

ing and dignity once said to him: "Young man, you have your future all before you." "Until then," the witty Artemus would remark in droll way that never failed to bring down the house, "I thought my future was *behind* me." If it were not so amusing it would be humiliating to prohibitionists to discover that so able a thinker and close observer as the Rev. Dr. Spear deems it necessary to solemnly warn them that they must be able to carry an election before they can elect. The following extracts present the Doctor's main point:

"The majority of the people can always get all they want, through one or the other of the existing parties, by simply voting it into power. These parties are constantly watching public sentiment, and, from time to time, adopting new principles, or measures in accordance with its supposed demands. Their plan is not to lag behind this sentiment or go contrary to it; and neither proposes to disband or commit suicide, in order to make room for a third party."

"Such a party can give no legal expression to its views until it gets itself into power, and this it cannot do until the majority of the voters shall adopt its views; and when, if ever, this becomes a fact, the party will be wholly unnecessary to attain the result. Let public sentiment move up to the mark of Prohibition and there will be no difficulty in obtaining it through the existing parties."

"They [Prohibitionists] cannot vote themselves into power until they get the necessary popular opinion on their side. . . The opinion being given such a party is not needed."

"If they are successful in leading the people generally to adopt their views, the end they desire will be gained without organizing a third party for that purpose. The existing political parties, assumed to be opposed to Prohibition, will, upon this supposition, change their attitude; and either, if placed in power, will give to the principle the sanction and force of law. No new party is needed when public sentiment demands a prohibitory law, and, in the absence of such a sentiment, no new party can secure the result."

"The conditions upon which it can succeed entirely dispense with its necessity as the means of that success. These conditions being given, the movement is not needed; and if not given it is a failure."

Over and over again with wonderful tact this argument is brought to view: a new party cannot come to the front until it secures a controlling public sentiment on its side; but the very existence of this sentiment will render the party unnecessary, for one of the existing parties will be quick to adopt as its own the principle demanded. Never did a juggler handle his balls with more consummate skill than does this accomplished dialectician this argument all through his paper. The advocate of political prohibition is tossed from one horn of the dilemma to the other with a bewildering rapidity.

The argument is plausible, but not sound:

1. It is true only in a degree, that: "The way a people vote tells the story as to what they think." It tells the story rather of what the party manipulators wish. In the argument no account is made of those tremendous elements of the strength of a party: party machinery, party spirit, party prejudice and party *inertia*. Nine in ten of Democrats would vote for the Democratic party if its principles were reversed; and the same is true, in a less degree, of Republicans. After a