

British Gossip

ALREADY there is apprehension expressed in many rural communities of England lest the "gypsy plague" of last summer be repeated. Bands of Hungarian warriors crossed from Hamburg last year and strolled about the country until the governing county officers found them a serious problem. Surrey is said to be specially subject to these visitations. The county council of that district has submitted questions to other county organisations in England and Wales with the object of procuring the passage of a Bill through Parliament to cope with the evil. Gypsies are all very well in melodrama and light opera. In the romances dear to boyhood the leader of the gypsy band is a hero second only to the pirate chief. But the Romany in real life is an entirely different character. He is a despiser of such conventionalities as property rights and the bath tub. The earth is his and he verily is adorned with liberal patches of the native soil. Newark, Stafford and Romford suffered many depredations last year and are preparing a stern reception for any wandering minstrels who wish to encamp in the neighbourhood for another season.

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Sir Eldon Gorst, the successor to Earl Cromer in Egypt, is half a colonial, his mother having been a native of Christchurch, N.Z. He was born in that delightful island forty-eight years ago, and, after



Lady Gorst,

Wife of the new British Agent in Cairo.

a career of honours at Cambridge, was called to the Bar and became an attache in the Diplomatic Service. He first became closely connected with Egyptian finance in 1890, when he was made Controller of Direct Revenues. He succeeded Lord Milner as Under-Secretary of State for Finance, and afterwards became Financial Adviser to the Minister of the Interior.

In 1903 he married the daughter of Mr. C. D. Rudd, one of the founders of the gold-mining industry on the Rand, now a large landowner in Scotland. Lady Gorst is said to be a most agreeable hostess and her qualities in this regard will probably be exercised freely. The new British Agent, thanks to the herculean work accomplished by his predecessor, will be able to relax, so far as social diversions are concerned, to a degree which would have been inadvisable a decade ago. Lady Gorst's father was one of Cecil Rhodes' few intimate friends and he is also a comrade of Dr. Jameson.

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Mr. Beerbohm Tree has returned from Berlin, apparently quite satisfied with his theatrical performance in the capital of Germany. He and his company were treated right royally by the Kaiser and court dignitaries and he has every reason to feel that he was a social success during the brief Shakespearean display. But the critics dealt untenderly with the English actor and his stage management, causing London's would-be wits to murmur: "Teutons, spare our Tree!" It is generally acknowledged that

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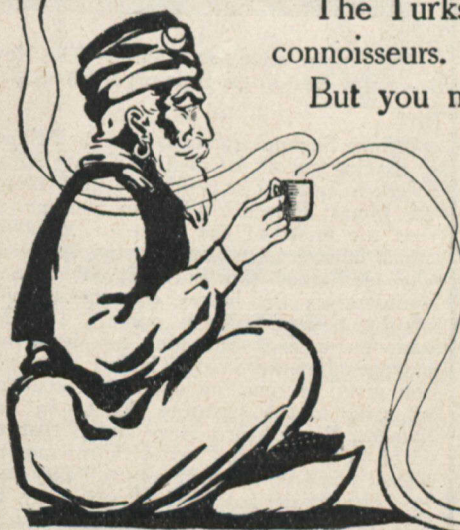


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