

## CIVILIZED AMERICA AND MARYLAND.

Prison guards in Florida torture to death a youth of nineteen. Policemen in New York murder a prisoner while administering the "third degree." Two men are publicly whipped in Ohio for stealing an old refrigerator which they sold for three dollars. Mere boys are in death houses in many American prisons waiting to be executed. In the State of Maryland, which boasts of its enlightenment, we notice that several Eastern Shore newspapers comment most intemperately on the decision of the Court of Appeals in the Lee case and come very near to approving lynchings.

Of course, Courts are not above criticism. We believe that every citizen has an inherent right to criticize the actions of every public official, but it is unfair and incorrect to give the impression to the public that our Courts discriminate in favor of murderers and rapists. They do nothing of the sort.

No one but a lunatic or criminal defends acts of private violence, and no one but a fanatical and vicious individual can advocate, either directly or impliedly, lynching in this state.

We have no sympathy with

the point of view of those in temperate, hasty and publicity-seeking individuals who rushed into print to denounce all citizens of the Eastern Shore when a colored man was lynched last year. We do not believe that the residents of the Shore counties as a class are any more backward than those of the rest of Maryland, Baltimore City included. Many of our finest men and women, whom we respect and admire, reside across the bay.

Society has not yet learned how to prevent all individual acts of lawlessness; but most civilized communities have outgrown mob violence.

Unfortunately, some of the citizens of the peninsula have been led by the extravagance of the criticisms heaped on all Eastern Shoremen to reply in an equally violent and ill-considered manner and have thus played directly into the hands of their critics and the communistic agitators.

There is much to be said in defense of the great majority of Eastern Shoremen, but nothing to be said in defense of those who participated in the recent lynching or who now seek to justify it. Lynchings, whatever the provocations, are barbarous and inexcusable crimes in those communities which have adequate agencies for apprehending and punishing criminals. Our courts, both nisi prius and appellate, are perfectly capable of handling crime on the Eastern Shore. Every resident of that part of the state who possesses a decent sense of civic responsibility should not only condemn the lynching that disgraced Maryland but should repudiate all those persons who intimate that such a public crime was in any wise to be excused or who suggest that mob action would be justified in the future.

Efforts to apprehend and punish the lynchers should be kept up, and mob-minded persons in this state made to understand that Maryland will not tolerate the attempts of private individuals to take the law into their own hands.