Some little surprise has been created by Lieut. Stairs' recent change of regiment. The *United Service Gazette*, in referring to the matter, has the following to say of the gallant young officer of whom Halifax is proud:—"The slowness of promotion in the Royal Engineers is brought to the front by the acceptance by Lieutenant W. G. Stairs, R.E, of a captaincy in the Welsh Regiment, offered in recognition of his services as an African explorer during his participation in Mr. Stanley's late African expedition in relief of Emin Pasha. It is by no means a usual occurrence for the command of a company in a line battalion to be given to a subaltern of the Royal Engineers. Captain Stairs brings honor to the Canadian Military College, for it was from that establishment that he was gazetted to the Royal Engineers in 1885. On his return from Stanley's expedition he was last June appointed adjutant to the Royal Engineer troops at Aldershot, and he now gets his captaincy in a line regiment.

There is something very appropriate about General Booth's match factory in connection with his "Darkest England" scheme. It is proposed to call the matches "Salvation Blazes," and they surely, all things considered, ought to lighten the darkness considerably. General Booth has opened one or two of his shelters in the east end of London, and proposed to employ his people in the match factory in Hackney eight hours a day at good wages. Meanwhile he is looking about for a suitable Over-Sea Colony, but in this he meets a difficulty. The question is not so much what place is suitable for his people, but what place will have them. The idea of helping to regenerate the "submerged tenth" is not one to which any of the Colonies take kindly. They usually have enough to do to take care of their own black sheep. Victoria has already sent a protest to General Booth against having a riotous Salvation Army contingent invade it, whereupon the General said that Victoria might have waited until he proposed to do such a thing.

The Clitheroe case is not likely to be forgotten for some time to come. The Lancashire people rebel against the idea of a woman being free to leave her husband, and have subscribed funds to enable Mr. Jackson to carry the case to the House of Lords. An English exchange, in speaking of the matter, says it was in Lancashire that wives used to be corrected with a pair of wooden clogs, and that the custom has not even yet fallen into absolute neglect. The sympathy of such people for Mr. Jackson and his methods is consequently only to be expected. The legal effects of the decision are only just beginning to be felt. A case of wife-beating came up at the police court not long ago, and the woman asked for a judicial separation. This the Bench refused, and it was intimated that after the decision in the Clitheroe case, separation orders would not be made, as a wife could live apart from her husband if she chose. The applicant also asked for a maintenance order for the children, and was told it could not be entertained. The difficulty of arranging disorganized family affairs has evidently not been diminished by recent decisions.

"What's in a name?" The *Times*, commenting on the title chosen by the Australian Federal Convention, says:—"On some ears the appellation will grate. There are historical associations with the word Commonwealth, which might have recommended the use of another for territories belonging, and proud to belong, to the British Crown." The *Times*, however, will not waste time disputing over the title, although it suggests that Canada has not so exclusively appropriated the term "Dominion" as to forbid its employment by a federal union in the South Seas. As a more exalted phrase, "Realm" is proposed. Unfortunately these suggestions of the *Times* come too late, as the Australians have agreed upon the "Commonwealth of Australia" as a name. Some people sniff sedition in the fact that it is proposed to call the integral parts of the Commonwealth, not Provinces, but States, quite forgetting the fact that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, and that there is no sign of disloyalty to the Empire shown by the Australian Colonies, even in the fact that their constitution is a compromise between that of the United States and that of Canada. In the event of the federation being carried in the different Legislatures, the Sovereign of the Empire will still be, through the Governor-General, the enacting authority; and the Privy Council will continue the ultimate court of appeal. Our readers are aware that the proposal to make the office of Governor-General one of popular election was rejected, whereby the Australians showed themselves wise in their generation. They evidently recognise their inestimable gain through freedom from the turmoil, jobbery and intrigues involved in the election of a head of an executive. They have evidently not studied the United States in vain on this point, however much they have seen fit to copy in other respects.

It is of interest to note in connection with the taking of the census that when the next numbering of the people occurs, in 1901, the opening year of the twentieth century, the people of England will be able to look back upon a census system which has attained the honors of centenarianism. In Canada, of course, we cannot claim any such distinction, but as we are a part and parcel of the great Empire, of which Great Britain is the chief corner stone, we take a lively interest in the progress and prosperity of the country, as demonstrated by the census returns. The first serious proposal to ascertain the number of the population in England was made in 1753, when Mr. Thomas Potter, M.P., introduced a bill for "taking and registering an annual account of the total number of the people, and of the total number of marriages, births and deaths; and also of the total number of the poor receiving alms in every parish and parochial place in Great Britain." The opposition to the bill was strong, and it is amusing to read the remarks of a member named Thornton, who said—"I did not believe that there was any set of men, or indeed any individual of the human species, so presumptuous and so abandoned as to make the proposal we have just heard." We may make allowance for party feeling influencing Mr. Thornton's views. This bill, in spite of opposition and genuine fears that the scheme would prove costly and impracticable; that it would facilitate the imposition of new taxes; that it would be a prelude to conscription, that it would expose any weakness of the country to enemies abroad, and that the proposal was ominous of "some public misfortune, or an epidemical distemper," passed, with the support of the Government, through all its stages in the House of Commons by large majorities. It was, however, thrown out on the second reading in the House of Lords, and the proposal was not renewed until 1800, by which time public opinion had caught up to the advance guard of the foremost thinkers of the time, and the "Population Bill" brought in by Mr. Abbot was passed without opposition. The fear of the world becoming over populated, brought on by the publication about this time of Mr. Malthus' famous work on this subject, doubtless had a good deal to do with the desire to find out just how things stood in this respect. Accordingly the first census was taken in March, 1801, and since that date an enumeration has taken place in the first year of each successive decennium. The result of the first taking of the census was reassuring, and even at the present day, after a great increase of population, we are not so much troubled at the thought that there will ever be too many people on the earth, as we are that there will be too many of the wrong sort on the best portions of it. The legislation of the time all points to this fear The United States Congress last session passed a strict immigration bill, and that country is showing in every way her desire to keep out of her territory all undesirable human and inhuman nature. The Chinese are barred or restricted in many places; Australia is getting on the defensive against them—in fact, the question of the "scum" of creation, of all kinds is getting to be a subject "ripe for inquiry" in many places. The taking of the census will do much to throw light upon this matter, both in Britain and the Colonies, as, in the former especially, every effort is being made to make the census of foreign immigrants as complete as possible. The British census coincides for the third time with the enumeration of the inhabitants of the Colonies.

A very interesting appeal case, that of "Musgrove vs. Chun Teong Toy," has just been decided by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, after four months' deliberation. In March and April, 1888, there was a violent agitation in certain of the Australian colonies against the immigration of Chinese. On April 27 a British vessel, the *Afghan*, arrived in the port of Melbourne with 268 Chinese immigrants on board, Chun Teong Toy, or Ah Toy, as he was generally called, being one of them. By the then existing law of the colony a vessel could bring to a Victorian port only one Chinese passenger for every 100 registered tons burden, a provision under which the *Afghan* was entitled to convey only 14 Chinese. She had, therefore, 254 in excess of her legal complement. According to the Chinese Act, 1881, no Chinaman could land in Victoria until he had paid, or some one had paid for him, a capitation tax of £10, and any shipmaster bringing more than the legal number of Chinese was liable on conviction to a penalty of £100 for each one in excess. The defendant, who was the collector of customs at Melbourne, refused to permit any of the immigrants on board the *Afghan* to land. Ah Toy accordingly brought an action against him for damages, alleging that by the law of the colony any Chinese on offering to pay £10 was entitled to land, and that the conveying of more than the lawful number was an offence for which by the Statute the master, not the immigrant, was punishable. The case would have been sufficiently interesting if the defendant had been content with pleading that he was justified under the Statute in refusing Ah Toy to land, but he proceeded to allege that Her Majesty's Government of Victoria, having reason to believe that a large influx of Chinese was imminent, and that this would be a danger to the public peace, decided that no further Chinese should be allowed to enter the colony, and that he (the defendant) acting on instructions, refused to receive £10 from Ah Toy or to allow him to land. Furthermore, it was said that this act of the collector was ratified by the Government of Victoria, and consequently by Her Majesty, as an act of State policy. It was around these two latter pleas that the battle raged; for the questions which they raised were, whether it is a prerogative of the Crown to exclude friendly aliens, and, if so, whether this prerogative has ever been delegated by Her Majesty to the Victorian Ministers, and finally, whether an administrative act of this character by a Colonial Government can be called an act of State. Both sides went back to the expulsion of the Jews by Edward I in 1290. Magna Charta, Calvin's case, Cokes Institutes, the opinions of Lord Eldon, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Samuel Romilly and a host of other authorities were quoted. The constitutional relations between the self-governing colonies and the nature and effects of acts of State were also investigated. In giving judgment their lordships decided that it was not necessary to consider the constitutional questions at all; that there was no duty on the collector of customs to take £10, inasmuch as that was not the price of a license to land, but in the nature of a penalty on landing, and "it is not because the unlawfulness of an act is visited by a pecuniary penalty that the payment of that penalty makes it lawful." Acordingly there was no breach of duty on the part of the collector of customs towards Ah Toy, and the latter had no cause of action. The judges also expressed the opinion that there is no authority for the proposition that an alien has a legal right, enforcible by action, to enter British territory.