

Current Comment.

attempt to get behind facts, to call things by false and high sounding names, is about as despicable and ludicrous an exhibition of snobbery in excelsis as has ever been chronicled. The fate of the grand old name of gentleman we all, alas! know too well, and it does seem to me regrettable that the honourable cognomen of servant should follow it into the limbo of meaningless words. What, after all, in this whole world is nobler than service? Apart altogether from religion, is not each one of us a servant to some one? Does not the very motto pipe, save only the Queen herself, eon- of the highest dignitary of all the Em- of the proud boast, "Ich Dien"— serve? What, then, can be the objection to the old and honest term, servant? No doubt the craze for snob- bish terms will not stop here. We shall probably have objectors to the term "wages," persons who will insist that we shall not hurt the feelings of our printer's devil by alluding to the rewards of his labours—brg pardon— assistance, by such a derogatory word as wages, but that we shall speak of his emoluments of office, or his honorarium. The tendency to this form of snobishness is unquestionably on the increase, and is far from a healthy or a hopeful sign. So far as domestic servants are concerned, much of the antipathy now displayed towards this branch of making oneself useful in life—which is, after all, the chief object of existence—has, I believe, been created by the well-meaning busy-bodies who will never leave well alone. Men like Mr Barclay, of Dunedin, have reiterated that servants are a class looked down upon, until, from that very cause, and from that alone, servants have begun to believe that there is some truth in the allegation. As a matter of fact, there is, I honestly and firmly believe, no person who commands a higher respect than that of the capable and trusted family servant. They are not merely honoured with confidence and warm regard, they not infrequently become the very mentors of the household, and, as some of us know, very despotic rulers thereof to boot. That there are changes coming which will altogether revolutionise the relations between employer and servant no one can doubt. Whether any of these changes will benefit the servant class is doubtful, but most assuredly no possible benefit can arise from a stupid and vulgar change of name to house assistants.

WHAT THE LONDON "TIMES" SAYS ABOUT INFLUENZA.

At the commencement of this year, when influenza was reaching its height and assuming very serious proportions in London, the "Times" had the following in its columns. We quote this, as it is written by an authority whose words carry weight, and who gets to the real secret of the prevention of influenza:

"Influenza has so far baffled research; we know, however, that it is highly contagious, its onset is sudden, and that the best thing we can do to escape it is to avoid whatever may tend to lower the tone of the system."

This is the root of the matter. Influenza attacks those who, by lack of vigour and tone in the system, have left a loophole for its entrance. The main thing, then, is to keep in good health whilst this scourge is so prevalent. This can only be done by keeping up the general tone of the system, and so enable the various organs to carry out their respective duties, the tendency to catch colds and influenza being thereby greatly minimised.

The body is extremely susceptible to chills, and the slightest draught causes a violent attack of coughing or sneezing. Many so-called cures for influenza fail to get at the root of the trouble, and only afford temporary relief. A medicine that will brace up the system, keep the liver in thorough and regular working order, and the digestion right, will, without doubt, prove the most effective preventative and cure for influenza and colds. This is what Blue Beans for Biliousness will do, and we maintain that no better remedy can be found for these ailments. Blue Beans have been proved in hundreds of cases to be the most effective known remedy in dealing with influenza, colds, and all ailments arising from such complaints.

"The Little Splash of Crimson."

In a letter to the "Daily News" Mr A. G. Hales says:—"Some of the younger bloods are thinking of the V.C. they mean to win. For myself I cannot help thinking of the little splash of crimson I have seen so often on a man's temple, of the strong bony fingers buried knuckle deep in the soft soil in the last death clutch, as the soul has slipped out of the little hole in the centre of the crimson splash, round which the sharp splinters of jagged bone, like broken needle points, project. Beautiful war! Glorious war! A moment of mortal anguish, a hole in the earth, and a soul on its way to judgment. A scout has just dashed past my tent on his way towards the staff officer's camp. His left arm lies useless by his side; his face is as white as the milk the ralls pour from the pails in the Highlands at dawn. His knit brow and clenched teeth tell he is no holiday rider. He has to pass a little knot of privates. "What news, mate?" calls out the bugler. The scout does not pause, does not check the steady gallop of his Argentine pony, does not even bend his body in the saddle, but half turning his head for a moment flings his reply back at them as a lass throws a shoe over her shoulder for luck: "Only a skinning—they've bolted."

The Use of the Revolver.

Nervous folks who are always on the look out for that familiar burglar should not be allowed revolvers. Thomas Hopwood, a groom, was charged in Sydney illegally on the premises of John Findlay, at Rookwood. Early on Sunday morning, hearing a noise, Findlay arose, saw the accused at the back of his house, and chased him, firing a shot at the retreating figure before the fugitive was captured. Hopwood explains that he had fallen asleep in the last train from Sydney to Ashfield and had been overcarried to Homebush. He then proceeded, as he thought to walk back, but took the wrong road and did not discover his mistake until he reached Rookwood. Then, being too tired to walk back to Ashfield he was looking for an empty house in which to sleep until morning when he was chased by Findlay. The magistrate believed his story and dismissed the case.

The Train of the Future.

The House of Commons has thrown out the Manchester and Liverpool Express Railway Bill. The committee, however, did not condemn the proposal to run trains at nearly 100 miles per hour on the mono rail. The plans satisfied them completely, excepting as to brake power. The problem of stopping a mono-railway at high speed was not deemed to be sufficiently clear. The promoters of the Bill, too, had not satisfied certain local interests. This marvellous scheme of locomotion will come up again next year. It may be here noted that, to the joy of Londoners who use the underground railway, trains have already commenced running on part of the district section with electrical engines. There is hope that before long the tunnels will be less evil-smelling than they are with the ordinary locomotive.

Spoils to the Victors.

The Wellington "Post," referring to the proposed increase in Ministers' salaries, says:—"The scale proposed in the Bill is higher than that existing in any of the Australian colonies, since in New South Wales there are no house allowances. As against the New South Wales Chief Secretary's £1820 our Premier is to be paid £1950, and as against the £1370 of the other New South Wales Ministers, our Ministers are to receive £1450. Instead of being higher, the New Zealand scale should obviously be lower than that of either Victoria or New South Wales. Then, again, the sum allowed for the salaries of the Commonwealth Ministers is only £12,000 a year, or just £250 more than the total of the salaries without house allowances proposed to be spent upon the Ministers of this colony. Including house allowance, it is proposed that we should pay more for our Ministers than Federal Australia. Could anything be more absurd?

There is another comparison that brings out forcibly the disproportionate rewards now asked by our Ministers for their services. Our Chief Justice is paid only £1750, and our puisne Judges £1500 a year, and no house allowances. That is to say, the Premier, with his house allowance, is to receive £200 a year more than the Chief Justice, and the other Ministers with their house allowances each only £30 a year less than the other Judges. From no standpoint, so far as we can see, can the salaries now proposed for the Cabinet be justified, and we trust that Parliament will refuse to sanction this enormous increase in expenditure."

Colonial Snobs.

The Dunedin correspondent of the "Argus" gives the following as an instance of colonial snobbery:—"An early settler who had the good sense to secure a good stretch of emu- bery made a good deal of money out of sheep, and when he died and the land was sold there was a handsome competence for the family. Some of the girls were sent to England to finish their education, and are now necessarily the creme de la creme of society. Going home in the evening the other evening they were greatly interested in the doings of a handsome little child, but while they could not conceal the enthusiasm inspired they explained afterwards that "After all, dear, it was only a common child, but so bold, handsome, and clever." A dance was given the same night, and it so happened that the father of the child was the leader of the musicians. He got to hear of what was said, but could say nothing then. But the musicians were curtained off, and one of them rudely drew the curtains a little apart, except when partaking of the beer and sandwiches, good enough for common people, while the elite sipped champagne. The daughter, enraged at the boldness, sought the musician's shop next day, and bounding in with "Are you the man," etc., roundly abused him for presumption, declaring that they would not again glance at the occupants of the shop when she was petrified by the remark, "Well, if I and my child are common people, perhaps you can tell me what that good old sort your mother was when she used to milk the cows behind old —'s barn."

A Woman's Romance.

A member of the Johannesburg commando in laager at Glenese was discovered to be a young woman, and inquiries elicited the following romantic story:—"When the husband of this plucky young woman was away

commandeered for service at the front, she attired herself in male clothes, went to the field-cornet, and requested him to commandeer her. This was done, and she proceeded to the front as a properly-equipped burgher. She fought bravely in the trenches at Spion Kop. It was not until a few days ago that her sex was discovered, and she was then at once sent to her home. On the way thither she made a speech to the people assembled on the station platform, exhorting the burghers to persevere in the struggle, and explaining that she preferred fighting for her country to lying ill at home.

The Emperor of China.

The Shanghai correspondent of a London journal has telegraphed to his paper what he declares is an official declaration of policy by the Emperor Kwang Hsun. It was communicated through Weng Tung Ho, the Emperor's ex-tutor, who was dismissed from Peking in 1898. The more important part of the Imperial message is as follows:—

His Majesty is convinced, through amply trustworthy sources, that the loyal support of many millions of the Chinese will be accorded to his proposals for putting an end to the state of anarchy brought about by the action of the Empress Hsi Tsi. The Government of China being virtually non-existent, the Emperor proposes that the Foreign Powers, whose troops dominate the capital, shall recover his Imperial power from the palace, in which His Majesty is confined a prisoner, shall declare Empress Hsi Tsi and her present Ministers to be usurpers, and shall bring Emperor Kwang Hsun to Nanking, Wu Chang or Shanghai, whichever the said Foreign Powers deem to be the most suitable situation for the capital of the Chinese empire under the new conditions.

The Government should be carried on, says Weng Tung Ho, by the Emperor, but the Powers should declare a joint protectorate over China. The proposals include the abolition of the Imperial Boards at Peking, the appointment of new Ministers, the reorganisation of the army to police the Empire under foreign officers, the control of the Customs and posts and telegraphs by the Foreign Powers, the establishment of a uniform currency, the readjustment of taxation, and, finally, freedom of religion. The revolution would be a huge one, but Weng declares that it would be peacefully accepted by the great bulk of the Chinese. The present difficulty, Weng implied, would need the presence of fully 100,000 foreign troops.

Cricket and the Empire.

Let no wisecracker with his head stuffed full of high politics, of questions of trade and tariffs, of scientific theories of racial involutions, dare to laugh at cricket (says the London "Daily Mail"). If there had been no Australian test matches there would most likely have been no Colonial Volunteers. Just as the kindly memories of school friendships knit men together in after manhood, just as the athletic

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