

THE OBSERVER

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EDITOR AND OWNER.

Entered at the postoffice at La Grande, Oregon, as second class matter.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Daily, single copy 5c
 Daily, per week 15c
 Daily, per month 65c

WHO OWNS THE CHURCH?

A writer who evidently had nothing else to do has published in the Survey an article in answer to the question, "Who owns the church?" Noting the vast sum of money invested in church property he is perturbed because church taxes are remitted and other "favors" granted. Certain kinds of business, he says, are prohibited from encroachment upon zones occupied by churches and "ministers are generally carried at half fare on the railroads." Persons not members of the church contribute to the erection and maintenance of buildings and "for advertising purposes churches are treated as public institutions." Hence the author would put the churches with the railroads and demand general public control.

All of which might be ingenious if it were based on fact. But it is not. "For advertising purposes" new towns do put their church list at the front because churches are the evidence of social welfare, profitable investment and a commercial future. Infidels have been known to support them under such conditions. But as a whole every church is built and operated voluntarily and chiefly by its own members—while the whole community gets the benefit. It is the greatest police force in society.

Because of its uplifting influence the community in small degree compensates the church by remission of taxes, but the church is in the world to give more than it gets. In most states ministers no longer are carried by the railroads at half fare; when they are so carried it was a niggardly recognition of a social debt to the clerical class which can never be repaid in money.

But the writer turns a logical somersault when he cites popular indifference and criticism of churches in support of his allegation that the church does not express the will of the people. Even if that were true the blame should rest on the people, not on the churches. In America the accountability of the average church is not the problem, but rather the responsibility of the people who decline to heed the church's appeals for support and co-operation. The question who owns the property is beside the mark. The real owner is God to whom it is dedicated.

THE IRON IN ANGLO-SAXON BLOOD

"We took risks. We knew we took them. Things have come out against us and therefore we have no cause for complaint but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last."

Capt. Scott's last written words will stand as a message of inspira-

tion to a world in which the taking of risks is popular enough but the cheerful facing of the price of losing is not so general.

Every man must take risks if he is to achieve anything. If he has a big ideal, and is determined to attain it he must risk something—his time, his money, his health, his strength, his prosperity, his peace of mind, his ease, his luxuries—according to the circumstances. It is written in big letters in the book of life that no one possibly can get anything for nothing. He may think he is getting it for nothing, but always in the end there is a price to pay. Always there is a risk—a "hazard of new fortunes"—to be run.

The wise man puts his aim in one balance and the risks in another. If the aim is heavy enough it makes risks, heavy in themselves but light by comparison seem nothing. Quietly and unostentatiously he accepts the dare of fate. It may be only his money he risks; it may be only his job; or it may be his whole life's happiness. If the aim is worthy he can in the bitter hour of defeat call to his aid some such lofty philosophy as Capt. Scott threw in the face of death. If it is unworthy no philosophy can truly comfort him.

Great ambitions do this to men—they make them able to bear the disappointments that hinder them from making rapid progress to their goal and if in the end the goal is lost and all the effort proved in vain, the struggle to win puts a touch of iron in the blood that makes them able to face even the supreme loss.

Because we do not usually think in lofty terms we compress all our vague recognition of the sublimity of such an attitude as that taken by Capt. Scott into terse, illuminative American slang: "He was a game loser." And to be worthy to win we must be willing to lose.

SPANKING THE MILITANT ONES.

What to do with the suffragettes who announce they will stop short of murder but who came dangerously close to it when they dynamited the house of Chancellor Lloyd-George, is being discussed in England today. Apparently there is no way of punishing them adequately. They glory in being sent to jail and during their imprisonment go on hunger strikes that secure them release, the government naturally not wanting to elevate any of them to the position of a martyr for the cause. Letting them starve to death as they would a male prisoner is being seriously urged on the prison authorities.

Drastic conditions call for drastic remedies. How would spanking do? That would be drastic, and it would not permanently injure the ladies. In addition it would supply just that touch of comedy to their punishment which is necessary if they are to be brought to their senses. If there is anything a woman dreads it is ridicule. She can go to prison, the gallows or the stake with a proud consciousness that she is doing something impressive and dramatic, but it is doubtful if she could go to the official spanker with anything like the same self-glorying pose. To be spanked like a child would be too

much a reminder to the suffragette that she had acted like a child.

To be quite serious, however, the time has come when something should be done for the sensible, law-abiding suffragists of England, the women who will do credit to their sex when they do get the ballot. They are the chief sufferers from the present campaign. If the disorder continues the intelligent women of England will never get the suffrage, for it is human nature to deny what is asked for so roughly and imperiously. To succumb to reason and argument is sound sense and justice; to succumb to threats is cowardice. That probably is how the average Englishman looks on the whole question by this time. In other words, the real merits of the suffrage contentions have been buried under the avalanche of violence. It is time to spank somebody.

Governmental ownership of railroads is a questionable move as a profit sharing plan. Congressmen would drop the seed and franking privilege and begin issuing tourists' tickets during campaigns.

John D. got only \$10,000,000 at the latest Standard Oil melon cutting, but if this happens three or four times a year he may be able to worry along.

A cowcatcher for automobiles has been invented. Owing to the high price of meat it would delight almost any automobilist to catch a cow.

The Brooklyn man who stole an almsbox evidently didn't figure on the cost of gasoline nowadays. Else he would have stolen a horse.

A Chicagoan wants a divorce because his wife threw eggs at him. In these days no man can afford such an extravagant wife.

Women will not be allowed to practice law in Russia, but then, there isn't any law in Russia worth practicing, anyhow.

The only interest some men have in public meetings is in a possible chance of being able to talk without a time limit.

A report says the good roads of France are being worn down by automobiles, but so are the good bank accounts.

It seems as though the new spring hats should at least be kept within the parcels post limit of seventy-two inches.

There are nine million telephones in the United States, and there are times when they all seem to be busy.

On of the unnecessary causes of the high cost of living is the use of eggs in shampooing red hair.

In crossing the Delaware Washington sure "stumped" those New York suffragists.

Speaking of capital punishment, Tom Marshall has got to live in Washington.

A Visit to the Tomb of Jonah.

The site of Nineveh is almost perfectly level. But adjoining the western wall are two huge mounds concealing the palaces of the greatest kings of Assyria. The lower or southern mound is occupied by a mosque and a village of considerable size. Its name is Nebi Ynus, or the Prophet Jonah, for in the mosque is the tomb in which Jonah is said to have been buried. The age of the tomb is uncertain, yet probably it dates from long after the Hebrew prophet's time. However, the place is now sacred, so sacred that pilgrims visit it from afar.

I rode up the steep, narrow streets of the village to the mosque, and to the amazement of the natives I dismounted and entered the mosque yard. A crowd of excited men quickly surrounded me. To a priest I explained that I had come to see the grave of Jonah, and with a motion of the hand I made a understood that he would be rewarded. Removing my shoes, I followed the priest through a dark passage way. There he pointed to a wall and said that the tomb was just beyond. I wished to enter the prayer room from which the tomb itself might be seen, but the place was considered far too sacred for my profane



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THE LITERARY RIVALS.

A Series-Comic Scene Between Victor Hugo and the Two Dumas.

It is perhaps only natural that Mr. A. F. Davidson, the latest biographer of Victor Hugo, annoyed by the extravagant eulogies of the poet that his predecessors had written, should lay a good deal of stress on the great Frenchman's faults and failings. Of these the chief was undoubtedly vanity. Victor Hugo was inordinately vain—vain at one moment with a superb assurance that almost dignified vanity itself, at another with an uneasy jealousy at once petty and absurd.

Some years ago in a review of the work of the two Dumas, father and son, an anecdote was related that well illustrates this trait. Both of the Dumas, Victor Hugo and several others were chatting together when a foreign gentleman was presented, who made an excellent impression on every one until the moment of his departure. As he bowed in taking leave he addressed himself to the most celebrated members of the group and assured them of his pride and satisfaction in having met "the greatest poet, the greatest romancer and the greatest dramatist of France."

"A little unthinking of our friend to address his parting compliment entirely to me, was it not?" remarked Victor Hugo complacently.

The others looked at each other, and he caught the look.

"The dramatist—that was you, then, you think, Dumas?" he inquired of Dumas the younger in an ominous voice. Then a thought even more appalling occurred to him, and without waiting for a reply he turned to Dumas the elder.

"The romancer, monsieur—the romancer! Do I understand you to suppose that by 'the greatest romancer' it was you who was designated? Reply, monsieur!" he demanded. His brow

was thunderous, and the company held their breath, but the elder Dumas, who never found himself at a loss, answered with an easy laugh:

"But certainly it was I, and the dramatist was my son. How should it be otherwise? You did not invite the gentleman to dine, and I did. You are not a cook—a good cook, a veritable prince among cooking amateurs—and I am! His compliments, such as they are, are for us, his prospective hosts. But they are only payment in advance for the salad marseillaise of peppers stuffed with minced crab meat which I have promised to prepare for him and which I invite you to share also."

The great and only Hugo shrugged a tolerantly contemptuous shoulder.

"No! I have had enough of the society of this gentleman who speaks from the stomach, not the head," he stated grandly. "You may appreciate it, Dumas, but I do not. It is true—I am not a cook."

A Cheap Marine Telescope.

Make an oblong narrow box out of four pieces of quarter inch board about two feet long by sixteen inches wide, and fit a piece of clear, clean glass across one end, held in place by brass banded tacks driven into the wood and overlapping the glass. Fill all the cracks with sealing wax to keep out the light. Then plunge the glass end two or three inches into the water and look through the open end. This simple marine telescope is made on the principle of the more elaborate glasses through which to look at the famous gardens under the sea near the Catalina Islands.—Christian Herald.

A Parallel.

Mr. Merry—Jack Jones, I am told, laughed while he was being married. Mr. Grouch—Well, haven't men been known to joke on the scaffold?—Baltimore American.