

THE LOBBY KING'S BLUFF.

"ED" PHELPS'S ABSURD EXPLANATION ABOUT THAT AGREEMENT TO BRIBE.

He Was Trying to Catch "Nellie Bly" At the Time—Why, Oh! Why, Then, Did He Give Written Memoranda and Hang About the St. James Hotel?—Talk of a Legislative Investigation—Why Not a Grand Jury Indictment in This County?—Comments in This City and Albany.

The remarkable narrative that Nellie Bly presented to the readers of THE WORLD yesterday of her visit to the headquarters of Ed Phelps, the "King of the Albany Lobby," and her exposure of how legislation is promoted or destroyed was a startling revelation to the honest citizens of New York. From time to time THE WORLD has heard rumors of an organized lobby at Albany, but tangible proof of its existence has been difficult to secure. To Nellie Bly was entrusted by us means easy task of not only discovering who was at the head of the "third House" but of receiving detailed and exact evidence of how bills are killed or forced through the Legislature. This mission Nellie Bly undertook and carried through with success at every point.

HOW THE LOBBY KING WAS CAUGHT.

Arriving at Albany, Nellie Bly selected at random a bill then pending in committee, and which was directed at the unrestrained sale of patent medicines and "nostrums." Informing herself especially as to the aims and backing of the desirable measure, she sought out the man who was reported to hold the balance of power in the House, although himself not a member of the Legislature. Nellie Bly went directly to his room at the Kenmore Hotel and, without card or introduction, asked if Ed Phelps stood before her. With a smile of pleasure, Mr. Phelps drew his chair closer, as his visitor regarded the object of her call. With growing anticipations of the money there to be in his job, Mr. Phelps listened to Nellie Bly's plausible story of how she was the wife of a wealthy Philadelphia patent-medicine man; how she had run on to New York to place some advertisements, and there had heard for the first time of the bill before the Legislature; how she had hastened to Albany, had heard of the great influence wielded by Mr. Phelps, and was now before him to solicit his aid to have the obnoxious bill killed. When Mr. Phelps began to show some signs of suspicion his visitor quickly met his questions by asking if he really could kill the bill if he wanted to. This seeming doubt on the part of his fair visitor at once roused the pride of Mr. Phelps, and he announced himself proudly as the acknowledged "King of the Lobby." In proof of this creditable assertion the "King" displayed documentary evidence which left no doubt that his business was what he claimed it to be. He exhibited a list of the men whom he controlled, and in a matter of fact way ran over the names, commencing parenthetically upon the case as intimately with which they could be bought. He talked business without reserve and made no disguise of just how much money Miss Bly must pay.

WHAT HE AGREED TO DO.

After all details had been arranged and Mr. Phelps had assured Nellie Bly that he would kill the bill for \$1,000 and his expenses he wrote his name and address on a copy of the bill and agreed to meet his visitor at his room in the Boreal Building in this city. Last Friday Tan Wozniak's representative met the King of the Lobby as he had been appointed, and the first thing Mr. Phelps remarked was that he had killed the bill and would like to have his money—\$1,000 for the six men he had bought and \$50 for "expenses." Mr. Phelps wrote the name of a friend on a slip of paper and asked Miss Bly to make out a check for \$1,500 to that name. This slip Tan Wozniak has, as well as the list of the Committee on Affairs of Cities with Mr. Phelps's annotations as to whom he would buy and whom he could not buy. Nellie Bly arranged to meet the king at the St. James Hotel later, and then left him. Half an hour after her departure a World reporter saw Mr. Phelps and his son punctual to the appointment at the St. James, but Nellie Bly was busy writing her story in THE WORLD Editorial Rooms.

THE LOBBY KING'S AMUSING EXPLANATION.

In answer to the detailed, circumstantial and explicit story of Nellie Bly, Edwin R. Phelps offers the following astonishing explanation:

I have read with some amusement from time to time the remarkable stories got up by you, my dear female confidence correspondent, and I, who must be admitted to be the champion story-teller of the age, have no objection to the attention she has now paid to me, but I do object to her resort to groundless statements that affect other people in her efforts to concoct a sensational romance such as you seem to suppose that your readers believe.

The fact is that I had a visit at my hotel in Albany last Wednesday from the fair Nellie, who came to tell me gravely that she wanted my services to kill a bill relating to quack medicines, then in the Assembly. Naturally I asked the dear girl what she knew about legislation, how she became interested in quack medicines and who sent her to interestedly. On the first question she professed an interestingly, and on the second she pleaded a husband's infidelity, which for her sake I hope will not long be a false pretense, and to the third she objected to say what valued friend had mentioned her name. But as what you call their eagerness to pay me \$4,000 to kill the bill while I did not know your bogus innuendo, I said to her, "If it is as you say, I will go down to New York in my private car, and once there I will have you and your newspaper decoy. My usual course would have been to tell her that I had no business transactions with women and that her husband must call on me if he wanted to lead my fair services. As it was I resolved to lead my visitor on as far as she would go. All my actions were with that object and I intended when it came to the crisis to give her a lesson that would teach her better sense hereafter."

Now, some people seem to think that my conversation is untrue. I met her at her own game and certainly indulged in some tall talking to astonish her. But it is entirely positively untrue. I intend to say that I mentioned the name of a single Assemblyman, not a legislator was named while Nellie was in my room, and as a matter of fact I never talked with any Assemblyman on the Patent Medicine bill, but with two of the members named by a member, and with two of the members named by Nellie. I have no acquaintance whatever. The marks put on the committee list produced by Nellie must have been the work of her own fair hands. The story of the portion of them were made by me, and of a smooth surface and the others on the rough cover of a book is "too thin." No one who wanted to cover up his grossness would be guilty of such a slipshod innuendo. Besides, say I am wrong, and Nellie played her tricks. Besides, say I am wrong, and Nellie played her tricks. Besides, say I am wrong, and Nellie played her tricks. Besides, say I am wrong, and Nellie played her tricks.

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I have been twenty years in business. I make no disguise of my occupations, and I am anxious to receive the same respect for persons who can better afford to pay me than to waste time at Albany. But I never in my life paid her offered a dollar to any Senator or Assemblyman to induce him to sign a certain bill. I signed the memoranda and took down names of some newspapers. I have never known a Legislature in which there were not a sufficient number of members, except when I would a representative measure and to any extent, at Albany or Washington.

EDWIN R. PHELPS, 115 Broadway, New York.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE EXPLANATION.

In view of the foregoing explanation, which is the "King of the Lobby's" own, it is interesting to analyze the foregoing explanation. The explanation of the "King of the Lobby" is a complete and convincing exposure of the "King of the Lobby's" own, it is interesting to analyze the foregoing explanation. The explanation of the "King of the Lobby" is a complete and convincing exposure of the "King of the Lobby's" own, it is interesting to analyze the foregoing explanation.

WHAT THE POLITICIANS SAY.

Among local politicians, who all know of Phelps's notorious exposure of his methods, should certainly be made to suffer for his part in bringing this matter up at the recent meeting. It is not that he has done anything wrong, but he has done it in a very bad way. He has done it in a very bad way. He has done it in a very bad way.

ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL.

Although the "King of the Lobby" is a well-known name, it is not a name to be taken very much to heart. It is a name to be taken very much to heart. It is a name to be taken very much to heart.

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WHAT THE KING HIMSELF SAYS.

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WILL HE BE INDICTED?

The question whether Mr. Ed Phelps had not turned a loose rein to an indictment for bribery was yesterday submitted to several well-known criminal lawyers in this city, and the views of a number of Senators and Assemblymen upon his alleged proceedings were also expressed. The result was a vote of the best authorities on the question of bribery, but was not an indictment. It was a vote of the best authorities on the question of bribery, but was not an indictment.

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