

THE OBSERVER

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OLD MAN CLEMMON'S CAREER

Rankin Clemmons, the barefoot millionaire of Kentucky died the other day, famed for three things. He owned more land in the Blue Grass country than any other individual, close to 10,000 acres, and all acquired by his own industry and thrift. Dying at ninety, he was hale, hearty and master of his affairs up to three weeks before his death, although never calling in a doctor in all that time. Finally his wisdom was of such quality that he refused to take his rule of life seriously enough to propound it as a doctrine which all might follow to advantage.

Old man Clemmons' way of living suited him; that was enough. He was born strong and lived in the open air; did manual work every day of his life except during his one spree—his honeymoon. He never carried a watch, ordering his goings and comings, his risings and retrappings by the sun. But he sagely refrained from attaining any virtue to Puritan hours. "It's what one does between getting up and going to bed that counts." But the gem of the Clemmons' death-bed interview is his reply when the reporter asked the "barefoot millionaire" if he had any advice to give the coming generation. Said he:

"Advice to the coming generation? Why, my children never would accept my advice. I've quit giving advice. But if anybody would follow what I said, I'd say, 'First attend to your own business.'"

What a silent, staid, uninteresting world it would be if we were all wise enough to take old man Clemmons' sagacious advice. Though precious few of us take advice all of us enjoy hearing it and giving advice and that universal appetite helps to keep alive some of the most exalted forms of human activity—churches, universities, social settlements, uplift organizations and newspapers. Many a man dies poor as a churchmouse who has had a broader and more meaningful grand grave not to tell everybody to follow his example left his record life like Rankin Clemmons. However, since his life suited him and he had been singularly immune from criticism.

HIDING FROM WAR'S HORRORS

From Vienna, home of "The Merry Widow" and the "Spring Maid" comes an odd tale. Three ladies, mother and daughters, wearied of the din and tragedy of war. All about them were regiments marching, couriers dashing, invalids limping, paupers begging, working men and women rioting for bread, hospitals full of wounded. The trio decided that since the war was not of their making they were not called upon to endure its travails. So they shut themselves up in their house, stocked it with supplies sufficient for three months, pulled down the blinds and lived on serenely. But the paternal government would not let them rest. The police, thinking the family had been murdered, disturbed

their calm by breaking into the house. These Viennese women were wise in the strictly selfish sense. They set their own quietude above everything else in the world, above the hunger of their neighbors, the cries of the wounded, the peril of their state. As long as they had peace and food within their four walls, what cared they for the winds of hate and poverty blowing just around the corner?

No doubt very many Europeans, especially women, would like to divorce themselves from the present turmoil by the simple expedient of hibernating until the war is over. The ghostly mess enervates sensitive minds and unbalances the weak. But fortunately for all concerned few turn the wish into deed. So titled men and women work side by side with commoners and paupers to relieve distress and heal the wounds of war.

Beyond all doubt the world has most to hope from those who do not hide themselves away from its horrors. The fullness of life belongs to those who dare to do and endure. Better a week in a typhus hospital helping the afflicted than a year in a self-made prison administering only to our own puny wants. In the deeper sense man cannot live to himself alone. People may cut themselves off from their fellows but once the divorce is accomplished they are dead at heart and merely encumber the earth with their further presence.

Experiment department says radium is bad for the soil. It only costs a million dollars an ounce, but don't use too much of it in making the spring garden.

A GERMAN GUIDE

(From The Germania Herald Milwaukee.)

Washington Our Counsellor

We have the following comment to make upon the proper treatment of the German Note:

In view of the British domination and enslavement of world opinion, in view of the attitude primarily of our Eastern press, representing in its demands for war with Germany less than five per cent of the American public, in view of the complexion of the influences directly besetting the President, we deem it our duty to accord our President such assistance as is in our power; we therefore most respectfully but most urgently submit that our President who seeks unbiased counsel in the present crisis of our Nation will find it in the undying words of George Washington in his Farewell Address.

From George Washington's Farewell Address

"Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct. And can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period a great nation to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and temporary advantages which might be lost by steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not secured the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by the vices?"

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded, and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer in-

sult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasion of dispute occur.

Hence frequent collisions, unenvomed, and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject. At other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into ope the enmities in the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties, from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her policies or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyances; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world, so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine senses. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand, neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the Government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an il-

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In every large city there is one store that is recognized as the best men's store. Particular men buy their garments there because they never have to question either prices, style or quality.

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