

A NEW feature was introduced during the meeting of the Branch at Nelson. The Chief Health Officer was asked to give a quasi-scientific half-hour's lecture open to the general public. There was a very large and distinguished audience, a large part of which was composed of ladies. Dr. Mason, who illustrated his remarks with a number of original and convincing lantern-slides, chose for his subject the trailing skirt and the part it plays in the dissemination of the tubercle bacillus. He said that they had but recently witnessed the end of a struggle the like of which had not been seen in modern times. They were, so to speak, fresh from the welcoming-back of those of their fellows who went to Africa to defend what we honestly believed was the right, and to uphold and extend the dominion of our gracious Lord and King, Edward VII. While our hearts thrilled with pride at the recital of the brave conduct of our troops, the joys of victory were largely clouded by the price in blood which had to be paid. While no one would hesitate to offer the same sacrifice again to the god of war should the same good reasons arise, yet he was sure no one would accuse him of want of loyalty when he said they should hesitate long and use every endeavour to find some other way of settling our differences than by once more sacrificing our sons, brothers, and friends. No individual effort would be wanting to avert, if possible, such slaughter and suffering as had resulted from our late conflict with a brave and energetic foe. Some forty thousand men, they were told, fell either from wounds or sickness during the South African campaign. Yet, while they deplored and deprecated this holocaust, they paid but a passing attention to that army of twofold size which yearly in Great Britain alone fell before that arch-enemy consumption.