

Leo Frank An Innocent Man Declares Geraldine Farrar After Visit to Tower Cell



MISS GERALDINE FARRAR
In the role which she plays tonight in "Madame Sans-Gené." She declares Frank is an innocent man.

Opera Singer Elated Upon Hearing That Mr. and Mrs. Leo Frank Became Engaged After Hearing Her Sing Several Years Ago.

Geraldine Farrar, grand opera's fairest songbird, laden with an armful of flowers, visited the cell of Leo Frank Thursday and learned that it was largely the influence of her romantic arias one night years ago, when she made her first appearance in Atlanta, that prompted the engagement of Frank to his wife.

One of her first acts upon emerging from the jail after spending several hours with the doomed man was the dispatching of a 130-word telegram to a New York newspaper and friends in that city proclaiming her belief in the man's innocence. She was vividly impressed, and last night told a reporter for The Constitution that Frank's personality was, without doubt, the most remarkable she had ever encountered.

IMPRESSED BY PERSONALITY.

"His faith and spirit are wonderful," she exclaimed, as she recalled impressions recorded upon her visit to the Tower. "I have never seen a man with such a personality. One might hear everything that could possibly be considered a detriment to his case, but to sit and talk with him would convince even the most callous of his innocence."

Ever since the trial of Leo Frank, the operatic star has kept in close touch with it through the newspapers and magazines. She stated that she had made a particular study of the case, owing to the widespread attention it commands and to the interesting psychological elements involved.

"One of the great anticipations of my journey south this season," she said, "was a proposed visit to Leo Frank. I had been planning it for months.

"When I first entered the jail, I grew sick at heart. My courage faltered, and I feared, for the time being, that I would not be able to stand the test. As long as I live, I will never forget my feelings as I stepped out of the elevator into the corridor. I had a sensation of nausea, and I wanted to turn back; but my anxiety to see the man in whose behalf I had already formed such a firm belief of innocence, spurred me on.

FORGETS ENVIRONMENT.

"I had hardly entered his cell before the disheartening influence of the dark place left me. The man was a most engaging personality. One forgets the circumstances, the environments, even the crime with which he is accused, when he speaks.

"True, there is nothing about his outward appearance to be so impressive. It is his intellect that counts. You would, perhaps, hardly notice him in a crowd, but when he speaks, you sit and listen. I strove as hard as I could to look upon him from a completely unprejudiced standpoint, but all the while, my conviction of his innocence grew upon me, and I finally resigned myself to total faith in him.

"There is poignant pathos in the grief of his wife. She was present when I talked with him, and her hand went through the bars to rest in his all the while we chatted. Deep down in her heart there is sorrow untold, but when he takes hold of her fingers and

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LEO FRANK INNOCENT, IS BELIEF OF FARRAR

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glances into her eyes, a smile brightens her face that is supremely eloquent.

"The torture this poor woman has withstood would have driven any ordinary soul to distraction. She loves him intensely. I can see that plainly. To my dying day, I shall never forget the scene at that jail.

"I learned most of it from her own lips, and divined the rest, that Mrs. Frank has worked and slaved untiringly to spare her husband. I don't think Leo Frank would bear up with such fortitude if it were not for her constancy.

SCENE

THRILLED.

"I sat there enthralled by the example of their love. There sat the man, one of the greatest personalities it has been my pleasure to observe, lingering in the shadow of death, being idolized by a worthy woman even more intensely than on their bridal week. It thrilled me. I forgot that I was in a jail.

"Frank smiles when you speak of death to him. 'I won't die on the gallows,' he told me when I asked him if he thought that nothing would intervene with the court's decree. 'Either God or the people of Georgia will save me.'

"The man is even now studying for his future. He has no more idea of dying than I have. He has every confidence that something will intervene. I would have been broken, a maniac, long before now. But Frank—well, he knows he's innocent, and he has the unbounded faith that is born of innocence.

"I was elated—so elated that I could scarcely speak—when he told me that my singing on the night he and his wife became engaged had had much to do with their engagement; had thrilled them into the mood that impelled him to ask her to be his wife.

WILL VISIT

FRANK AGAIN.

"Before I leave I want to visit him again. I will never be content until I do."

Miss Farrar's telegram, sent to New York to her friends who have taken an interest in the case, is as follows:

"I have just enjoyed the privilege of an hour's conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Leo Frank. Nobody who comes in contact with him can fail to be impressed by his unusual personality, his faith, his hopeful attitude and absolute belief that the people of Georgia will eventually vindicate his honor.

"My opinion of his innocence is strengthened by the faith he radiates, supplemented by the tenderness and confidence he aspires in his devoted wife. By singular coincidence he told me he became engaged to Mrs. Frank the night they attended my first appearance here in Atlanta seven years ago, and that they were especially pleased that I should have sought this meeting.

"I carried away with me the pleasurable impression of having met an unusual soul. It seems to me he must and will be cleared."

One of these messages was directed to Mr. Ochs, of The New York Times, a personal friend of the celebrated singer.

Did Not Offer Help.

Reports that Miss Farrar had offered to aid Frank in his fight for freedom or to secure executive clemency were denied last night by Frank himself. The condemned man said that Miss Farrar had visited him in his cell, had expressed sympathy for him and displayed vivid interest in his case.

"Miss Farrar was here only a short time," said Frank. "We discussed music, of which I am very fond. Moreover, I had visited some of the places in Europe where she had appeared and the discussion of those visits was of deep interest to both of us.

"Miss Farrar came simply to express her interest and sympathy."