ever. Slight as has been the element of public ownership in this case, it has reduced street lighting in Springfield from $137.50 per arc light per annum, to less than $60.

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Moses Harman's Release.

About a year ago (vol. viii, pp. 242, 290, 806, 815) Mr. Moses Harman was convicted in the Federal court of mailing an obscene article in his periodical, Lucifer. He was convicted, not because the jury considered the article obscene, but because the presiding judge instructed the jury that the question of obscenity was not within their province, that the only question for them to pass upon was the fact of the mailing of the paper. In fact the article was not obscene, and Mr. Harman's conviction and imprisonment were, as the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones describes them, "nothing less than a crime." It is a subject for congratulation that Mr. Harman's imprisonment has under these circumstances been treated by some of the good men and women of the community as an honor instead of a disgrace, and that they should therefore have greeted him with an honorable reception upon his return. It was no misplaced praise, that of the late Ernest Howard Crosby, when in responding to an invitation to this reception he said: "No one can know Mr Harman personally or through his writings without becoming impressed by the purity and honesty of his purpose and by the fact that his main impulse is what seems to him a high ideal." These words we repeat and endorse, not in advocacy of Mr. Harman's views, for we dissent from them, but in the same spirit in which Mr. Crosby added to his personal praise the words: "That such men should be met by the arguments of iron bars and dungeon cells shows that the spirit of Torquemada is not entirely exorcised."

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The Traction Referendum in Chicago.

Mayor Dunne has insisted upon a referendum on the traction ordinance, (p. 914), but every influence to prevent this has been resorted to by the newspapers that do the "hurrah" work for the traction companies. This seems to be the supreme test which the companies and their coadjutors wish to avoid, and at last they have come to depend upon the impossibility of securing a referendum petition for lack of sufficient time. In the Chicago Tribune of the 6th this expectation was "given dead away." "The question of a referendum on the ordinance at the spring election," said the Tribune of that date, "practically will be settled by the date on which the settlement is reported to the Council; if the measures are not submitted until next week, and no move toward getting at the petition is made before that time, it is unlikely that the requisite number of signatures, 86,000, can be secured before the statutory limit of February 1."

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But Mayor Dunne has not been as fast asleep as some of his friends have feared and his enemies have believed. On the 7th he urged the City Council by message to readopt the Foreman resolution of a year or more ago (vol. viii, p. 456), pledging the Council to make no final settlement of the traction question without an approval by popular vote on referendum. The adverse vote upon this request of the Mayor proves the danger that confronts the city. If a referendum is not obtained before the 1st of February, the Council will probably pass, over the Mayor's veto, a franchise ordinance that will practically strip the city of its rights and turn over the streets for twenty years to come to Pierpont Morgan's stock-jobbing crew.

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ERNEST HOWARD CROSBY.

To some men their ideals are realities, and Ernest Howard Crosby was conspicuously one of these. His ideals were not dreamy ruminations for drawing room chat or club house banter. They were not intellectual playthings for leisure hours when the serious work of life is suspended. They were in no sense secondary. Mr. Crosby's ideals were to him the primary object of his life, its beginning and its end, its form and its substance, to which everything else was subordinate, to which everything else was made to give way.

Accidents of worldly fortune had indeed placed him beyond any necessity for practically contrasting the seriousness of his ideals with the seriousness of making a living. But such a test would have been a minor one in comparison with some that he actually endured. The essence of it all is not that as a man of leisure he was able to devote himself to his ideals with singleness of mind, but that in all he did, whether from necessity or choice, his ideals had the first place and the controlling influence.

They were worthy of it. For Ernest Crosby's ideals were both lofty and practical. He loved his fellow man with a love that was more than affectionate emotion and truer than conventional philanthropy. Emotional it certainly was, but it was the emotion that inspires. With him the

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all-absorbing sentiment of fraternal love inspired rational thought and generated rational activity. It was the profound fraternal love which we should call "justice," if it were not that "justice" has been perverted to mean brutal vengeance. In the sense of right relations, of moral equilibrium, of social harmony, the word "justice" more truly than any other defines the love that Ernest Crosby had for his fellow men.

Awakened by Tolstoy to the great realities of the ideal, Mr. Crosby found in Henry George, as Tolstoy had told him he would, the method of social regeneration. From the hour of that awakening, he lived a new life—a life from within outward instead of one from without inward, from himself to others and no longer from others to himself. It was a short life, but none of it was wasted. In essay and speech and poem, Ernest Howard Crosby has left a record of idealistic work that will continue to serve the human race long after the work of the most successful among his sordidly practical contemporaries has been thrust aside as rubbish and forgotten.

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THE PESSIMISM OF OPTIMISM.

"Ernest H. Crosby of New York, who died at Baltimore on Thursday, aged 50 years, was a conspicuous example of the waste of good abilities coupled with great earnestness and zeal in their use. . . . He . . . embraced the doctrine that nearly everything on earth was wrong, that everything which his fellow men did that he did not approve was done from base motives, and that no one could be decent and sincere whose conduct was not governed by his own code of conduct. And so he became a universal fault-finder, whose counsels average people heard with resentment and only that they might do just the contrary to them. . . . He became as a man who passes along a fair street and insists that those in his company shall think only of the sewer under it, or as one who looks upon a stately mansion and insists that the only thing about it worth considering is the garbage can at the back door, or as one who looks at the sun and denies that its light is real because there are spots upon its splendid disk."—Editorial Obituary in Chicago Inter Ocean of January 5, 1907.

Originating as philosophical terms, "optimism" and "pessimism" have passed into current language, the one as a term of condemnation, the other as a term of reproach. Etymologically the optimist is one who hopes for the best, the pessimist the one who expects the worst. Currently the optimist is the apostle of good cheer, the preacher of faith in mankind, the prophet of a better day; the pessimist is the knocker, the kicker, the cynic, the man who is always "agin the government." Yet, like many another word of honorable extraction and established meaning, each term often has been made to perform duties at variance with its character. So often indeed are they impressed into traitorous service that a discerning person is reminded of the devil stealing the livery of heaven, and in some vocabularies would rather be mentioned as a pessimist than as an optimist.

Starting with the premise that an optimist is one who always "looks upon the bright side," and the pessimist is the muck-raker who always sees the "dark side," the apologists for every existing evil use the words to condemn honesty and varnish hypocracy, to discourage investigation and condone graft, to prove that whatever is is right, and whoever would suggest improvement is an enemy of society. Wanting in discrimination, they have to resort to metaphors which show how vagabond ideas may masquerade in respectable phrases. For instance, every one has heard such illustrations as these: "The optimist is the traveler who sees the beautiful landscape, and the pessimist is one who keeps his eyes upon the mud in the road;" "The optimist sees the ring of the doughnut, while the pessimist sees only the hole;" "The optimist expects only his country's glory, the pessimist fears its ruin," and so on.

According to such illustrations, the optimist could be entirely without foresight, the embodiment of folly, while the pessimist would at least possess the merit of caution. It might be suggested, in comment upon them, that the pessimist who sees the mud is likely to select the safest course, while the landscape gazer is in danger of stumbling into the ditch; that the hole in the doughnut is more digestible than the ring, etc.

In short, to generalize, the optimist who does not discriminate is worse than the pessimist who does not distinguish. The latter may be disagreeable perhaps, but the former is dangerous because a preacher of false security. Making a concrete application of the terms as used in the unconscious sophistry of those who do their thinking according to good form, the optimist is one who would let well enough alone, a stand patter, a defender of the *status quo,* an opponent of every reform. He looks upon the "bright side," that is, he believes all is going well and he will not listen to criticism of public affairs. He fosters sentiment and creates conditions which make the people easy prey for political grafters and commercial flim-flammers. Ventures of a certain kind he calls "larceny" when represented by dollars, and "business enterprise" when it is in millions. A crime is not a crime if the evidence of it escapes the grand jury. By the same token a pessimist is one who has the discernment to see

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