

## BRITISH GOSSIP

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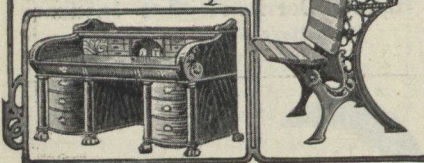
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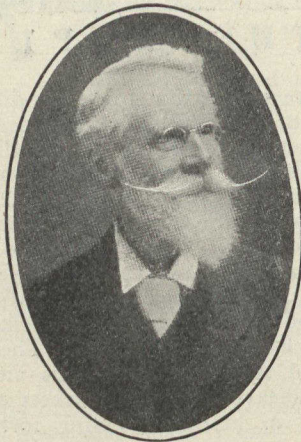
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Sir William Crookes, winner  
of the Nobel Prize for  
Chemistry.

as a permanent source of subsistence, as wheat-eaters multiply faster than the wheat-producing area. Sir William, who is seventy-five, is the sixth English winner of the Nobel prize. Mr. Kipling has been awarded the Nobel prize in literature which amounts, financially, to his charge for 78,000 words. This is a horribly commercial age and young writers will doubtless envy the author of "Plain Tales" and others not so plain. But the Nobel awards cannot avoid illustrating the small boy's rendering of a sacred proverb—"Them that has, gits."

\* \* \*

ON December thirtieth of last year, the vault in Highgate Cemetery, in which lies the famous Druce coffin, was opened by the highest authorities and within the casket was found the body of an aged, bearded man. Thus the melodramatic story of the lead which was placed there forty-three years ago is proved a fabrication and another chapter in the great case is closed. The suit of George Hollamby Druce, financed by a joint stock company, falls to the ground and it is probable that a charge of perjury will be brought against certain witnesses. As about a dozen witnesses had testified at the trial that Druce and the Duke of Portland were one and the same person, the proceedings following the exhuming investigation may become distinctly unpleasant for these cocksure persons. Chief among them was Robert Caldwell, who stated that he had been present at the bogus funeral and had assisted in placing a roll of lead in the coffin instead of a body. This positive gentleman fled to New York after giving his testimony and was arrested there but is now ill at his home in Staten Island.

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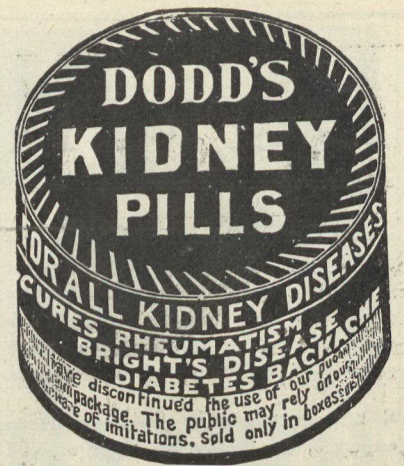
IF the late poet, Francis Thompson, had possessed more genius, he would have been called eccentric. But, as his muse was of rather feeble constitution, he is more likely to be dubbed freakish. About twelve years ago, it looked as if Francis Thompson would write poetry of a surpassing order. But he has left little that is of golden note. His chief unusualnesses are cheerfully summed up by James Douglas: "He wore a long ulster in summer and left it off during the winter. He carried his books in a little basket on his back. He talked to himself all the time. Like Rossetti, he was fond of roaming through the London streets all night long. He starved as gloriously as any bard in Old Grub Street. He called cabs for coppers in the Strand. He served in a bootshop near Leicester Square. He was a bookseller's 'Collector,' going from publisher to publisher with a sack on his back filled with the books written by the Philistines. Like De Quincey, he palliated the ills of life with opium. But his queerest trait was his passion for cricket. . . . Yet he was a mystic and a scholar, a master of divine word-music."

\* \* \*

THE Countess of Warwick is said to be engaged in writing her memoirs, which ought to make sprightly reading, for it is not often that the wife of an English Earl is numbered with the socialists. Lady Warwick seems to have more than her share of talents and grace as she is a musician, a public speaker, an expert motorist and a famous sportswoman, as well as a fashionable beauty. It has always been difficult for the British public to take Lady Warwick's socialism seriously and it is to be feared that they look at her more appreciatively than they listen to her disquisitions. Not even when she sold some jewels in order to give money to a pet movement have they regarded the Countess as anything but a picturesque experimenter in politics.

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THE recent marriage of the Lord High Chancellor at St. Stephen's attracted public interest, largely owing to the office of the bridegroom and the strange scene of the ceremony. Although the bridegroom is over sixty years of age, he is said to be stalwart in figure and agile in movement. Indeed, his honeymoon was partially devoted to golf, a game of which Lord Loreburn, to give him his everyday title, is decidedly fond. The four men who follow royalty in the table of precedence, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of York and the Prime Minister, are all natives of Scotland and are all said to be addicted to the royal game. An archbishop on the links must be an awesome sight and the distinguished player must occasionally be afflicted by a desire to lay aside his vocabulary. In his early years the Lord Chancellor was known as Rob Reid and has won his way to the woosack by sheer ability and industry. Yet, in spite of the place held by these four distinguished Scots, a member from somewhere north of Edinburgh arose in the House last year and protested that no plums fell to the men from Caledonia.



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