

Letters From Eagle Readers

Governor Ritchie Protests a Recent Eagle Editorial Editor Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

On account of absence from Maryland the editorial in your issue of Tuesday, Dec. 8, entitled "Mr. Ritchie and the Negroes," was not called to my attention in time for me to write you in regard to it until today. Perhaps it is too late now for the statements contained in this editorial to be corrected, but they are so completely contrary to the facts that at least I can inform you of them so that you may know the injustice which you have unintentionally done.

Your editorial rests on the assertion that I had refused protection to a certain lawyer who was attorney for a Negro accused of murder, and that this refusal has been followed by a lynching. The facts are that as soon as I heard that the lawyer in question had been molested I got in immediate communication with the Judge and the State's Attorney of the Circuit, who, in their turn, conferred with the Mayor and Chief of Police of the town, and informed me that the local authorities were able to handle any situation of the same kind which might recur, and that they would let me know in the event that any assistance from me would be needed. I accepted these assurances from the local authorities. As a matter of fact the attorney did not go back to the county, so that there was no repetition of the trouble.

So far as subsequent developments in this particular case and in the subsequent lynching case are concerned, your editorial was so completely in error that the Baltimore Sun, on Dec. 11, published an editorial in reply to it, and outlining the steps I had actually taken in regard to both cases. I enclose you a copy of this editorial, and also a copy of my statement issued on Dec. 5 and referred to in the editorial of the Baltimore Sun.

It would not be appropriate at this stage for me to go into greater detail beyond saying that as a result of investigations made under my direction the Attorney General of the State, also under my direction, is at present in Salisbury performing the duties which the situation calls for.

What you evidently did was to assume the correctness of the statements made in a telegram sent me on Dec. 5 by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This association obviously had not the slightest knowledge of what had been or what was being done, but if the Baltimore Sun is not on your exchange list, certainly it is available to you and it does seem to me that you should have consulted its files before relying upon the statements of this association or that at least you should have taken some steps to ascertain their reliability. Had you done so you would have readily ascertained all of the facts reviewed in the Baltimore Sun's editorial of Dec. 11, including the statement I issued on Dec. 5, which was published in the Baltimore Sun and many other papers on Dec. 6, two days prior to the publication of your editorial.

I might add that I have received communications commend-

ing my action in the premises from the Pennsylvania State Negro Council and from a large Negro organization in Chicago. At least these show that the facts were well known and could have been readily ascertained by you.

ALBERT C. RITCHIE,
Governor of Maryland.
Annapolis, Md., Dec. 14, 1931.