

Editorial

THE CHURCH

THIS is a critical day for the Christian church. The white church of Christ finds itself in a position which gives the lie to many of its finest professions. It is a church of Peace; and its followers are at war. It is a church of the Masses in theory while in practice it is a church of the Classes. It is an organization which despises wealth and yet which finds wealth its only modern weapon. In fine,—as a follower of Jesus, the Jew,—it professes the sublimest of ethical codes and yet falls so far from following it that some would deny that it is Christian.

The Negro church in America comes nearer to being built along the lines of its Founder. It is a democratic church of the masses; it welcomes all men despite race or color; and its wide activities touch every line of human endeavor. Nevertheless, the Negro church today in all its branches faces a peculiar crisis. The 3,000,000 Baptists, who represent more nearly than any other branch the great rank and file of the colored people, are torn asunder over a detail of organization. The African Methodist church must put strong material in its leadership or it will drift into sectional disruption, or personal feuds. The Colored Methodist Episcopal church is passing through a regrettable ethical slough of despond in high places; while the Zion church is having financial troubles. The colored Congregationalists are still a remnant. The colored Episcopalians are as babes overlaid by their none-too-loving mother; while the colored Presbyterians are spiritually harassed. The great Methodist Episcopal church has a strong element

which is seeking to drive out its colored membership in order to welcome the white South.

Facing such problems what shall we do? The appeal is first of all to the mighty past. In slavery, in Reconstruction and in the days after the Negro church made the Negro race in America. Today it can remake it if it calls to the front its strong, honest men; if it puts aside petty sectarianism and creed, and if it works for social uplift and individual honor. Will the church do this? In the long run and after much travail of soul we believe it will.

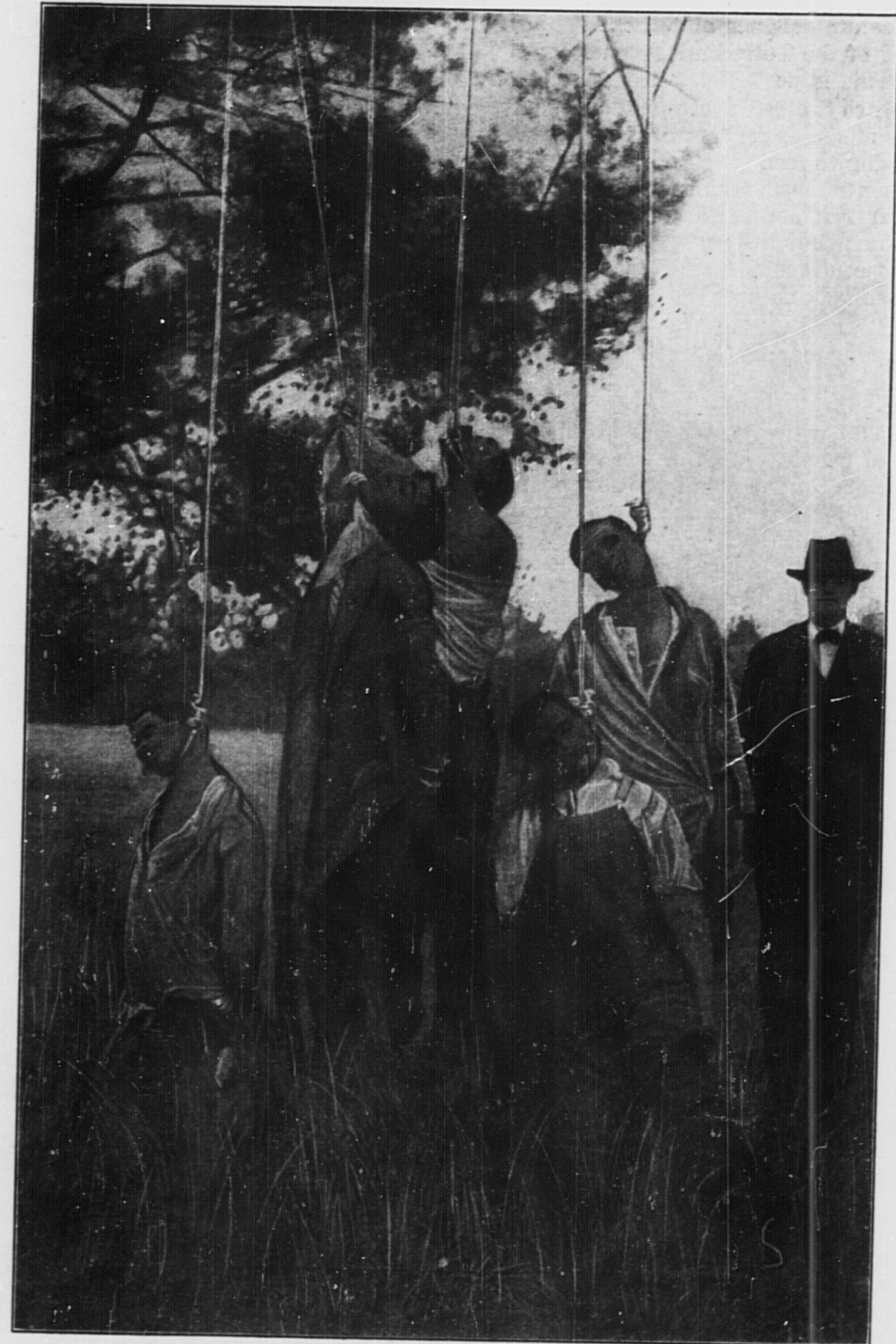


PEONAGE

THE picture on the opposite page is authentic. It was taken in Lee County, Ga., where on January 20 five Negroes were taken from the Worth County jail, rushed into the adjoining county in automobiles, hanged and shot. The photograph was taken on the spot and a copy sent to a prominent white man in a neighboring city. His colored servant took it while he was at lunch, handed it to a CRISIS agent, who had it quickly copied. The original was then returned and the copy sent to us. It was a little dim and has been slightly retouched. Otherwise it is absolutely authentic.

These men were killed for defending themselves from "arrest." The arresting mob was led by a sheriff. The sheriff was killed. What was the real cause back of this wholesale lynching and back of the lynching of six Negroes in Early County, December 30th?

The answer is clear: Peonage. Slavery under another name; the



THE LYNCHING IN LEE COUNTY, GA., JAN. 20, 1916

(From an actual photograph)