

BOOK ON NOTABLES MAKES LONDON GASP

Anonymous Author's Sketches
of Monarchs and Statesmen
Brings Laughs and Anger.

WILSON AMONG THE QUOTED

Only One of Publishers Knows
Name of Author of "The Whis-
pering Gallery."

By T. B. YBARRA.

Copyright, 1926, by The New York Times Company.
Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, Nov. 19.—Woodrow Wilson, Lady Astor, Walter Hines Page and Mark Twain figure, with European monarchs, statesmen and other world-famous celebrities, in "The Whispering Gallery," a book by an unnamed author, which, published today, is the sensation of the hour here, and is inspiring the question, "Who wrote it?" from thousands of readers who are chuckling with glee, gasping with amazement or quivering with anger as they peruse its pages.

This afternoon, its publishers, the John Lane Company, issued a statement that a clause was expressly inserted in the prepublication agreement with the mysterious author that his name was to be divulged only to one director of the firm and absolutely to nobody else.

Selling Like "Hot Cakes."

Though five Cabinet Ministers, Lords Oxford and Asquith, Lord Balfour, Lord Reading, Lord Cecil and Winston Churchill, have denied statements attributed to them in the book, and though its astoundingly frank statements concerning other famous figures of the present age are arousing furious denunciation in some quarters here, the publishers announce that they have no intention of withdrawing it. The volume is selling like "hot cakes" and excerpts from it are filling entire columns in the newspapers.

It is providing the main topic of conversation throughout London, where all sorts of guesses on the author's identity are being hazarded. He describes himself as a diplomat whose name is a household word in diplomatic circles, though not so well known to the general public. The amazing thing about his book is that it quotes again and again conversations between the author and the celebrities it mentions, including President Wilson, Kaiser Wilhelm, King Edward the Seventh, Emperor Francis Joseph, Cecil Rhodes and Lord Northcliffe. In fact, if the author is to be believed, a small army of the world's most famous men talked intimately to him on the gravest questions of international politics.

Author Genuine, Publishers Say.

Further describing the remarkable circumstances under which the volume row amazing and scandalizing London came to be published, the directors of the John Lane Company said in their statement:

"We took every possible precaution to satisfy ourselves that 'The Whispering Gallery' was a genuine work by a man who held the position which the author claims to have held, that of a diplomat, presumably retired. The book seems to us to ring true and we still honestly believe it was written by a man in a position to tell of the people and matters of which he has written. We do not believe the author could have written the book unless he had lived in the circles in which he claims in his preface, to have moved."

B. W. Willett, Chairman of the John Lane Company, said this afternoon that if the book is a fake it is the biggest bit of cheek he ever came across.

Author's Opinion of Celebrities.

Here are some samples of the thumbnail sketches of celebrities which abound in the book:

Woodrow Wilson—"quickly converted by storm and stress into weak-kneed bully. He must not be judged too harshly for being utterly unfit to grapple with the political brigands on whose side, to his utter consternation he found himself."

Walter Hines Page—"I shouldn't think a single human being in Christendom said less that he would wish to recant from 1914 to 1918 than Walter H. Page."

Lady Astor—"She is a strange mixture of humility and pride. She has two mottoes, 'sic vos non vobis,' which

[Thus you (toil) not for yourselves (and) no one attacks me with impunity.]

of course, applies to the lower orders, and 'nemo me impune lacessit,' which applies to herself."

Kaiser Wilhelm—"The one thing that he was accused of throughout the war was the one thing every single person who had ever met him knew to be false. He was not and never could be a Macchiavelli. To put it bluntly, he was too much of a fool to be one."

Czar Nicholas—"Wilhelm was the sort of a boy who puts out his tongue in public, whereas Nicholas was the sort who pulls off the legs of flies in private. Nicholas was a cad, a coward, a butcher and a blackguard."

Mussolini—"He is one mass of poses, all of which have become so much a part of himself that a poseless Mussolini would now be almost an affectation. In England he couldn't exist for ten minutes, because his tricks, mannerisms and posturing would expose him to endless merriment."

H. G. Wells—"He would give his head to be a commanding influence in the world of action, and he witness inwardly at the destiny that condemns him to the impotence of the inkpot. This accounts for his childish attacks on such big historical figures as Napoleon, Caesar, &c. He envies their halo of heroism. He is the victim of an inferiority complex."

Thomas Hardy—"He is the high-brows' hero, yet he has managed to survive it."

Quotes Conversations with Wilson.

This anonymous author also quotes scores of ultrafrank remarks which he says celebrities made about each other—frequently in intimate discourse with himself.

Wilson, he says, thus described Lloyd George to him in the privacy of the Presidential sanctum before he met the British statesman:

"I doubt if I would like Lloyd George. He has a way of appealing to the emotions and not to the intellect, which I distrust."

Of Clemenceau, Wilson is quoted as saying:

"He is a man who cannot see further than the frontiers of France. He can see them very distinctly to north, south and west but his sight is misty when he looks toward the east, due no doubt to the haze that hangs over the Rhine."

The unnamed author has much to say of King Edward VII, with whom he claims to have been on terms of considerable intimacy. This monarch, who, according to the author, was described by Lord Northcliffe as "the greatest monarch we've ever had

—on a race course," is said in pre-war days to have held a long conversation with his nephew, Kaiser Wilhelm, and succeeded in causing Wilhelm to disclose his plans for world domination, which included the Germanizing of all America.

The writer, who hides under the cloak of anonymity, asserts he was present at some of the world's most important war councils, where, if he is to be believed, he hobnobbed on the most familiar terms with Lloyd George, Asquith, Grey, Cecil and other luminaries.

Some of the statements he attributes to these personages have been promptly denied by some of the statesmen said to have been present.

Of the great men whom he met during those stirring days, the author remarks: "With very few exceptions, I found them personally charming but politically deplorable."

It is impossible within the limits of a cable dispatch to give more than a few of the countless startling statements with which "The Whispering Gallery" absolutely bristles. Scarcely one of its 250 pages is without some passage, tossed off casually, which has all the potentialities of literary dynamite.

More Denials From Statesmen.

More repudiations of statements attributed to them in "The Whispering Gallery" are published in this morning's Daily Mail. They come from Lloyd George and Lord Riddell. Six pages in the book are given to Lord Riddell and the author says of him:

"I first met him in Washington. We all knew him as Lloyd George's chief henchman."

"The book teems with inaccuracies and references to myself are in several instances inaccurate," said Lord Riddell.

Lloyd George denounced the book in vigorous terms.

"Imaginative balderdash" and "a pack of lies" were two expressions he used, while he declared those parts of the book referring to him to be "bosh from beginning to end."

The Daily Mail is furious in its condemnation of the book which, it declares, is made up of "outrageous slanders on the famous dead and dishonorable imputations against the living." The paper uses such strong language editorially in attacking the publishers for producing such a book that it would not be surprising if legal action were threatened.