

Mr Cooper thoroughly deserved the applause he received on finishing his paper.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Rev Father Bell and Mr Cooper, after which the meeting closed.

The programme for next Tuesday is quarterly meeting lectures by members.

LECTURE IN DUNEDIN.

(Otago Daily Times, December 10.)

THE announcement of a lecture by Mr Michael Houlahan with the somewhat comprehensive title of "Landlords, Land Rings, Banks, and Pawnshops," did not attract an audience of more than 80 people to the City Hall last evening. Those who were present were afforded full value for their money, and those who did not attend missed an hour's capital entertainment. There was no chairman, but the absence of a person in that position did not detract from the success of the meeting, for Mr Houlahan was equal to performing the duties both of chairman and lecturer.

Mr Houlahan commenced his address with an expression of disappointment at the dimensions of his audience, and this was a note on which he frequently touched in the course of his later remarks, consoling himself, however, with the reflection that with the presence of "the grand representatives of the Press," from whom he knew he would receive justice, he would gain the public ear. His subject, he claimed, was one which deserved the greatest amount of consideration at the present juncture when there was a large number of unemployed, when tracts of the country were unexplored, and when yet there was plenty of money in the Colony—when the banks' cellars were full of gold, when their safes were bursting with notes, and when, in fact, they did not know what to do with their money. It was sad, Mr Houlahan sighed, that the country should be in such a plight, that there should be plenty of money in the country and that the people could not get at it. This was a sentiment which met with a hearty response from the audience. Mr Houlahan gave a harrowing description of the consequences of landlordism in Ireland. He had had a holy horror of landlordism since he was a child, for when he was only nine years of age his father was sent adrift in the world by the sheriff and his officers. It was a singular thing, though—and Mr Houlahan's face brightened as he reflected upon the swift retribution which had overtaken the landlord—that not a single being had ever since gone to live in the house. Another illustration of the evils of the system was given by the lecturer, the landlord in this instance being a person who, Mr Houlahan said, "wore a great big nose." It was said that this nose was the result of a curse the landlord got from a poor widow whom he turned out of her house. He would not vouch for the truth of that story, Mr Houlahan with praiseworthy caution said, but it was a fact that the man had a big nose, and how he got it he could not very well say. After effectually "sitting" on a person who interrupted him, Mr Houlahan frankly informed his hearers that if he had his way he would send the landlords to Siberia—to the mines. Coming nearer home, Mr Houlahan confided to his audience that there was landlordism in New Zealand. "The speaker," he said, "is a victim to landlordism," and he proceeded to show how he had been victimised. His troubles began about five years ago, when he leased a property and built upon it a brewery, bottle store, and all the other things connected with a brewery. After this it appears Mr Houlahan ran short of money and borrowed £50 from the lessor, to whom he gave a bill at four months and a mortgage over his property. He expected to get his bill renewed, but when it was not paid the lessor pressed for money. Mr Houlahan called a few of his creditors together, mentioning them by name (two of them being in the audience), and at that meeting the lessor agreed to take £50 worth of beer. The audience evidently doubted the capacity of that gentlemen and roared at this statement. On the next morning, however, Mr Houlahan was visited by two bailiffs. He was next served with a summons for £51 18s 6d, but he confessed judgment and paid the money. That was five years ago. Since then the landlord had had "his knife in him," and kept the bailiffs so persistently running after him that they utterly ruined him. Mr Houlahan went on to describe how, in his absence, two bailiffs took possession of his property and put their humble servant clean on the broad of his back—and a few in the audience unfeelingly laughed as if Mr Houlahan's back was broad enough to sustain the burden that was thrown upon it. Landlordism, he insisted, was "eating and drinking and sapping the heart's blood of the people." That was the curse of the country, and until we got a State bank that would give money at 4 per cent, or perhaps 3½ per cent—Mr Houlahan subsequently suggested 2½ per cent—and that would take the unemployed off the streets of the cities, there would be nothing but widespread misery and pauperism all through New Zealand. Land-rings he (the lecturer) dismissed in a few words, for he assumed that the audience were pretty well conversant with these things. He then informed the audience that he had asked seven men people to take the chair, but he could not get one to do so. One whom he let slip and addressed as "your worship," informed him on

learning his subject that he was going out of town. He had also send a friend to a member of Parliament who pretended to support the present Government, "But God help the Government which had such supporters." This gave Mr Houlahan an opportunity to eulogise the present Government, singling out for special praise the Minister for Lands as "one of the noblest men in the whole of New Zealand." Before concluding, Mr Houlahan promised that the last had not been seen of him on the platform, and then, in compliance with a loudly expressed request, gave a few verses of a song which, though not one that is usually found on concert programmes, was conceived by the audience to be of the comic order, for they received it with great laughter as well as with uproarious applause and demands for an "encore," which, however, were not acceded to.

Before the meeting separated Mr J. M'Indoe proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Houlahan for his "luminous lecture," and this was assented to.

"HOW SHALL WE DECIDE THIS QUESTION?"

Now, which is the worse—to have no appetite for your dinner, or to have no dinner for your appetite?

There are lots of people on the one side or the other of this question. When "good digestion waits on appetite and health on both," that is the ideal attitude of a person towards his meals. But most of us are not blessed in this way; we either have too much food without an appetite, or a vigorous appetite without enough to satisfy it. Different folk will answer this question differently, yet the common sense of it is that, within reasonable limits, it is better to have an appetite without a dinner, because, short of starvation line, a hungry man is a healthy man; whereas a man who ought to eat and doesn't feel like eating, stands in need of "alterations and repairs."

To illustrate. We recently received a communication in which the writer says, "I was afraid to eat." Did he fancy his food was poisoned, or did his nature rebel against the nourishment lived on? If the latter, why? Let him clear the mystery himself.

He says, "In the year 1889 I changed my work from railway porter to signalman. I had been signalman twelve months, and then all at once, so to speak, I did not feel myself. My mouth tasted bad, so that ordinary articles of diet seemed to lose their flavour; the palate, to put it in that way, appeared to have nothing to say to them. One thing was like another, and none was good. My tongue was coated and furred, with a dark line down the middle and yellow fur round it. My breath was offensive and my appetite poor, with pains through the chest and shoulders, which were always right before I had eaten anything. Then I was greatly troubled with wind. It would gather so it felt like a ball in my throat, and act as if it would choke me."

We cannot wonder that under these circumstances our friend failed to do justice to his meals. He adds that there was what he calls "a prickling sensation" at his heart, as though it were touched with some sharp instrument. Then, again, at times he was attacked with spasms, the agony of which was so severe that the sweat rolled off him. "I dreaded," he says, the thought of eating, and many a scanty meal have I made, for I was afraid to eat.

"After a time I got into a low, weak, and nervous condition, and felt miserable, as if something was going to happen, and this caused me to lose a good deal of sleep."

What he means by the fear of "something going to happen" is, of course, the fear of some calamity, such as the loss of his position, his own death, or the death of somebody dear to him. This was due, as he intimates, to the impoverished state of his blood (the life bearer), his unstrung nerves, and to the brain enfeebled by lack of nourishment. The night of this form of illness is always full of ghosts and goblins, the creatures of a restless and ungoverned imagination.

"With great difficulty," he says, "I stuck to my work, for I had a wife and family depending on me. So I struggled on, but what I suffered for over two years is past my powers of description. I am sure no one has suffered so much as I have done."

In the latter statement he is undoubtedly wrong. One's own pain is one's own, and is always harder to bear than in one's notion of his neighbour's pain. There is a countless multitude who are all the while going through the same wretched experience, only we don't happen to come in touch with them.

Well, the writer finally mentions that after all medical treatment had left him where it found him. He chanced to read in a book of a case exactly like his own having been cured by Mother Seigel's Syrup. "My wife," he says, "got me a bottle of Mr Langstaff's, in Woodlesford, and after using its contents the ailment left me and has never returned since that fortunate day. I should like the whole world to know what it did for me. I have been employed by the Midland Railway Company for eleven years.

(Signed) "GEORGE HUNT,
Car Bottom Road,
Apperley Bridge, near Leeds."

We publish this by Mr Hunt's desire, in order that part of the world at least may know how thankful he is and for what reason.

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