

## The Montgomery County Outrage.

Mrs. James Tschiffely, of Darnestown, Montgomery county, Md., was horribly outraged, last Saturday night, by a colored man named John Diggs, of Baltimore, who had been employed on the farm as a harvest hand. Mr. Tschiffely was away from home, on business, and about ten o'clock at night, while Mrs. Tschiffely was seated alone in her house, the negro seized her and after beating her with the arm of a chair compelled her to remain with him all night. At daylight Diggs left, and the unfortunate lady made her way into the yard, where she was found in an insensible condition. Her injuries are very severe, and although she may recover, she will probably lose the sight of one eye.

Search was at once made for the colored man, and he was captured, on Monday night, at Mechanicsville, twenty miles from Rockville. He was safely lodged in Rockville jail. About three o'clock Tuesday morning, a crowd of one hundred and fifty men marched to the jail, broke it open, overpowered the Sheriff and his deputies and took Diggs out. He was hurried to a tree, and a rope was placed about his neck. He did not deny having committed the outrage, but protested that he had used no violence. When urged to tell the whole truth he burst out in a series of violent oaths. A prayer was made by one of the hanging party, but it had no effect upon the negro, he was drawn up with a curse upon his lips. A coroner's jury rendered a verdict of "death by violence committed by parties unknown."

No one need regret the summary mode in which justice has been meted out in this case. While a general resort to Lynch law would be a dreadful thing, yet there are some crimes the punishment of which a community will take into its own hands, rather than await the slow course of justice in the courts, with the risk of an escape of the criminal through the technicalities of the law. Although it may be urged that sudden retribution of this kind does not seem to deter others from the commission of like crimes, there is a sense of relief in a community when such men are taken away. The *Baltimore Sun* sensibly points out that greater precaution in preventing such outrages would be better than Lynch law applied afterwards. It says:

"When punishment fails to deter, an increase of precaution becomes the part of prudence. When burglaries are common, the prudent housekeeper does not simply rely upon the certainty that the criminals when caught will be sent to the penitentiary. He strengthens his bolts and bars, and prepares to give the nocturnal thief a warm reception if he should chance to enter. We cannot suggest too strongly the necessity of similar precaution in lonely and exposed neighborhoods, where, if possible, females should not be left alone without proper company or protection, and it may not be amiss to have an eye to means of self-defence, if occasion should unhappily require. A pistol in the hands of a weak girl, if she knows how and has the courage to use it, is as effectual for the protection of her life or honor as in the hand of the strongest man. Self-defence is not the exclusive privilege of the stronger sex, and there is no reason why in the country, remote from neighbors and from passers-by, women should not be taught how to protect themselves in the absence of their male protectors. Even a faithful mastiff has been found an effectual protection under similar circumstances. One such ruffian as the colored man Diggs foiled and killed in his brutal attempt would be a more salutary warning than half a dozen lynchings, or even legal executions, for the accomplished crime."