bring the former to justice must fail.

The men who broke into the prison hospital, seized the Negro and hanged him, must be singled out. If Maryland's plan to set an example is left to include all who "participated in any way," it cannot be expected that it can be carried into effect.