

## Atlanta and Its Warnings

THE Richmond *Times-Dispatch* says that "the negroes of the entire South have a terrible warning from Atlanta, and if they value their lives they will give it heed." The Baltimore *News* takes a different view, holding that "Georgia's only method of minimizing her disgrace is the prompt punishment of the men responsible." The Grand Jury of Fulton County, Georgia, in which Atlanta is, finds the Atlanta *News* chiefly responsible, both because of its editorial utterances and of its sensational presentation of the criminal news. We hope the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* has before this transferred some of its warnings from the negroes of the South, who were not at Atlanta on the night of the riot, to the Atlanta *News*, that was there and has been presented by the Grand Jury as "deserving of the severest condemnation."

To hold all the negroes of the South responsible for crimes which only a small proportion of them ever attempt is not only unjust but very mischievous in that it may tend to make half-way decent negroes feel that if they are to be credited with crimes anyway, they might as well attempt the crimes. To kill the innocent is no way to make guilt unpopular. On the contrary, it gives the innocent and the

guilty a common cause and blurs the distinction between them.

The Atlanta riots were of no value at all as a warning to bad negroes, but by stirring up race hatred increased the danger to white women. The only profit that can be got out of them is to make them an effectual warning to newspapers and fire-eaters not to stir up race strife and to mobs not to murder. Happily the disposition is strong in Atlanta to make them profitable in that way. We read with satisfaction of the arrest of mob leaders and promise of acute discomfort for them, and of the adjustment of the best brains in Atlanta to the prevention of such outbreaks in future.

Atlanta is the most modern city in the South, and the one least like a Southern city. They tell us that its negro-hunting mob was not a typical Southern mob, but more like the negro-baiting mobs of Ohio and Illinois, and that industrial rivalries and jealousies had much to do with its temper.