

Humor--Pathos--Tragedy In the Quickly Changing Kaleid-oscope of the Frank Trial

By Britt Craig.
The Leo Frank trial is a clearinghouse of human emotions. If you don't know what a clearinghouse of human emotions is, go into the courtroom and sit awhile. That is, if you can get in. A good many haven't been able to. Yet, on the other hand, a good many have.

They say that humor and pathos go hand in hand. Down there at Pryor and Hunter streets, right across from the spot where the magnificent new temple of justice is mounting higher and higher every day, they go with locked arms. Tragedy walks between in what little space is left.

A person with just a little imagination and an ordinary hearing apparatus can sit in the courtroom and enjoy a performance that includes farce, comedy and tragedy and most anything else that is included in the list of human feelings.

It's a pity the place isn't large enough to accommodate everybody.

A Self-Appointed "Sob" Sister.

A slight little woman, as pretty as a picture, came into the courtroom the other day at an afternoon session. She carried a heavy notebook under her arm and had to push her way as she wedged in between one man here and another there.

She eventually reached the press table. A number of reporters were bumming cigarettes from Plennie Miner and sending notes to Chief Lanford, jokingly asking if he would deny the report that he had died that morning. There was an empty seat, and therein she reposed herself and notebook with an air of "Well, here I am, thank goodness."

A reporter who had an eye for beauty as well as an insatiable curiosity, quired:

"What paper are you with?"
"I'm not on any paper, thank you. I'm a sob-sister."
"A what!"
"Oh, a sob-sister. Don't you know what they are?"
"Yes, but they work on papers like other ordinary reporters."
"I'm a free-lance."
"What is the job of sob-sisters?"
"They write stories with tears in 'em and make folks cry and weep and pull at their heart strings."
The press table grouped their heads and said that no sob-sister who ever admitted she was a sob-sister over was a sob-sister, ever had been or ever would be. So, they concluded that she was a rank impostor, make no difference how pretty she was, or how willing she was to admit that she belonged to somebody's sob-squad.
"We don't allow any free-lances at this table," said Deputy Sheriff Minor.
"If you're on no particular paper, you'll have to move."
"Very well, then," she answered.
"If it'll suit you, I'm on the Fulton County Daily Report."
She sat.

Attorney Moore in Court.

Attorney John Moore, who, for the past two biggest murder trials of the last years has been a figure as important and conspicuous as the defendant, seems to find it impossible to keep away from the biggest criminal case of the year.

At the Friday morning session he appeared at the Frank trial, smiling and nodding to acquaintances all over the courtroom. While the heated argument between Solicitor Dorsey and counsel for the defense was under way, he climbed to the bench and

talked interestedly for several moments with Judge Roan.

Mr. Moore has made repeated and constant denial that he is in any manner associated with the defense in the Frank case. The rumor has been in circulation for some time, however, that he is a silent figure in movements of the defense.

Reserve Seats DuLuxe.

There are places and places from which one may be able to witness a big trial, but the back gallery of a livery stable with only a banister railing for a seat is a point of vantage hitherto unheard of.

But many hitherto unheard of things have happened in the Frank trial.

At the Friday morning session someone happened to glance through the window directly behind the witness box. A few feet beyond, just across an alley, a long gallery of an adjoining livery stable was filled with men and women and girls. Many sat on the banister railing, while others reposed on buggies and wagons and vehicle of all sorts.

A woman who was pretty enough to have wiled her way past the door-keeper of an executive session of the board of education, stood in the doorway to the kitchen of a Greek restaurant.

All these spectators were able to hear the entire examination of witnesses and most of the arguments.

Anent Nervousness.

It was an interesting argument that followed Solicitor Dorsey's objection to Reuben Arnold's query put to M. B. Darley, regarding the nervous demeanor of others who were with Frank at the pencil factor on the morning of the body's discovery.

Attorney Arnold had asked Darley, after Darley had stated that Frank was obviously nervous and trembling. If all others around the building were similarly affected.

"I object," interposed the solicitor, and the fireworks began.

"Some men," said Mr. Arnold, "display nervousness and some do not. It is all according to temperament. Some men are able to face a hailstorm of bullets while men drop, bloody and disfigured, all about them. Yet, there are plenty of us who quail at the sight of a corpse, and are completely unstrung at such a spectacle.

"The question of nervous deportment should have never been injected into this case. Some of the biggest rascals on earth can sit stolidly and never tremor, while a man of undisputed honesty will quake and tremble on examination."

The solicitor, after citing a ruling in the famous Woolfolk case, said briefly:

"It is absurd to throw out a drag-net and attempt to rope in everybody's temperament on the day of the tragedy—utterly absurd."
He was sustained.

Deputies as Censors.

The duties of a censor, which, heretofore, has been confined to moving pictures and bald-head-row stage performances, now apply to Atlanta's Jurymen. Deputy Sheriff Plennie Minor, or whoever is deputizing the jury in the Frank case, has been assigned by Judge Roan to censor whatever mail the jurors desire to read during course of the case.

Not only that, but he has been ordered to censor the jury's literature. Friday afternoon at the close of the Friday session Judge Roan gave the jurymen permission to read magazines

and periodicals which the sheriff—or his deputy, or whoever is concerned in the matter—decided was fit reading matter.

Speculation is rife—whatever that happens to mean—over the kind of literature a sheriff or his deputy will select for a jury.

It will, also, no doubt, be a very delicate job for the sheriff, or his deputy, to peruse some of the mail of the jurors.

Maybe, though, the situation can be solved, as has already been suggested, by swearing the deputy or the sheriff or whoever it is who has the censoring business on his hands to utter secrecy. Things are likely to develop—if not likely, inable—which needs secrecy, utter secrecy.

Lanford and the Press Stand.

Chief Newport A. Lanford, of the detective department of police headquarters, has been an interesting figure in the Frank trial. Every day he sits just behind the table occupied by the state.

It was under his direction that much of the important evidence was gathered which is being produced by the solicitor. He was associated with the third degree and examinations to which Frank was subjected and those under which Jim Conley was put.

He is a large, striking looking man, very big and heavy and wears a moustache closely cropped, which is beginning to show gray at the edges. He is a keen observer of the proceedings, overlooks nothing and frequently makes suggestions to the solicitor.

During lulls in the trial he makes the occupants of the press table butts for his pointed jokes. He denies that the defense is planning to put him on the stand. When asked to verify the report that the defense would use him he said:

"They'll quickly discover that they are resting under a decidedly grave misapprehension of the testimony I could give—it would be very hurtful to them."

A Touch of Tragedy.

The grim story of Mary Phagan's tragic end was brought forcibly to the attention of a crowded courtroom Friday afternoon when Dr. Roy F. Harris, state chemist, told on the stand of exhuming the body of Mary Phagan and of making minute examination of her corpse.

With a precision of the medical expert, he calmly related the story of the discolored eye, the wounds on the body and the gash in the head. He told of opening the skull to ascertain whether or not the blow had been sufficient to break, and of examining the brain for hemorrhage.

There was not a sound from the hundreds, straining eyes and ears for fear one tiny detail would be lost. The room was hushed and stifling, and only the noise of the street was to be heard blending with the ceaseless buzzing of the ozonators and the electric fans. It was the most thrilling testimony of the day, and during its course many women arose and left their seats, hiding their faces and the crimson that spread to the cheeks with newspapers.

"There was a deep impression in the throat," said the medical expert. "It was made by a stout cord or twine. It was an eighth of an inch deep and fully that wide. Death, unquestionably, was from strangulation."

When the solicitor arose, holding to view the wrapping cord which had

been found around the neck of the body, and said:

"Could it have been inflicted by a cord this size?" There were many shudders, especially from the girls and women.

As the witness gave his answer, his features whitened. He wavered and clutched the arms of the chair for support. He had almost collapsed, and could not resume his statement because of illness with which he had been confined to bed for three previous days.