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Some Indirect Methods of Temperance Reform.

[Paper read by MRS. ALLEN, M.A., LL.B.,
before Convention.]

IN choosing the subject of my paper, I was actuated, not so much by the desire to say something new, because in these days, when the Prohibition question is so much discussed by the public, one despairs of finding anything new to say upon it, but rather by the desire to find some new phase, some aspect not so much discussed, some direction not yet fully explored, in which the energies of the bulk of the Prohibition and Temperance advocates in the colony might be steadily employed to the ultimate furtherance of the cause. We cannot all be platform speakers; we cannot all be house-to-house canvassers. And to some minds—to my own mind—platform speaking and house-to-house canvassing are not productive of the most permanent and enduring results: Effective they certainly are at election times, but that is because the attention of the people is roused, and their minds receptive and impressionable. But an impression readily made is readily lost, and during the interval between poll and poll we know it is difficult, and increasingly difficult, to stir up any enthusiasm, any feeling, by either public speeches or private

canvassing. And in any case, at any time, the bulk of our Temperance advocates are inactive, they are not workers except in so far as by their example and by their quiet expression of opinion they are making an impression upon those immediately around them. Many of them are unwilling to assert them-



MRS A. R. ATKINSON,
PRESIDENT N. Z. W.C.T.U.

selves, feeling, as indeed we all feel at times, that the assumption of an aggressive attitude makes enemies as well as friends for our cause, and that the intemperate methods to which our enthusiasm and zeal sometimes make us prone are somewhat inconsistent with our claim to be "temperance" reformers.

At any rate, we know that we lie under that accusation.

So I have felt that, if I could indicate some direction in which quiet, unostentatious work might be done for the cause of Temperance reform, I should be assisting the cause in a really valuable way, besides offering some welcome suggestions to many who would be glad to assist in any way that lay within their powers and circumstances.

All of us who have read anything about the efforts of Temperance reformers know that one fact which is always insisted upon is the necessity for providing some other means of amusement, pastime, recreation, occupation, if we propose to deprive the frequenters of public-houses of that means of forgetting the worries and cares of every-day life, or if we hope to induce them voluntarily to forego their present method of enjoyment. We recognise the truth of the argument, but I am afraid that most of us have not, so far, regarded it as a basis for practical work. What I want to urge now is that it shall be taken as a basis for practical work.

I cannot claim for what I have to say that it is in any sense new. Probably, when I have finished, you will say to one another that you "knew all that before." But, however many times you may have heard it or read it, I feel that it is so important a feature of our move-