

BRUCE DEFENDS EASTERN SHORE AGAINST "PIQUED PROFESSOR"

William Cabell Bruce, former United State Senator, last night in a letter to the editor of The Sun, took up the cudgels for the Eastern Shore against the criticisms leveled in a recent report by Dr. Broadus Mitchell, associate professor of political economy at the Johns Hopkins University, on the lynching of Matthew Williams at Salisbury.

Dr. Mitchell's report on an inquiry on behalf of the Commission on Race Relations of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America was made public recently. It expressed the opinion that a contributing factor to the lynching was "geographical isolation resulting in rather backward conditions."

To this phase of the report Mr. Bruce took vigorous exception, citing his intimate acquaintance with the Eastern Shore people through canvassing the section in political campaigns, and denying that the Shore is, as Professor Mitchell asserted, backward in its mental and spiritual development.

Text Of Letter

In his letter, former Senator Bruce said:

"I am sure that no one who knows me would impute to me the least approval of lynching, under any circumstances, however exasperating, and my defeat, when I was a candidate for re-election to the United States Senate in 1928, was, of course, largely due to the rejection by thousands of Democratic voters on the Eastern Shore, of my outspoken convictions relating to prohibition and sectarian intolerance.

"But, having thrice canvassed every part of the Eastern Shore, as a candidate for a seat in the United States Senate, and having been brought into intimate contact with its people, I wish to deny, if my personal testimony is worth anything, that the Eastern Shore is, as Prof. Broadus Mitchell affirms, 'backward' in its mental and spiritual development."

"From the recent attacks on the

character of our Eastern Shore brothers one might suppose that lynching is peculiar to the Eastern Shore. The fact is that it has occurred over and over again in many States of the Union whenever the incitement to it has been sufficiently intense and widespread to provoke it.

"Some years ago a brute who had outraged a woman near my home at Ruxton, in Baltimore county, was lynched by her infuriated neighbors. My recollection is that this brute was dragged from the Towson jail by the lynchers and that no legal punishment was ever inflicted upon any one of them.

"This is but a single illustration that I might employ for the purpose of reminding the people of the Western Shore of Maryland that there has been lynching on both sides of the Chesapeake. Indeed, I might go further north than Maryland and recall another brute who some years ago was lynched at Port Jervis, on the Hudson river, in the full sight of a large concourse of human beings, not one of whom apparently witnessed the lynching.

Favors "Stern Retribution"

"God forbid that even such crimes as those which wrought frenzy in the brain of that Salisbury uprising—the crime of the wild beast, Euel Lee, who wiped out, at one fell stroke, the lives of a worthy wedded pair and their two innocent young daughters, because of a disagreement over a dollar—the crime of the other wild beast who butchered his employer, a prominent and useful citizen of Salisbury, because he thought that he should receive for his services more than fifteen cents an hour—should hurry me into an attempt to justify the killing, much less the burning, of the criminal last mentioned, Matthew Williams.

"Close as every group of American citizens are to the representative agencies of their government, and

passionately impelled as they may be, at time to reclaim the authority that they have delegated to courts of justice they have no right, when they lynch, to expect anything but stern retribution at the hands of the law.

It is easy to see where lynching begins, but not so easy to see where, if unchecked, it would stop; but the indefensibility of lynching furnishes no just reason why, when a lynching occurs in a single community on the Eastern Shore, the entire population of that extensive region should be defamed as mentally and spiritually backward. Edmund Burke did not know how to frame an indictment against an entire people; apparently, Dr. Mitchell does, though our own flesh and blood.

Warns Of Wider Gulf

"The mental and spiritual backwardness of the Eastern Shore is supposed by him to be attributable to geographical isolation, due to the interposition of the Chesapeake Bay between the Eastern and Western Shores of Maryland, but, when it is remembered how close the Eastern Shore is to the doors of two of the greatest cities in the world, Philadelphia and New York, it is hard to believe that the loss of mental stimulus and spiritual exaltation, which the Eastern Shore suffers from not being nearer to such an abode of intellectual power and seraphic sinlessness, as Baltimore, can be quite so pronounced as Dr. Mitchell seems to think.

"At any rate, the situation is certainly not likely to be mitigated, in a social, political or economic sense, by assailing the mental and spiritual character of the whole people of the Eastern Shore, converting the Eastern and Western Shores of Maryland into warring camps, and making the Chesapeake Bay even wider than it now is.

Recalls English Descent

"I do not agree with the convictions of the Eastern Shore about prohibition, but of these convictions, inspired by the grave abuses which undeniably