

THE LYNCHING OF PRICE.

The finale in the Price-Dean tragedy, which has engrossed public attention in this county for the past three months, was the hanging of Price Tuesday night by a mob of masked men. The crime for which so fearful a penalty has been paid was one of extreme atrocity and richly merited the most extreme punishment known to the law, and doubtless would have received it after all the quibbles of the law had been exhausted in its postponement. Whilst there was not the shadow of a doubt as to the young man's guilt, his confessions, with corroborating circumstances to sustain them, having fully established that fact, and the punishment only that decreed by the court to be administered in a lawful way; nevertheless, this resort to unlawful methods cannot but be deplored by all right-minded citizens. The participants have been collectively guilty of a serious crime for which each individual is legally responsible, and in cooler moments they will fully realize its enormity and, if no other punishment than an accusing conscience be theirs, each and all will unavailingly regret their part in it. We do not condone a thing of this sort. We have always advised against it. But if ever there was a case with mitigating circumstances—when the law seemed unequal to the pressing demands of justice—the one under discussion is its parallel. With most convincing proof of the perpetrator of the crime while he was yet upon the scene of it—whilst the anguish of kindred of the murdered girl was yet at its full—the natural feelings for revenge were put aside and the man given into the hands of the law. The intention was clearly evident to bide the time required by the law to drag its slow length along, and await the execution of the sentence pronounced, after trial before as impartial a court as ever sat upon the bench. Only when the judgment of that court had been arrested almost on the eve of the execution that popular indignation began to reassert itself. And when to those not versed in legal practice it seemed not improbable that the ends of justice might be finally defeated altogether by the reprieve which had been granted pending the appeal to a higher court, and the subsequent efforts of indomitable counsel, endurance reached its limit and the people determined to take the matter in their own hands. The quiet, determined and methodical movements of the lynchers, as reported, did not indicate the hastily gathered and angry mob, but a well-organized body with a settled purpose in view, from whom the officers of the law, when it became known to them that a lynching was imminent, were powerless to protect the prisoner. When the terrible job had been completed the mob dispersed as quietly as it had gathered, leaving the lifeless body of the victim, out of which the life had been strangled, suspended not two feet from the ground. It is a bad piece of business, a terribly bad piece of business with a host of inevitable sequences of no pleasant character. By it an additional grief has been heaped upon the parents of the victim. They were in no way responsible for the deed and their efforts to save their son from the penalty of his crime were the promptings of nature, and sympathy for them is as general as the regret at its immediate cause.