

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LYNCING.

The lynching at Upper Marlboro' of a prisoner in jail on a charge of barn-burning is a most discreditable incident, and one which the thoughtful and law-abiding people of Prince George's county will, no doubt, deplore and strongly discountenance. The crime of which the victim of mob violence was accused, and which he is said to have confessed, was a heinous one, though it was instigated by the fact that his own father's house had been burned by a band of unknown men. Although the parties whose property he destroyed are not shown to have been concerned in any way in the destruction of the Vermillion house, the prisoner seemed to have regarded his act as one of reprisal. It is claimed, on the other hand, that he had threatened the lives of persons in the neighborhood and was known to be a desperate man, who would, probably, if he ever secured an opportunity, have put his threats into execution. He was, however, securely ironed in jail, and there was no reason to apprehend that he would escape the legal penalty of his crime. There is consequently not even the excuse ordinarily advanced in behalf of lynch law of a probability that adequate justice would fail to be meted out by the courts. The lynching of Vermillion, in whatever aspect it is viewed, was an indefensible resort to brute force by a mob in contempt of all law and order, and should be searchingly inquired into and punished by the proper authorities. Such lawless acts bring discredit not only upon the community in which they occur, but upon the people of the entire State, while at the same time tending to weaken popular confidence in the orderly administration of justice, upon which alone the public should rely for the punishment of offenders. Vermillion is said to have been a notorious law-breaker, but the men who hung him have committed an act more flagrant than any of which he was accused.