

OBSERVATIONS

BY SARAH B. HARRIS

Anna Eva Fay

An old man named Noah Long was thrown into the Kaw river at Argentine, Kansas, about the first of February and drowned. Anna Eva Fay was making the town a visit and she was asked to locate the body. Her occult powers, in spite of the many exposures of the machinery by which she accomplishes her remarkable guesses, are still believed in by the people who announce that they do not believe in religion or in anything else that has not been demonstrated according to their own formulas. Consequently they appealed to Anna Eva Fay, who answers questions sitting in the middle of the stage with a sheet thrown over her body and head, which also conceals a tube leading from the under part of the stage to her ear, to locate the body of the old man who had been murdered.

She was told that a girl had confessed that she saw two men throw the old man into the river from the bridge. She demanded to be taken to the bridge and after looking over the spot, she advised the searchers to look under a sand-scow that was moored a short distance from the bridge. The awe-struck laborers followed her advice and found the body of the old man caught in the jetsam lodged against the obstructing sand-scow.

When the body of the poor stone-mason was brought to light the conviction that Anna Eva Fay possessed supernatural powers spread and was confirmed.

The scoffers were chagrined and the show played to large houses. Miss Fay's occultism supports two large, useless men, her husband and her son. They claim the box-office receipts.

Nothing demoralizes a man so thoroughly and quickly as to be supported by a woman. Nothing makes a woman so cynical and disgusted as to be obliged to support two able-bodied men. Whether she does it by deceiving an audience which wishes to be deceived or by teaching or washing, it does not matter; the disintegrating, demoralizing effect upon the men and upon the woman who supports them is the same.

Miss Fay is cynical. Off the stage she does not claim to know everything and if the interviewer refers to her advertised powers she looks disgusted and changes the subject. In her youth she was frank and a preternaturally acute child. Upon temperaments like hers detective stories are founded. She comprehends character and its manifestations. Her answers to questions are founded upon her ability to gather up the clues which the questioners themselves furnish her and consider them by the light of a singularly unclouded intellect and an experience that teaches her that the answers to most puzzles are obtained by the man who keeps his eyes open and allows no preconceived theories to blind him to that which is just under his nose. It was by the operation of these faculties and no others that she discovered the old man's body.

The Kansas City Star says: "Yesterday Anna Eva Fay began the preliminary work of a systematic search for the body, and while the circumstances tend to show that the discovery was due wholly to accident, yet there are plenty of people who are willing to give the mind reader some of the credit. Miss Fay, standing on the bridge shivering with cold yesterday, looked into the water where the body was said to have been thrown. 'If I were looking for the body I think I would have those boats moved,' she remarked, as she turned to enter the carriage. 'I will come back in the morning and have it done, for I think if the body is in the river, it is lodged there.'"

She did not say that she could see the body beneath the ice, where it was actually lodged, but she observed the

current and knew from aforesaid how the jetsam in a sluggish current piles up against a broad obstacle like a scow. The men who were searching for the body might have found it without Miss Fay's assistance, but men are not in the habit of thinking. Unlike Miss Fay they earn their living by following a routine, and an emergency finds them unprepared and panicky. It is not surprising that thinking seems to most men like a supernatural, mysterious process. They do so little of it that when a sharp-eyed little body like Miss Fay begins to think and to offer them the results, they are as awe-struck as though they saw a burning bush that was not consumed or heard a disembodied voice, or saw a ghost. The occasional Napoleon is not absolutely great, but in comparison with the gabies who are his fellow citizens, he is almost a god.

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The Newspapers and the Primaries

The total defeat of the council gang which has been trying to administer the affairs of the city without regard to the interests of the city and in behalf of the gas company is due primarily to the efforts of the editors of the Journal assisted by the editors of the Courier.

It is conventional and customary to elect councilmen to two terms. If it had not been for the publicity given to the schemes and conduct of the council gang, the records of each councilman printed in full with explanatory notes in the shape of editorial comment in the newspapers, there is no doubt that the councilmen who were candidates for the second term would have been re-elected. Over and over again the Journal has printed the names of the members of the gang, so that there was not a voter in the city who did not know why it was inexpedient to re-elect Councilmen Albers, Bacon, Lawlor, Fryer, Malone, Erlenborn, Pentzer, Stewart and Thompson.

The Bacon attempt to divert fifty dollars of city taxes into his son's pocket was abetted by the votes of the gang and was defeated by the veto of the mayor. The sum is a small one but it illustrates the fact that the members of the gang did not consider that they were elected to represent the interests of the city but to trade favors with each other and to divide up as nearly even as possible. The effect of the constant newspaper references to this particular episode in which Mr. Bacon was principal and the other members of the gang were accessories before and after the act, was reflected in the vote of the Fourth ward. Out of 388 votes Mr. Bacon received 72.

Not in one edition or two, not spasmodically or with favor to this interest or that, have the republican papers of Lincoln exposed the schemes of the gang and the attempts of Mark and George Woods to regain municipal influence. Every edition of the papers has informed the subscribers of the schemes of the councilmen against the city and the mayor, and every impartial, disinterested, honest republican who reads the papers made up his mind to vote against the men who were trying to destroy the prosperity of the water department and to deliver the council into the control of the gas company.

It is frequently urged against our kind of democracy that it is a failure because owing to the strength of the ward machine the cities of the United States are controlled by the lowest, not necessarily the most ignorant, but the most unscrupulous men. It is true there is a constant effort at control on the part of men who have found that it pays to obtain an influence over councilmen and city officials to be used for corporations, but so long as it pays a newspaper to work for the public

against a part of the public their schemes will eventually be futile. Exposure and defeat is the final portion of all such men as Croker. He was the shrewdest politician and most accomplished engineer in this country and a protracted term of power made him feel secure. But he was defeated and has retired to live out the balance of his days on his ill-gotten capital. It is not likely then that there are any small-bore politicians in Lincoln able to defeat the tendencies of evolution actively at work in American politics.

President Roosevelt prescribes publicity for the evils incident to trusts. Publicity is the one disinfectant that the corrupt politician dreads above all others. Councilman Bacon did not squirm until the newspapers printed his O. K. of his son's bill to the city of seventy-five dollars for ten days' clerical work. As Mark Twain says, the wickedness is being found out. The municipal function performed by the papers is rarely recognized and never rewarded by anything but the accomplishment of the general good. In the patient, never-omitted, daily service performed by the city papers, whose effects are illustrated by the primaries held last week, the people have an example of the value of publicity applied to city administration. Of course the publicity is ineffectual unless it appeals to the conscience and the unpartisan reasoning of a great people. The seventy-two votes received by Councilman Bacon in the Fourth ward should be a warning to all future councilmen who contemplate a raid on the city for the benefit of their families, of the certainty of discovery, punishment and disgrace. For a man cannot be disgraced, no matter how flagrant the offense he has committed, until it has been made public. Disgrace follows upon the announcement of a crime and is not inherent in its commission. This is where the newspapers come in. Fear of publicity restrains many a greedy councilman or other city official, who is without self-respect, whose inner light has been so long put out that his vision is adjusted to darkness, but who, nevertheless, has an intellectual conception of the effect of light upon other people and of its reflex effect upon himself.

The function of reporting the diabolical schemes of corrupt officials is not an agreeable one. It is much more comfortable when we meet our fellow-men and their wives and daughters to be able to maintain the social fiction that the head of the house is impeccable, an upright citizen and all that the head of the house should be. The editors who deliberately repudiate the fiction and prove that their neighbor is a highway robber can not expect to be invited to any more Kensingtons in the neighborhood. In deciding to expose the machinations of their neighbors they renounce the legitimate desire to be invited to "pour" or to "dip" at receptions. They finally renounce these social decorations and distinctions when they put on the editorial veil. The ceremony should be accompanied by the dramatic renunciations adopted by the Catholic church on the admission of sisters to conventual life. For the embarrassments of an editor who tries conscientiously to perform the duties of his position are many and real. As to rewards, there are none this side the Judgment. That is one reason why it is occasionally permissible for an editor to call the attention of the public to his own and to other editors' public services.

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A New Member

The "Won't Perform Club" which was organized a short time ago meets a long-felt want. Mrs. Stoutenborough, one of the best speakers in Nebraska, writes that she almost believes that the organizer of the club has seen her in the solitude of her attic to which she is accustomed to flee after a committee has wrenched a promise from her to speak, or sing, or pray. Although Mrs. Stoutenborough does easily and gracefully what the rest of us do awkwardly and to no purpose, she is human, she is a housekeeper and

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The Maurice Grau Opera Company gave a special performance in honor of Prince Henry at the Metropolitan opera house in New York city on the evening of February 25. In this program each of the prima donnas and all the great tenors took part. The schedule of prices charged was as follows:

Orchestra chairs, \$30.00; Dress Circle, \$15.00; First rows Balcony, \$12.50; Rear rows Balcony, \$10.00, and standing room, \$5.00.

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