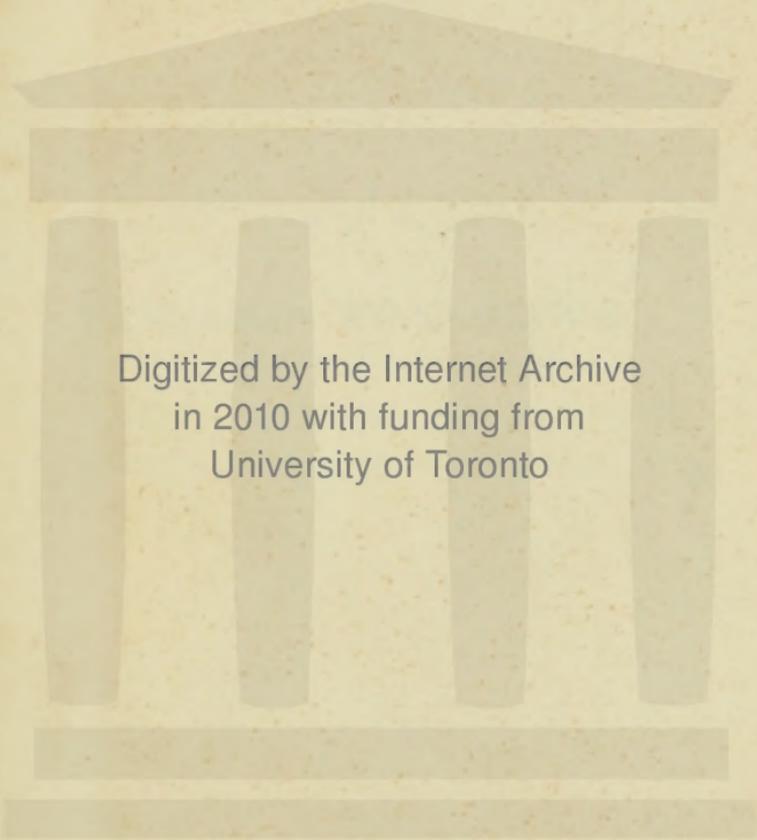


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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND JARED

SPARKS' CONTINUATION (ABRIDGED)

EDITED BY EDGAR SANDERSON, M.A.

COMMENDATORY

“The great Pennsylvanian Dr. Franklin.”

—LORD MACAULAY.

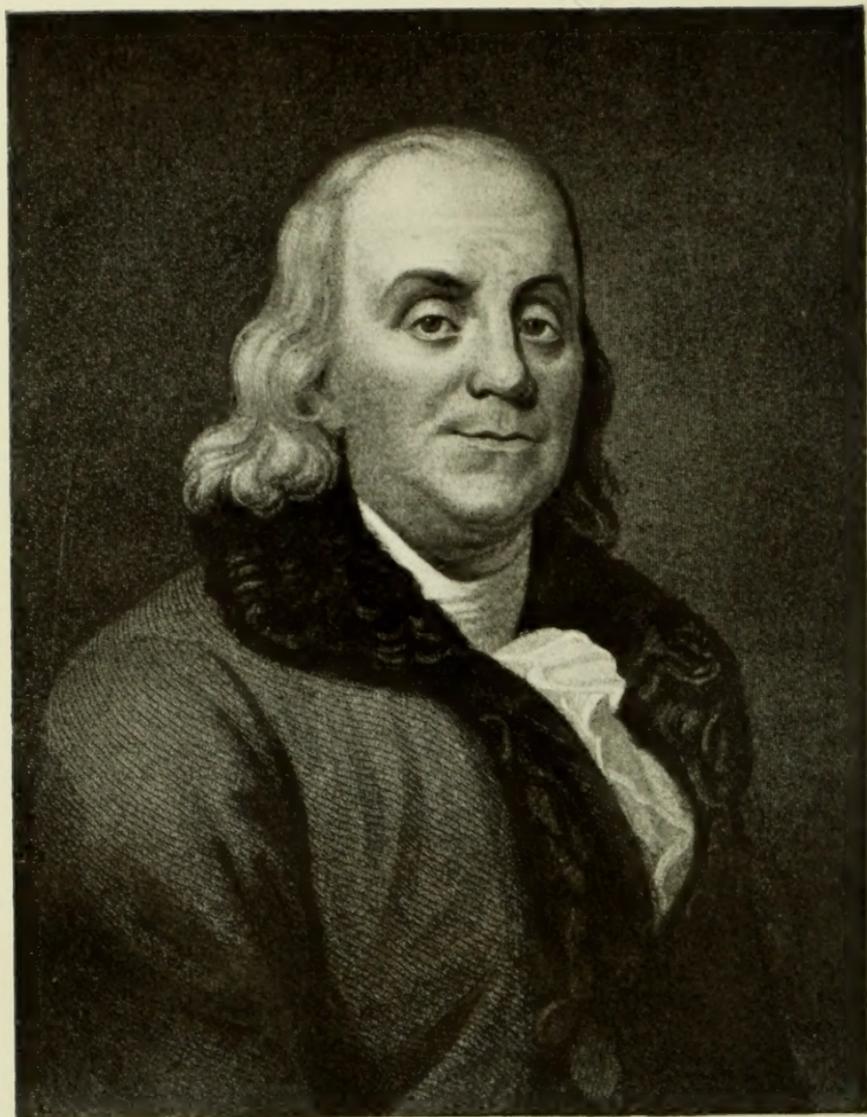
“I recommend the study of Franklin to all young people; he was a real philanthropist, a wonderful man. It was said that it was honour enough to any one country to have produced such a man as Franklin.”—REV. SYDNEY SMITH.

ERRATUM

Page 87, line 7: for 1703 read 1730

ERRATA

Page 21 line 7: for 1793 read 1792



After the picture by J. A. Duplessis.

B. Franklin

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
Benjamin Franklin

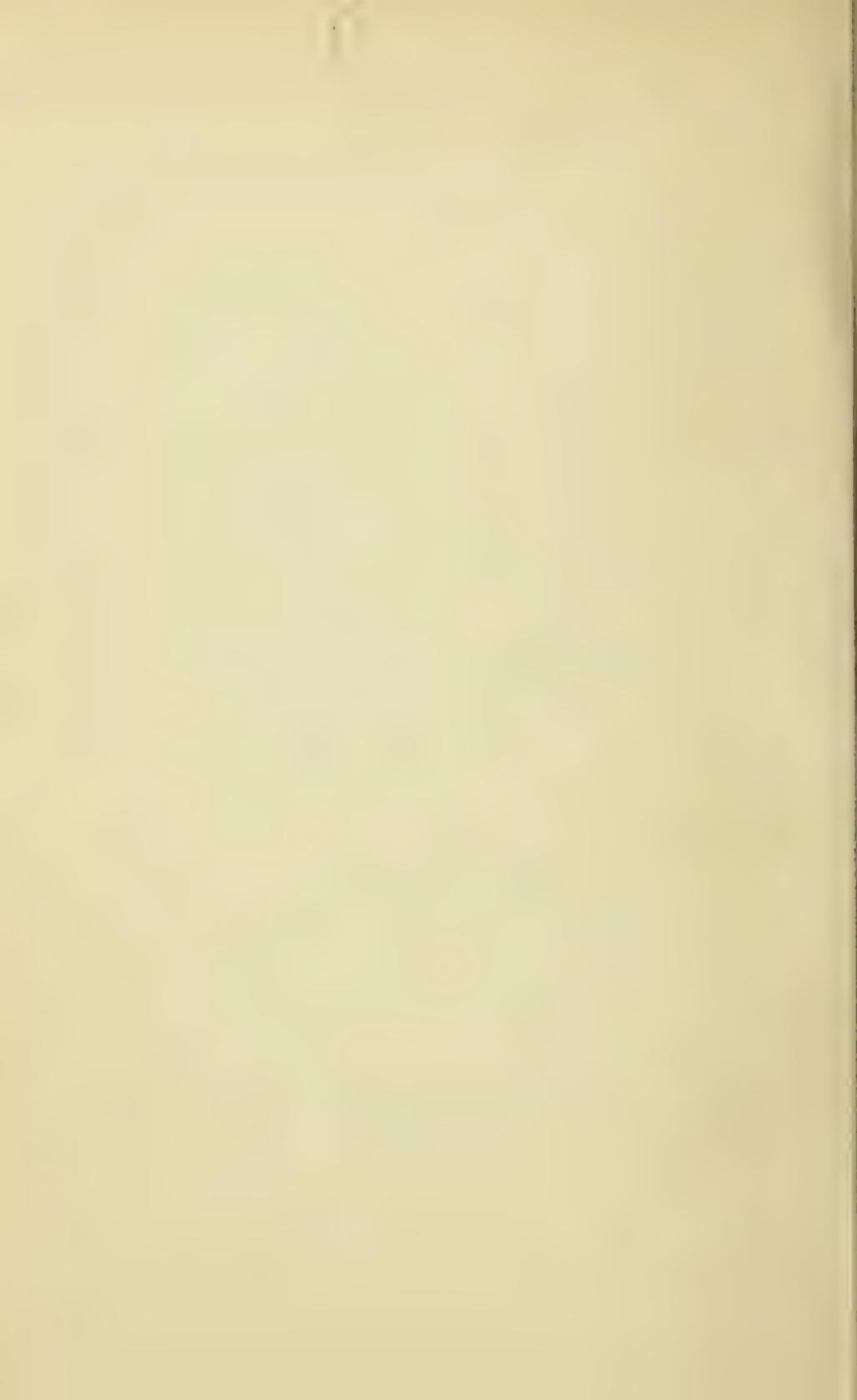
TO WHICH IS ADDED JARED SPARKS'
CONTINUATION (ABRIDGED)

NEWLY EDITED, WITH NOTES
AND A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

London : **HUTCHINSON & CO.**
Paternoster Row   1903



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S
AUTOBIOGRAPHY



THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

CHAPTER I

Origin and Genealogy of his Family—His Birth—His Mother—Employments in his Boyhood—Anecdote—Character of his Father—Epitaph on his Father and Mother—Fond of Reading—Apprenticed to his Brother to learn the Printer's Trade—Writes Ballads—Intimacy with Collins—Practises Composition—Adopts a Vegetable Diet—Studies the Socratic Method of Disputation—Concerned in publishing a Newspaper—Disagrees with his Brother—Leaves Boston, and takes Passage in a Sloop for New York.

I HAVE ever had a pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the inquiries I made among the remains of my relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to learn the circumstances of *my* life, many of which you are unacquainted with; and expecting the enjoyment of a few weeks' uninterrupted leisure, I sit down to write them. Besides, there are some other inducements that excite me to this undertaking. From the poverty and obscurity in which I was

born, and in which I passed my earliest years, I have raised myself to a state of affluence and some degree of celebrity in the world. As constant good fortune has accompanied me even to an advanced period of life, my posterity will perhaps be desirous of learning the means which I employed, and which, thanks to Providence, so well succeeded with me. They may also deem them fit to be imitated, should any of them find themselves in similar circumstances.

This good fortune, when I reflect on it (which is frequently the case), has induced me sometimes to say, that, if it were left to my choice, I should have no objection to go over the same life from its beginning to the end; requesting only the advantage authors have of correcting in a second edition the faults of the first. So would I also wish to change some incidents of it for others more favourable. Notwithstanding, if this condition was denied, I should still accept the offer of recommencing the same life. But as this repetition is not to be expected, that which resembles most living one's life over again, seems to be to recall all the circumstances of it, and, to render this remembrance more durable, to record them in writing.

In thus employing myself, I shall yield to the inclination so natural to old men, of talking of themselves and their own actions; and I shall indulge it without being tiresome to those who, from respect to my age, might conceive themselves obliged to listen to me, since they will be always free to read me or not. And, lastly (I may as well confess it, as the denial of it would be believed by nobody), I shall, perhaps, not a little gratify my own vanity. Indeed, I never heard or saw the introductory words, "Without vanity I may say," etc., but some vain

thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of it themselves; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others who are within his sphere of action; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd, if a man were to thank God for his *vanity* among the other comforts of life.

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire, with all humility, to acknowledge that I attribute the mentioned happiness of my past life to His divine providence, which led me to the means I used, and gave the success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness will still be exercised towards me in continuing that happiness, or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse, which I may experience as others have done; the complexion of my future fortune being known to Him only in whose power it is to bless us, even in our afflictions.

Some notes, which one of my uncles, who had the same curiosity in collecting family anecdotes, once put into my hands, furnished me with several particulars relative to our ancestors. From these notes I learned, that they lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, on a freehold of about thirty acres, for at least three hundred years, and how much longer could not be ascertained.

This small estate would not have sufficed for their maintenance without the business of a smith, which had continued in the family down to my uncle's time, the eldest son being always brought up to that employment; a custom which he and my father followed with regard to their eldest sons. When I searched the registers

at Ecton, I found an account of their marriages and burials from the year 1555 only, as the registers kept did not commence previous thereto. I, however, learned from it that I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back. My grandfather, Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he was too old to continue his business, when he retired to Banbury, in Oxfordshire, to the house of his son John, with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my uncle died, and lies buried. We saw his gravestone in 1758. His eldest son Thomas lived in the house at Ecton, and left it, with the land, to his only daughter, who, with her husband, one Fisher, of Wellingborough, sold it to Mr. Isted, now lord of the manor there. My grandfather had four sons, who grew up; viz., Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Josiah. Being at a distance from my papers, I will give you what account I can of them from memory; and if my papers are not lost in my absence, you will find among them many more particulars.

Thomas, my eldest uncle, was bred a smith under his father, but, being ingenious, and encouraged in learning, as all his brothers were, by an Esquire Palmer, then the principal inhabitant of that parish, he qualified himself for the Bar, and became a considerable man in the county; was chief mover of all public-spirited enterprises for the county or town of Northampton, as well as of his own village, of which many instances were related of him; and he was much taken notice of and patronised by Lord Halifax. He died in 1702, the 6th of January, four years, to a day, before I was born. The recital which some elderly persons made to us of his character, I remember struck you as something extraordinary, from its similarity with what you knew of

me. "Had he died," said you, "four years later, on the same day, one might have supposed a transmigration."

John, my next uncle, was bred a dyer, I believe of wool. Benjamin was bred a silk dyer, serving an apprenticeship in London. He was an ingenious man. I remember, when I was a boy, he came to my father's in Boston, and resided in the house with us for several years. There was always a particular affection between my father and him, and I was his godson. He lived to a great age. He left behind him two quarto volumes of manuscript, of his own poetry, consisting of fugitive pieces addressed to his friends. He had invented a shorthand of his own, which he taught me; but, not having practised it, I have now forgotten it. He was very pious, and an assiduous attendant at the sermons of the best preachers, which he reduced to writing according to his method, and had thus collected several volumes of them.

He was also a good deal of a politician; too much so, perhaps, for his station. There fell lately into my hands, in London, a collection he had made of all the principal political pamphlets relating to public affairs, from the year 1641 to 1717. Many of the volumes are wanting, as appears by their numbering; but there still remain eight volumes in folio, and twenty in quarto and in octavo. A dealer in old books had met with them, and, knowing me by name, having bought books of him, he brought them to me. It would appear that my uncle must have left them here, when he went to America, which was about fifty years ago. I found several of his notes in the margins. His grandson, Samuel Franklin, is still living in Boston.

Our humble family early embraced the reformed religion. Our forefathers continued Protestants through

the reign of Mary, when they were sometimes in danger of persecution, on account of their zeal against popery. They had an English Bible, and to conceal it and place it in safety, it was fastened open with tapes, under and within the cover of a joint stool. When my great-grandfather wished to read it to his family, he placed the joint stool on his knees, and then turned over the leaves under the tapes. One of the children stood at the door to give notice if he saw the apparitor coming, who was an officer of the spiritual court. In that case the stool was turned down again upon its feet, when the Bible remained concealed under it as before. This anecdote I had from uncle Benjamin. The family continued all of the Church of England till about the end of Charles the Second's reign, when some of the ministers that had been outed for their non-conformity, holding conventicles in Northamptonshire, my uncle Benjamin and my father Josiah adhered to them, and so continued all their lives. The rest of the family remained with the Episcopal Church.

My father married young, and carried his wife, with three children, to New England, about 1685. The conventicles being at that time forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed in the meetings, some considerable men of his acquaintance determined to go to that country, and he was prevailed with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy the exercise of their religion with freedom. By the same wife my father had four children more born there, and by a second, ten others,—in all seventeen; of whom I remember to have seen thirteen sitting together at his table; who all grew up to years of maturity, and were married. I was the youngest son, and the youngest of all the children except two daughters. I was born in Boston, in New England.

My mother, the second wife of my father, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England; of whom honourable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his ecclesiastical history of that country, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*, as "a godly and learned Englishman," if I remember the words rightly. I was informed he wrote several small occasional works, but only one of them was printed, which I remember to have seen several years since. It was written in 1675. It was in familiar verse, according to the taste of the times and people; and addressed to the government there. It asserts the liberty of conscience in behalf of the Anabaptists, the Quakers, and other sectaries that had been persecuted. He attributes to this persecution the Indian wars, and other calamities that had befallen the country; regarding them as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offence, and exhorting the repeal of those laws, so contrary to charity. This piece appeared to me as written with manly freedom, and a pleasing simplicity. The six last lines I remember, but have forgotten the preceding ones of the stanza; the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from good will, and therefore he would be known to be the author:—

“Because to be a libeller
I hate it with my heart.
From Sherbon Town where now I dwell
My name I do put here;
Without offence your real friend,
It is Peter Folger.”

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar school at eight years of age; my father intending to devote me, as the tithe

of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read, which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read, and the opinion of all his friends that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me his shorthand volumes of sermons, to set up with, if I would learn his shorthand. I continued, however, at the grammar school rather less than a year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be at the head of the same class, and was removed into the next class, whence I was to be placed in the third at the end of the year.

But my father, burdened with a numerous family, was unable, without inconvenience, to support the expense of a college education. Considering, moreover, as he said to one of his friends, in my presence, the little encouragement that line of life afforded to those educated for it, he gave up his first intentions, took me from the grammar school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell. He was a skilful master, and successful in his profession, employing the mildest and most encouraging methods. Under him I learned to write a good hand pretty soon; but I failed entirely in arithmetic. At ten years old I was taken to help my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler; a business to which he was not bred, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, because he found that his dyeing trade, being little in request, would not maintain his family. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wicks for the

candles, filling the moulds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, etc.

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination to go to sea; but my father declared against it. But residing near the water, I was much in it and on it. I learned to swim well, and to manage boats; and, when embarked with other boys, I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally the leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly conducted. There was a salt marsh, which bounded part of the millpond, on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there for us to stand upon, and I shewed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly in the evening, when the workmen were gone home, I assembled a number of my playfellows, and we worked diligently like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, till we brought them all to make our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which had formed our wharf. Inquiry was made after the authors of this transfer; we were discovered, complained of, and corrected by our fathers; and, though I demonstrated the utility of our work, mine convinced me, that that which was not honest, could not be truly useful.

I suppose you may like to know what kind of a man my father was. He had an excellent constitution,

was of a middle stature, well set, and very strong. He could draw prettily, and was skilled a little in music. His voice was sonorous and agreeable, so that when he played on his violin, and sang withal, as he was accustomed to do after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had some knowledge of mechanics, and on occasion was very handy with other tradesmen's tools. But his great excellence was his sound understanding, and his solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and public affairs. It is true he was never employed in the latter, the numerous family he had to educate, and the straitness of his circumstances, keeping him close to his trade ; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading men, who consulted him for his opinion in public affairs, and those of the Church he belonged to ; and who showed a great respect for his judgment and advice.

He was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs, when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbour to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent, in the conduct of life ; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table ; whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavour, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind ; so that I was brought up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent

what kind of food was set before me. Indeed, I am so unobservant of it, that to this day I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner of what dishes it consisted. This has been a great convenience to me in travelling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

My mother had likewise an excellent constitution ; she suckled all her ten children. I never knew either my father or mother to have any sickness but that of which they died ; he at eighty-nine, and she at eighty-five years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription :

JOSIAH FRANKLIN

and

ABIAH his wife,

Lie here interred.

They lived lovingly together in wedlock,

Fifty-five years ;

And without an estate or any gainful employment,

By constant labour, and honest industry,

(With God's blessing,)

Maintained a large family comfortably ;

And brought up thirteen children and seven grandchildren

Reputably.

From this instance, Reader,

Be encouraged to diligence in thy calling,

And distrust not Providence.

He was a pious and prudent man,

She a discreet and virtuous woman,

Their youngest son,

In filial regard to their memory,

Places this stone.

J. F. born 1655 ; died 1744. Æt. 89.

A. F. born 1667 ; died 1752. Æt. 85.

By my rambling digressions, I perceive myself to be grown old. I used to write more methodically. But one does not dress for private company as for a public ball. Perhaps it is only negligence.

To return; I continued thus employed in my father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was every appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father had apprehensions that, if he did not put me to one more agreeable, I should break loose and go to sea, as my brother Josiah had done, to his great vexation. In consequence, he took me to walk with him and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavour to fix it on some trade or profession that would keep me on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools. And it has been often useful to me, to have learned so much by it, as to be able to do some trifling jobs in the house, when a workman was not at hand, and to construct little machines for my experiments, at the moment when the intention of making these was warm in my mind. My father determined at last for the cutler's trade, and placed me for some days on trial with Samuel, son to my uncle Benjamin, who was bred to that trade in London, and had just established himself in Boston. But the sum he exacted as a fee for my apprenticeship displeased my father, and I was taken home again.

From my infancy I was passionately fond of reading,

and all the money that came into my hands was laid out in the purchasing of books. I was very fond of voyages. My first acquisition was Bunyan's works in separate little volumes; I afterwards sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections*. They were small chapmen's books,* and cheap; forty volumes in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read. I have often regretted, that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was resolved I should not be bred to divinity. There was among them Plutarch's *Lives*, which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of Defoe's, called *An Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *An Essay to do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son, James, of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters, to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me

* Commonly called "chap-books," a term applied to popular story books, which in former days used to be hawked about by chapmen, such as *Tom Hickathrift*, *Jack the Giant Killer*, etc. Burton's Histories were of rather a better class, and comprised *The English Hero, or, Sir Francis Drake Revived*, *Admirable Curiosities*, etc., etc.

bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indenture, when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve an apprenticeship till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made a great progress in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon, and clean. Often I sat up in my chamber reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned in the morning, lest it should be found missing.

After some time a merchant, an ingenious, sensible man, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, frequented our printing office, took notice of me, and invited me to see his library, and very kindly proposed to lend me such books as I chose to read. I now took a strong inclination for poetry, and wrote some little pieces. My brother, supposing it might turn to account, encouraged me, and induced me to compose two occasional ballads. One was called *The Light-House Tragedy*, and contained an account of the shipwreck of Captain Worthilake with his two daughters; the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of the famous *Teach*, or *Blackbeard*, the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in street-ballad style; and when they were printed, my brother sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold prodigiously, the event being recent, and having made a great noise. This success flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by criticising my performances, and telling me verse-makers

were generally beggars. Thus I escaped being a poet, and probably a very bad one ; but, as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how in such a situation I acquired what little ability I may be supposed to have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another ; which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company, by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice ; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, it is productive of disgusts, and perhaps enmities, with those who may have occasion for friendship. I had caught this by reading my father's books of dispute on religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and generally men of all sorts who have been bred at Edinburgh.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, on the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, having a greater plenty of words, and sometimes, as I thought, I was vanquished more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to

him. He answered and I replied. Three or four letters on a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers, and read them. Without entering into the subject in dispute, he took occasion to talk to me about my manner of writing; observed that though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which he attributed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method, and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to my manner of writing, and determined to endeavour to improve my style.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished if possible to imitate it. With that view I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiments in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should occur to me. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time, if I had gone on making verses; since the continual search for words of the same import, but of different length to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me

master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales in the *Spectator*, and turned them into verse ; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again.

I also sometimes jumbled my collection of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavoured to reduce them into the best order before I began to form the full sentences and complete the subject. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of the thoughts. By comparing my work with the original, I discovered many faults, and corrected them ; but I sometimes had the pleasure to fancy, that, in certain particulars of small consequence, I had been fortunate enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think that I might in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. The time I allotted for writing exercises, and for reading, was at night, or before work began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house, avoiding as much as I could the constant attendance at public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which I still continued to consider a duty, though I could not afford time to practise it.

When about sixteen years of age, I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconvenience, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty

pudding and a few others, and then proposed to my brother, that if he would give me weekly half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying of books ; but I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and despatching presently my light repast (which was often no more than a biscuit, or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins, or a tart from the pastry cook's and a glass of water), had the rest of the time, till their return, for study ; in which I made the greater progress from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which generally attend temperance in eating and drinking. Now it was that (being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed learning when at school,) I took Cocker's book on *Arithmetic*, and went through the whole by myself with the greatest ease. I also read Seller's and Sturny's book on *Navigation*, which made me acquainted with the little geometry it contains ; but I never proceeded far in that science. I read about this time Locke *On Human Understanding*, and *The Art of Thinking* by Messrs. de Port-Royal.

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), having at the end of it two little sketches on the Arts of Rhetoric and Logic, the latter finishing with a dispute in the Socratic method ; and soon after I procured Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many examples of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradictions

and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer. And being then from reading Shaftesbury and Collins made a doubter, as I already was in many points of our religious doctrines, I found this method the safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took delight in it, practised it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people even of superior knowledge into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved.

I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence, never using, when I advance anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly, undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, *I conceive*, or *apprehend*, a thing to be so and so; *It appears to me*, or *I should not think it, so or so, for such and such reasons*; or, *I imagine it to be so*; or, *It is so, if I am not mistaken*. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting. And as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to *be informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning and sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat most of those purposes for which speech was given to us. In fact, if you wish to instruct others, a positive dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may occasion opposition, and

prevent a candid attention. If you desire instruction and improvement from others, you should not at the same time express yourself fixed in your present opinions. Modest and sensible men, who do not love disputation, will leave you undisturbed in the possession of your errors. In adopting such a manner, you can seldom expect to please your hearers, or obtain the concurrence you desire. Pope judiciously observes,

“Men must be taught, as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.”

He also recommends it to us,

“To speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence.”

And he might have joined with this line that which he has coupled with another, I think, less properly,

“For want of modesty is want of sense.”

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the lines,

“Immodest words admit of no defence,
For want of modesty is want of sense.”

Now, is not the *want of sense*, where a man is so unfortunate as to want it, some apology for his *want of modesty*? And would not the lines stand more justly thus?

“Immodest words admit *but* this defence,
That want of modesty is want of sense.”

This, however, I should submit to better judgments.

My brother had, in 1720 or 1721, begun to print a newspaper. It was the second that appeared in America, and was called the *New England Courant*.

The only one before it was the *Boston News-Letter*. I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from the undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being in their judgment enough for America. At this time, 1771, there are not less than five-and-twenty. He went on, however, with the undertaking. I was employed to carry the papers to the customers, after having worked in composing the types and printing off the sheets.

He had some ingenious men among his friends, who amused themselves by writing little pieces for this paper, which gained it credit, and made it more in demand, and these gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their conversations, and their accounts of the approbation their papers were received with, I was excited to try my hand among them. But, being still a boy, and suspecting that my brother would object to printing anything of mine in his paper, if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my hand, and, writing an anonymous paper, I put it at night under the door of the printing-house. It was found in the morning, and communicated to his writing friends when they called in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my hearing, and I had the exquisite pleasure of finding it met with their approbation, and that, in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character among us for learning and ingenuity. I suppose that I was rather lucky in my judges, and that they were not really so very good as I then believed them to be. Encouraged however by this attempt, I wrote and sent in the same way to the press several other pieces, that were equally approved; and I kept my secret till all my fund of sense for such performances was exhausted, and then

discovered it, when I began to be considered a little more by my brother's acquaintance.

However, that did not quite please him, as he thought it tended to make me too vain. This might be one occasion of the differences we began to have about this time. Though a brother, he considered himself as my master, and me as his apprentice, and accordingly expected the same services from me as he would from another, while I thought he degraded me too much in some he required of me, who from a brother expected more indulgence. Our disputes were often brought before our father, and I fancy I was either generally in the right, or else a better pleader, because the judgment was generally in my favour. But my brother was passionate, and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss; and, thinking my apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected. Perhaps this harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with the aversion to arbitrary power, that has stuck to me through my whole life.

One of the pieces in our newspaper on some political point, which I have now forgotten, gave offence to the Assembly. He was taken up, censured, and imprisoned for a month by the Speaker's warrant, I suppose because he would not discover the author. I too was taken up and examined before the Council; but, though I did not give them any satisfaction, they contented themselves with admonishing me, and dismissed me, considering me perhaps as an apprentice, who was bound to keep his master's secrets. During my brother's confinement, which I resented a good deal notwithstanding our

private differences, I had the management of the paper ; and I made bold to give our rulers some rubs in it, which my brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavourable light, as a youth that had a turn for libelling and satire.

My brother's discharge was accompanied with an order, and a very odd one, that "*James Franklin* should no longer print the newspaper called *The New England Courant*." On a consultation held in our printing-office amongst his friends, what he should do in this conjuncture, it was proposed to elude the order by changing the name of the paper. But my brother, seeing inconveniences in this, came to a conclusion, as a better way, to let the paper in future be printed in the name of *Benjamin Franklin* ; and in order to avoid the censure of the Assembly, that might fall on him, as still printing it by his apprentice, he contrived and consented that my old indenture should be returned to me with a discharge on the back of it, to show in case of necessity ; and, in order to secure him the benefit of my service, I should sign new indentures for the remainder of my time, which were to be kept private. A very flimsy scheme it was ; however, it was immediately executed, and the paper was printed accordingly, under my name, for several months.

At length, a fresh difference arising between my brother and me, I took upon me to assert my freedom ; presuming that he would not venture to produce the new indentures. It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first *errata* of my life ; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow

upon me. Though he was otherwise not an ill-natured man ; perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

When he found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting employment in any other printing-house of the town, by going round and speaking to every master, who accordingly refused to give me work. I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer. And I was rather inclined to leave Boston, when I reflected, that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and, from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes ; and further, that my indiscreet disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people, as an infidel and atheist. I concluded, therefore, to remove to New York ; but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible, that, if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage my flight. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop to take me, under pretence of my being a young man of his acquaintance, that had an intrigue with a girl of bad character, whose parents would compel me to marry her, and that I could neither appear nor come away publicly. I sold my books to raise a little money, was taken on board the sloop privately, had a fair wind, and in three days found myself at New York, near three hundred miles from my home, at the age of seventeen (October, 1723), without the least recommendation, or knowledge of any person in the place, and very little money in my pocket.

CHAPTER II

Journey to Philadelphia—Adventure in a Boat—Dr. Brown—Burlington—His first Appearance in Philadelphia—Quaker Meeting—Seeks for Employment as a Printer—Commences Work in Keimer's Office—Forms Acquaintances—Patronised by Sir William Keith, Governor of Pennsylvania—First Interview with him—Keith proposes to set him up in Business—Returns to Boston—His Father disapproves Keith's Plan—Voyage to New York—Incident on the Passage from Newport—Meets his Friend Collins in New York—They go together to Philadelphia—Collins's ill Conduct causes a Separation—Keith insists on executing his original Plan, and proposes sending him to London to purchase Types—Returns to the use of Animal Food—Anecdotes of Keimer—His Associates, Osborne, Watson, Ralph—Their Exercises in Composition—Resolves to visit England, as advised by Governor Keith.

THE inclination I had had for the sea was by this time done away, or I might now have gratified it. But having another profession, and conceiving myself a pretty good workman, I offered my services to a printer of the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but had removed thence, in consequence of a quarrel with the governor, George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and hands enough already; but he said, "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death; if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was one hundred miles further; I set out however in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill, and drove us upon Long Island. In our way,

a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard ; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old favourite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, copper cuts, a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of, who mixed narration and dialogue ; a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting parts finds himself, as it were, admitted into the company and present at the conversation. Defoe has imitated him successfully in his *Robinson Crusoe*, in his *Moll Flanders*, and other pieces ; and Richardson has done the same in his *Pamela*, etc.

On approaching the island, we found it was in a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surge on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor, and swung out our cable towards the shore. Some people came down to the shore, and hallooed to us, as we did to them ; but the wind was so high, and the surge so loud, that we could not understand each other. There were some small boats near the shore, and we made signs, and called to them to fetch us ; but they either did not comprehend us, or it was impracticable, so they went off. Night approaching, we had no remedy but to have patience till the wind abated ; and in the meantime the boatmen and myself concluded to sleep, if we

could ; and so we crowded into the hatches, where we joined the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray, breaking over the head of our boat, leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest ; but, the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night ; having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum ; the water we sailed on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went to bed ; but, having read somewhere that cold water drunk plentifully was good for a fever, I followed the prescription and sweat plentifully most of the night. My fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty miles to go to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia.

It rained very hard all the day ; I was thoroughly soaked, and by noon a good deal tired ; so I stopped at a poor inn, where I stayed all night ; beginning now to wish I had never left home. I made so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions asked me, I was suspected to be some runaway indentured servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very obliging and friendly. Our acquaintance continued all the rest of his life. He had been, I imagine, an ambulatory quack doctor, for there was no town in England, nor any country in Europe,

of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but he was an infidel, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to turn the Bible into doggrel verse; as Cotton had formerly done with Virgil. By this means he set many facts in a ridiculous light, and might have done mischief with weak minds, if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and arrived the next morning at Burlington; but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday. Wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought some gingerbread to eat on the water, and asked her advice. She proposed to lodge me till a passage by some other boat occurred. I accepted her offer, being much fatigued by travelling on foot. Understanding I was a printer, she would have had me remain in that town and follow my business; being ignorant what stock was necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only of a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we rowed all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no further; the others knew not where we were, so we put towards the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with

the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arrived there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at Market-Street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best clothes coming round by sea. I was dirty from my being so long in the boat. My pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no one, nor where to look for lodging. Fatigued with walking, rowing, and the want of sleep, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted in a single dollar, and about a shilling in copper coin, which I gave to the boatmen for my passage. At first they refused it, on account of my having rowed; but I insisted on their taking it. Man is sometimes more generous when he has little money than when he has plenty; perhaps to prevent his being thought to have but little.

I walked towards the top of the street, gazing about till near Market Street, where I met a boy with bread. I had often made a meal of dry bread, and, inquiring where he had bought it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to. I asked for biscuits, meaning such as we had at Boston; that sort, it seems, was not made in Philadelphia. I then asked for a threepenny loaf, and was told they had none. Not knowing the different prices, nor the names of the different sorts

of bread, I told him to give me threepenny worth of any sort. He gave me accordingly three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned, and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way; and, coming round, found myself again at Market-Street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in a boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which, by this time, had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers, near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round a while, and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labour and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when some one was kind enough to rouse me. This, therefore, was the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

I then walked down towards the river, and, looking in the faces of every one, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance pleased me; and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get a lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three

Mariners. "Here," said he, "is a house where they receive strangers; but it is not a reputable one: if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better one;" and he conducted me to the Crooked Billet, in Water Street. There I got a dinner; and while I was eating, several questions were asked me, as, from my youth and appearance, I was suspected of being a runaway.

After dinner, my host having shown me to a bed, I laid myself on it without undressing, and slept till six in the evening, when I was called to supper. I went to bed again very early, and slept very soundly till next morning. Then I dressed myself as neat as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford, the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, travelling on horseback, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who perhaps might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then, till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, "Neighbour," said Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business: perhaps you may want such a one." He asked me a few questions, put a composing stick in my hand to see how I worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do. And taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's-people that had a good will for him, entered into a conversation on

his present undertaking and prospects ; while Bradford, not discovering that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business into his own hands, drew him on, by artful questions, and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what influence he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one was a crafty old sophister, and the other a true novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was.

The printing-house, I found, consisted of an old, damaged press, and a small, worn-out fount of English types, which he was using himself, composing an *Elegy* on Aquila Rose, before mentioned ; an ingenious younq man, of excellent character, much respected in the town, secretary to the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to *write* them, for his method was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. There being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the *Elegy* probably requiring all the letter, no one could help him. I endeavoured to put his press (which he had not yet used, and of which he understood nothing) into order to be worked with ; and, promising to come and print off his *Elegy*, as soon as he should have got it ready, I returned to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the *Elegy*. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was

very illiterate ; and Keimer, though something of a scholar, was a mere compositor, knowing nothing of presswork. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations. At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion ; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterwards found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I worked with him. He had a house, indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me ; but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's, before mentioned, who was the owner of his house ; and, my chest of clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town that were lovers of reading, with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly ; and gained money by my industry and frugality. I lived very contented, and forgot Boston as much as I could, and did not wish it should be known where I resided except to my friend Collins, who was in the secret, and kept it faithfully. At length, however, an incident happened that occasioned my return home much sooner than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, and hearing of me, wrote me a letter mentioning the grief of my relations and friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good-will to me, and that everything would be accommodated to my mind if I would return ; to which he

entreated me earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter, thanked him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston so fully and in such a light as to convince him that I was not so much in the wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, Governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and showed him the letter. The governor read it, and seemed surprised when he was told my age. He said I appeared a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged; the printers at Philadelphia were wretched ones; and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed; for his part he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This my brother-in-law Holmes afterwards told me in Boston; but I knew as yet nothing of it; when one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the Governor and another gentleman (who proved to be Colonel French, of Newcastle, in the province of Delaware,) finely dressed, come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him; but the Governor inquired for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unused to, made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blamed me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent madeira. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared with astonishment. I went,

however, with the Governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner of Third Street, and over the madeira he proposed my setting up my business. He stated the probabilities of my success, and both he and Colonel French assured me I should have their interest and influence to obtain for me the public business of both governments. And as I expressed doubts that my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would set forth the advantages, and he did not doubt he should determine him to comply. So it was concluded I should return to Boston by the first vessel, with the Governor's letter to my father. In the meantime it was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual. The Governor sent for me now and then to dine with him, which I considered a great honour ; more particularly as he conversed with me in a most affable, familiar, and friendly manner.

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offered for Boston. I took leave of Keimer, as going to see my friends. The Governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia, as a thing that would make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak ; we had a blustering time at sea, and were obliged to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arrived safe however at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me ; for my brother Homes was not yet returned, and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surprised the family ; all were however very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except

my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with nearly five pounds sterling in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I liked it. I praised it much, and the happy life I led in it, expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and, one of them asking what kind of money we had there, I produced a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of *raree-show* they had not been used to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an opportunity of letting them see my watch; and lastly (my brother still grum and sullen) gave them a dollar to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extremely. For, when my mother sometime after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wish to see us on good terms together, and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said, I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

My father received the Governor's letter with some surprise; but said little of it to me for some time. Captain Holmes returning, he showed it to him, and asked him if he knew Sir William Keith, and what kind of a man he was; adding that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a youth up in business who wanted three years to arrive at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favour of the project, but my father was decidedly against it, and at last gave a flat denial. He wrote a civil letter to Sir William thanking

him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, and declined to assist me as yet in setting up, I being in his opinion too young to be trusted with the management of an undertaking so important, and for which the preparation required a considerable expenditure.

My *old* companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, pleased with the account I gave him of my new country, determined to go thither also ; and, while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection in mathematics and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York ; where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleased that I had been able to obtain so advantageous a character from a person of such note where I had resided ; and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time ; therefore seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advised me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavour to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libelling, to which he thought I had too much inclination ; telling me, that by steady industry and prudent parsimony, I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up ; and that if I came near the matter he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York ; now with their approbation and their blessing.

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island, I

visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always loved me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pennsylvania, about thirty-five pounds currency, desired I would recover it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to employ it in. Accordingly he gave me an order to receive it. This business afterwards occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness.

At Newport we took in a number of passengers, amongst whom were two young women travelling together, and a sensible, matron-like Quaker lady, with her servants. I had shown an obliging disposition to render her some little services, which probably impressed her with sentiments of good will towards me ; for, when she witnessed the daily growing familiarity between the young women and myself, which they appeared to encourage, she took me aside and said, " Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou hast no friend with thee and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to ; depend upon it, these are very bad women ; I can see it by all their actions ; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger ; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seemed at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard, that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York they told me where they lived, and invited me to come and see them, but I avoided it, and it was well I did ; for the next day the

captain missed a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin, and knowing that these were a couple of strumpets ; he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punished. So though we had escaped a sunken rock, which we scraped upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together ; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as industrious lad ; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence he had acquired a habit of drinking brandy, and I found by his own account, as well as that of others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved himself in a very extravagant manner. He had gamed too and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses on the road and at Philadelphia, which proved a great burden to me.

The then Governor of New York, Burnet, (son of Bishop Burnet,) hearing from the captain that one of the passengers had a great many books on board, desired him to bring me to see him. I waited on him, and should have taken Collins with me had he been sober. The Governor received me with great civility, showed me

his library, which was a considerable one, and we had a good deal of conversation relative to books and authors. This was the second Governor who had done me the honour to take notice of me, and, for a poor boy like me, it was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received in the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting-house; but, whether they discovered his dram-drinking by his breath or by his behaviour, though he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's, he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it, that I was distressed to think what I should do in case of being called on to remit it.

His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarrelled, for when a little intoxicated he was very irritable. Once in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," said he. "We will not row you," said I. "You must," said he, "or stay all night on the water, just as you please." The others said, "Let us row, what signifies it!" But, my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along stepping on the thwarts towards me, when he came up and struck at me, I clapped my head under his thighs, and, rising, pitched him headforemost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so

was under little concern about him ; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pulled her out of his reach ; and whenever he drew near the boat, we asked him if he would row, striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to stifle with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. Finding him at last beginning to tire we drew him into the boat, and brought him home dripping wet. We hardly exchanged a civil word after this adventure. At length a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a preceptor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, met with him, and proposed to carry him thither to fill that situation. He accepted, and promised to remit me what he owed me out of the first money he should receive, but I never heard of him after.

The violation of my trust respecting Vernon's money was one of the first great *errata* of my life ; and this showed that my father was not much out in his judgment, when he considered me as too young to manage business. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent, that there was a great difference in persons ; and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. " But since he will not set you up, I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able ; I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality, that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on

the Governor, probably some friend, that knew him better, would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterwards heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises, which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing-house amounting, by my computation, to about one hundred pounds sterling. He liked it, but asked me, if my being on the spot in England to choose the types, and see that everything was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," said he, "when there, you may make acquaintance, and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery line." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," said he, "get yourself ready to go with *Annis*," which was the annual ship, and the only one, at that time, usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But as it would be some months before *Annis* sailed, I continued working with Keimer, fretting extremely about the money Collins had got from me, and in great apprehensions of being called upon for it by Vernon; this, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that in my first voyage from Boston to Philadelphia, being becalmed off Block Island, our crew employed themselves in catching cod, and hauled up a great number. Till then, I had stuck to my resolution to eat nothing that had had life; and on this occasion I considered, according to my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or could do us any injury that might justify this

massacre. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had been formerly a great lover of fish, and when it came out of the frying-pan it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till, recollecting that when the fish were opened I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs, then, thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we may not eat you;" so I dined upon cod very heartily, and have since continued to eat as other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a *reason* for every thing one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I lived on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasm, and loved argumentation; we therefore had many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and had trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, yet by degrees leading to the point, and bringing him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first, "What do you intend to infer from that?" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums, which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it is said, "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*" He likewise kept the seventh day Sabbath; and these two points were essential with him. I disliked both, but agreed to them on condition of his adopting the doctrine of not using animal food. "I doubt," said he, "my constitution will not bear it." I assured him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great eater, and I wished to give myself some diversion in half starving him. He consented to try the practice, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. Our provisions were purchased, cooked, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighbourhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, which she prepared for us at different times, in which there entered neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. This whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that, and that for the common, abruptly, without the least inconvenience; so that I think there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, grew tired of the project, longed for the fleshpots of Egypt, and ordered a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but, it being brought too soon upon the table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came.

I had made some courtship during this time to Miss Read. I had a great respect and affection for her, and had some reasons to believe she had the same for me; but, as I was about to take a long voyage, and we were

both very young, only a little above eighteen, it was thought most prudent by her mother to prevent our going too far at present; as a marriage, if it was to take place, would be more convenient after my return, when I should be, as I hoped, set up in my business. Perhaps, too, she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be.

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph; all lovers of reading. The two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brockden, the other was a clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me; for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters, too fond of criticism. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both were great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we have had together on Sundays in the woods, on the banks of the Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferred on what we had read.

Ralph was inclined to give himself up entirely to poetry, not doubting that he might make great proficiency in it, and even make his fortune by it. He pretended that the greatest poets must, when they first began to write, have committed as many faults as he did. Osborne endeavoured to dissuade him, assured him he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to;

that in the mercantile way, though he had no stock, he might by his diligence and punctuality recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approved for my part the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no farther.

On this it was proposed that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of our own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention, by agreeing that the task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm, which describes the descent of a Deity. When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and having little inclination, had done nothing. He then showed me his piece for my opinion, and I much approved it, as it appeared to me to have great merit. "Now," said he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in anything of mine, but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece and produce it as yours. I will pretend not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then hear what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcribed it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met. Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better. Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward, seemed desirous of being excused, had not had sufficient time

to correct, etc. But no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated. Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and proposed some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was severe against Ralph, and told me he was no better able to criticise than compose verses. As these two were returning home, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favour of what he thought my production; having before refrained, as he said, lest I should think he meant to flatter me. "But who would have imagined," said he, "that Franklin was capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improved on the original. In common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders, and yet, good God, how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had played, and Osborne was laughed at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till Pope cured him. He became, however, a pretty good prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion to mention the other two, I shall just remark here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise.

The Governor, seeming to like my company, had me frequently at his house ; and his setting me up was always mentioned as a fixed thing. I was to take with me letters recommendatory to a number of his friends, besides the letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money for purchasing the press, types, paper, etc. For these letters I was appointed to call at different times, when they were to be ready ; but a future time was still named. Thus we went on till the ship—whose departure, too, had been several times postponed—was on the point of sailing. Then, when I called to take my leave and receive the letters, his secretary, Dr. Baird, came out to me and said the Governor was extremely busy in writing, but would be down at Newcastle before the ship, and then the letters would be delivered to me.

Ralph, though married, and having one child, had determined to accompany me in this voyage. It was thought he intended to establish a correspondence, and obtain goods to sell on commission ; but I found after, that having some cause of discontent with his wife's relations, he proposed to leave her on their hands, and never to return to America. Having taken leave of my friends, and exchanged promises with Miss Read, I quitted Philadelphia in the ship, which anchored at Newcastle. The Governor was there ; but when I went to his lodging, his secretary came to me from him with expressions of the greatest regret that he could not then see me, being engaged in business of the utmost importance ; but that he would send the letters to me on board, wishing me heartily a good voyage and a speedy return, etc. I returned on board a little puzzled, but still not doubting.

CHAPTER III

Sails for London, accompanied by Ralph—On his Arrival delivers Letters supposed to be written by the Governor—Discovers that Keith had deceived him—His Money exhausted—Engages to work as a Printer at Palmer's, in Bartholomew Close—Writes and prints a Metaphysical Tract—Frequents a Club, consisting of Dr. Mandeville and others—Disagreement with Ralph, and Separation—Removes to Watts's Printing-house, near Lincoln's Inn Fields—Habits of the Workmen—His Expenses of Living—Feats of Activity in Swimming—Enters into Mercantile Business with Mr. Denham—Sir William Wyndham.

MR. ANDREW HAMILTON, a celebrated lawyer of Philadelphia, had taken his passage in the same ship for himself and son, with Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant, and Messrs. Oniam and Russel, masters of an iron work in Maryland, who had engaged the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were forced to take up with a berth in the steerage, and none on board knowing us, were considered as ordinary persons. But Mr. Hamilton and his son (it was James, since Governor,) returned from Newcastle to Philadelphia; the father being recalled by a great fee to plead for a seized ship. And, just before we sailed, Colonel French coming on board, and showing me great respect, I was more taken notice of, and, with my friend Ralph, invited by the other gentlemen to come into the cabin, there being now room. Accordingly we removed thither.

Understanding that Colonel French had brought on board the Governor's despatches, I asked the captain for those letters that were to be under my care. He said all were put into the bag together; and he could

not then come at them ; but, before we landed in England, I should have an opportunity of picking them out ; so I was satisfied for the present, and we proceeded on our voyage. We had a sociable company in the cabin, and lived uncommonly well, having the addition of all Mr. Hamilton's stores, who had laid in plentifully. In this passage Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me, that continued during his life. The voyage was otherwise not a pleasant one, as we had a great deal of bad weather.

When we came into the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me an opportunity of examining the bag for the Governor's letters. I found some upon which my name was put as under my care. I picked out six or seven, that, by the handwriting, I thought might be the promised letters, especially as one of them was addressed to Baskett, the King's printer, and another to some stationer. We arrived in London the 24th December, 1724. I waited upon the stationer, who came first in my way, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," said he ; but, opening the letter, "oh ! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a complete rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So putting the letter into my hand, he turned on his heel and left me to serve some customer. I was surprised to find these were not the Governor's letters ; and, after recollecting and comparing circumstances, I began to doubt his sincerity. I found my friend Denham, and opened the whole affair to him. He let me into Keith's character, told me there was not the least probability that he had written any letters for me ; that no one, who knew him,

had the smallest dependence on him ; and he laughed at the idea of the Governor's giving me a letter of credit, having, as he said, no credit to give. On my expressing some concern about what I should do, he advised me to endeavour getting some employment in the way of my business. "Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage."

We both of us happened to know, as well as the stationer, that Riddlesden, the attorney, was a very knave. He had half ruined Miss Read's father, by persuading him to be bond for him. By his letter it appeared there was a secret scheme on foot to the prejudice of Mr. Hamilton (supposed to be then coming over with us) ; that Keith was concerned in it with Riddlesden. Denham, who was a friend of Hamilton's, thought he ought to be acquainted with it ; so, when he arrived in England, which was soon after, partly from resentment and ill will to Keith and Riddlesden, and partly from good will to him, I waited on him, and gave him the letter. He thanked me cordially, the information being of importance to him ; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterwards on many occasions.

But what shall we think of a Governor playing such pitiful tricks, and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy ! It was a habit he had acquired. He wished to please everybody ; and, having little to give, he gave expectations. He was otherwise an ingenious, sensible man, a pretty good writer, and a good Governor for the people ; though not for his constituents, the Proprietaries, whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several

of our best laws were of his planning, and passed during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took lodgings together in Little Britain at three shillings and sixpence a week ; as much as we could then afford. He found some relations, but they were poor, and unable to assist him. He now let me know his intentions of remaining in London, and that he never meant to return to Philadelphia. He had brought no money with him ; the whole he could muster having been expended in paying his passage. I had fifteen pistoles ; so he borrowed occasionally of me to subsist, while he was looking out for business. He first endeavoured to get into the playhouse, believing himself qualified for an actor ; but Wilkes,* to whom he applied, advised him candidly not to think of that employment, as it was impossible he should succeed in it. Then he proposed to Roberts, a publisher in Pater Noster Row, to write for him a weekly paper like the *Spectator*, on certain conditions ; which Roberts did not approve. Then he endeavoured to get employment as a hackney writer, to copy for the stationers and lawyers about the Temple ; but could not find a vacancy.

For myself, I immediately got into work at Palmer's, a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, where I continued near a year. I was pretty diligent, but I spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings at plays and public amusements. We had nearly consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seemed quite to have forgotten his wife and child ; and I by degrees my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was

* A comedian of eminence.

to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great *errata* of my life, which I could wish to correct, if I were to live it over again. In fact, by our expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my passage.

At Palmer's I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature*. Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*. I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I printed a small number. It occasioned my being more considered by Mr. Palmer, as a young man of some ingenuity, though he seriously expostulated with me upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appeared abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another *erratum*. While I lodged in Little Britain, I made an acquaintance with one Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books. Circulating libraries were not then in use; but we agreed that, on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read, and return any of his books. This I esteemed a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could.

My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled, *The Infallibility of Human Judgment*, it occasioned an acquaintance between us. He took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on those subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale-ale house in — Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Dr. Mandeville, author of the *Fable of the Bees*, who had a club there, of which he was

the soul ; being a most facetious, entertaining companion. Lyons too introduced me to Dr. Pemberton, at Batson's Coffee-house, who promised to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, of which I was extremely desirous ; but this never happened.

I had brought over a few curiosities, among which the principal was a purse made of the *asbestos*, which purifies by fire. Sir Hans Sloane heard of it, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, showed me all his curiosities, and persuaded me to add that to the number ; for which he paid me handsomely.

In our house lodged a young woman, a milliner, who, I think, had a shop in the Cloisters. She had been genteelly bred, was sensible, lively, and of a most pleasing conversation. Ralph read plays to her in the evenings, they grew intimate, she took another lodging, and he followed her. They lived together some time ; but, he being still out of business, and her income not sufficient to maintain them with her child, he took a resolution of going from London, to try for a country school, which he thought himself well qualified to undertake, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was a master of arithmetic and accounts. This, however, he deemed a business below him, and, confident of future better fortune, when he should be unwilling to have it known that he once was so meanly employed, he changed his name, and did me the honour to assume mine ; for I soon after had a letter from him, acquainting me that he was settled in a small village (in Berkshire, I think it was, where he taught reading and writing to ten or a dozen boys, at sixpence each per week), recommending Mrs. T—— to my care, and desiring me to write to him, directing for *Mr. Franklin*, schoolmaster, at such a place.

He continued to write to me frequently, sending me large specimens of an epic poem which he was then composing, and desiring my remarks and corrections. These I gave him from time to time, but endeavoured rather to discourage his proceeding. One of Young's Satires was then just published. I copied and sent him a great part of it, which set in a strong light the folly of pursuing the Muses. All was in vain; sheets of the poem continued to come by every post. In the mean time, Mrs. T——, having on his account lost her friends and business, was often in distresses, and used to send for me, and borrow what money I could spare to help to alleviate them. I grew fond of her company, and, being at that time under no religious restraint, and taking advantage of my importance to her, I attempted to take some liberties with her (another *erratum*), which she repulsed with a proper degree of resentment. She wrote to Ralph and acquainted him with my conduct; this occasioned a breach between us; and, when he returned to London, he let me know he considered all the obligations he had been under to me as annulled; from which I concluded I was never to expect his repaying the money I had lent him, or that I had advanced for him. This, however, was of little consequence, as he was totally unable; and by the loss of his friendship I found myself relieved from a heavy burden. I now began to think of getting a little beforehand, and, expecting better employment, I left Palmer's to work at Watts's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into the printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily

exercise I had been used to in America, where press-work is mixed with the composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great drinkers of beer. On occasion I carried up and down stairs a large forme of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy, who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer that he might be *strong* to labour. I endeavoured to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he could eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that vile liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu* for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid one to the pressmen; the master thought so too,

and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private malice practised on me, by mixing my sorts, transposing and breaking my matter, etc., etc., if ever I stepped out of the room ; and all ascribed to the *chapel ghost*, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted ; that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money ; convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their *chapel* laws (a printing-house is called a *chapel* by the workmen), and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great many of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, bread, and cheese, finding they could with me be supplied, from a neighbouring house, with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbled with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz. three halfpence. This was a more comfortable as well as a cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sotting with their beer all day, were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer ; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being estimated a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making

a *St. Monday*) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon work of despatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

My lodgings in Little Britain being too remote, I found another in Duke Street, opposite to the Romish Chapel. It was up three pair of stairs backwards, at an Italian warehouse. A widow lady kept the house: she had a daughter, and a maid-servant, and a journeyman who attended the warehouse, but lodged abroad. After sending to inquire my character at the house where I last lodged, she agreed to take me in at the same rate—three shillings and sixpence a week; cheaper, as she said, from the protection she expected in having a man to lodge in the house. She was a widow, an elderly woman; had been bred a Protestant, being a clergyman's daughter, but was converted to the Catholic religion by her husband, whose memory she much revered; had lived much among people of distinction, and knew a thousand anecdotes of them as far back as the time of Charles II. She was lame in her knees with the gout, and therefore seldom stirred out of her room, so sometimes wanted company; and hers was so highly amusing to me, that I was sure to spend an evening with her whenever she desired it. Our supper was only half an anchovy each, on a very little slice of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between us; but the entertainment was in her conversation. My always keeping good hours, and giving little trouble in the family, made her unwilling to part with me; so that when I talked of a lodging I had heard of, nearer my business, for two shillings a week (which, intent as I was on saving money, made some difference) she

bid me not think of it, for she would abate me two shillings a week for the future : so I remained with her at one shilling and sixpence as long as I stayed in London.

In a garret of her house there lived a maiden lady of seventy, in the most retired manner, of whom my landlady gave me this account :—that she was a Roman Catholic ; had been sent abroad when young, and lodged in a nunnery, with an intent of becoming a nun ; but, the country not agreeing with her, she returned to England, where, there being no nunnery, she had vowed to lead the life of a nun, as near as might be done in those circumstances. Accordingly, she had given all her estate to charitable purposes, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on ; and out of this sum she still gave a part in charity, living herself on water-gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. She had lived many years in that garret, being permitted to remain there gratis by successive Catholic tenants of the house below, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her, to confess her every day. “ From this I asked her,” said my landlady, “ how she, as she lived, could possibly find so much employment for a confessor ? ” “ Oh ! ” said she, “ it is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*.” I was permitted once to visit her. She was cheerful and polite, and conversed pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and a book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney, of St. Veronica displaying her handkerchief, with the miraculous figure of Christ’s bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness. She looked pale, but was

never sick ; and I give it as another instance, on how small an income life and health may be supported.

At Watts's printing-house I contracted an acquaintance with an ingenious young man, one Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most printers ; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and loved reading. I taught him and a friend of his to swim, at twice going into the river, and they soon became good swimmers. They introduced me to some gentlemen from the country, who went to Chelsea by water, to see the college and Don Saltero's curiosities. In our return, at the request of the company, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I stripped and leaped into the river, and swam from near Chelsea to Blackfriars ; performing in the way many feats of activity, both upon and under the water, that surprised and pleased those to whom they were novelties.

I had from a child been delighted with this exercise, had studied and practised Thevenot's motions and positions, and added some of my own, aiming at the graceful and easy as well as the useful. All these I took this occasion of exhibiting to the company, and was much flattered by their admiration ; and Wygate, who was desirous of becoming a master, grew more and more attached to me on that account, as well as from the similarity of our studies. He at length proposed to me travelling all over Europe together, supporting ourselves everywhere by working at our business. I was once inclined to it ; but mentioning it to my good friend Mr. Denham, with whom I often spent an hour when I had leisure, he dissuaded me from it ; advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do.

I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed in debt to a number of people, compounded, and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had favoured him with; and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man, at the first remove, found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder, with interest.

He now told me he was about to return to Philadelphia, and should carry over a great quantity of goods, in order to open a store there. He proposed to take me over as his clerk, to keep his books—in which he would instruct me—copy his letters, and attend the store. He added, that, as soon as I should be acquainted with mercantile business, he would promote me by sending me with a cargo of flour and bread to the West Indies, and procure me commissions from others which would be profitable; and, if I managed well, would establish me handsomely. The thing pleased me; for I was grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months I had spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see it. Therefore I immediately agreed, on the terms of fifty pounds a year, Pennsylvania money; less, indeed, than my then present gettings as a compositor, but affording a better prospect.

I now took leave of printing, as I thought, for ever, and was daily employed in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen to purchase various articles, and see them packed up,

delivering messages, calling upon workmen to despatch, etc. ; and when all was on board, I had a few days' leisure. On one of these days, I was, to my surprise, sent for by a great man I knew only by name, Sir William Wyndham, and I waited upon him. He had heard by some means or other of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriars, and of my teaching Wygate and another young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons, about to set out on their travels ; he wished to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain ; so I could not undertake it. But from the incident I thought it likely, that if I were to remain in England, and open a swimming-school, I might get a good deal of money ; and it struck me so strongly, that, had the overture been made me sooner, probably I should not so soon have returned to America. Many years after, you and I had something of more importance to do with one of these sons of Sir William Wyndham, become Earl of Egremont, which I shall mention in its place.

Thus I passed about eighteen months in London ; most part of the time I worked hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays, and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor ; he owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive ; a great sum out of my small earnings ! I loved him, notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had improved my knowledge, however, though I had by no means improved my fortune ; but I had made some very ingenious acquaintance, whose conversation was of great advantage to me ; and I had read considerably.

CHAPTER IV

Voyage from London to Philadelphia—His Mercantile Plans defeated by the Death of Mr. Denham—Accepts an Offer from Keimer to superintend his Printing Establishment—Description of the Workmen in the Printing-house—Resolves to separate from Keimer, and commence Business on his own Account—Engraves the Plates for Paper Money in New Jersey, and prints the Bills—His Views of Religion—Account of his London Pamphlet—A New Version of the Lord's Prayer, with Explanatory Remarks—Forms a Partnership with Hugh Meredith in the Printing Business.

WE sailed from Gravesend on the 23rd of July, 1726. For the incidents of the voyage, I refer you to my Journal, where you will find them all minutely related. Perhaps the most important part of that journal is the *plan* to be found in it, which I formed at sea, for regulating the future conduct of my life. It is the more remarkable, as being formed when I was so young, and yet being pretty faithfully adhered to quite through to old age.

We landed at Philadelphia the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer Governor, being superseded by Major Gordon: I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seemed a little ashamed at seeing me, and passed without saying anything. I should have been as much ashamed at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return, after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to cohabit with him or bear his name, it being now said

he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow, though an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supplied with stationery, plenty of new types, and a number of hands, though none good, and seemed to have a great deal of business.

Mr. Denham took a store in Water Street, where we opened our goods; I attended the business diligently, studied accounts, and grew in a little time expert at selling. We lodged and boarded together; he counselled me as a father, having a sincere regard for me. I respected and loved him, and we might have gone on together very happily; but, in the beginning of February, 1727, when I had just passed my twenty-first year, we both were taken ill. My distemper was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal, gave up the point in my own mind, and was at the time rather disappointed when I found myself recovering; regretting, in some degree, that I must now, some time or other, have all that disagreeable work to go over again. I forget what Mr. Denham's distemper was; it held him a long time, and at length carried him off. He left me a small legacy in a nuncupative will, as a token of his kindness for me, and he left me once more to the wide world; for the store was taken into the care of his executors, and my employment under him ended.

My brother-in-law, Holmes, being now at Philadelphia, advised my return to my business; and Keimer tempted me, with an offer of large wages by the year, to come and take the management of his printing-house, that he

might better attend to his stationer's shop. I had heard a bad character of him in London from his wife and her friends, and was for not having any more to do with him. I wished for employment as a merchant's clerk ; but, not meeting with any, I closed again with Keimer. I found in his house these hands : Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pennsylvanian, thirty years of age, bred to country work ; he was honest, sensible, a man of experience, and fond of reading, but addicted to drinking. Stephen Potts, a young countryman of full age, bred to the same, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humour ; but a little idle. These he had agreed with at extreme low wages per week, to be raised a shilling every three months, as they would deserve by improving in their business ; and the expectation of these high wages, to come on hereafter, was what he had drawn them in with. Meredith was to work at press, Potts at bookbinding, which he by agreement was to teach them, though he knew neither one nor the other. John —, a wild Irishman, brought up to no business, whose service, for four years, Keimer had purchased from the captain of a ship ; he too was to be made a pressman. George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time for four years he had likewise bought, intending him for a compositor, of whom more presently ; and David Harry, a country boy, whom he had taken apprentice.

I soon perceived that the intention of engaging me at wages so much higher than he had been used to give, was to have these raw cheap hands formed through me ; and as soon as I had instructed them, they being all articed to him, he should be able to do without me. I went, however, very cheerfully, put his printing-house in

order, which had been in great confusion, and brought his hands by degrees to mind their business and to do it better.

It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and he gave me this account of himself: that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar school, and had been distinguished among the scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part when they exhibited plays; belonged to the Wits' Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers. Thence was sent to Oxford; there he continued about a year, but not well satisfied; wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts, he went out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and walked to London; where, having no friend to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas, found no means of being introduced among the players, grew necessitous, pawned his clothes, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offering immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, signed the indentures, was put into the ship, and came over; never writing a line to his friends to acquaint them what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natured, and a pleasant companion; but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away; with the rest I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me

the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something daily. My acquaintance with ingenious people in the town increased. We never worked on Saturday, that being Keimer's Sabbath, so that I had two days for reading. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent regard, and nothing now made me uneasy but my debt to Vernon, which I was yet unable to pay, being hitherto but a poor economist. He, however, kindly made no demand of it.

Our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-foundry in America ; I had seen types cast at James's in London, but without much attention to the manner ; however, I contrived a mould, and made use of the letters we had as puncheons, struck the matrixes in lead, and thus supplied in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engraved several things on occasion ; made the ink ; I was warehouseman ; and, in short, quite a *fac-totum*.

But, however serviceable I might be, I found that my services became every day of less importance, as the other hands improved in their business ; and, when Keimer paid me a second quarter's wages, he let me know that he felt them too heavy, and thought I should make an abatement. He grew by degrees less civil, put on more the airs of master, frequently found fault, was captious, and seemed ready for an outbreaking. I went on nevertheless with a good deal of patience, thinking that his incumbered circumstances were partly the cause. At length a trifle snapped our connexion ; for, a great noise happening near the court-house, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, looked up and saw me,

called out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business ; adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity ; all the neighbours who were looking out on the same occasion being witnesses how I was treated. He came up immediately into the printing-house ; continued the quarrel, high words passed on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he had not been obliged to so long a warning. I told him his wish was unnecessary, for I would leave him that instant ; and so taking my hat walked out of doors, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take care of some things I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came accordingly in the evening, when we talked my affair over. He had conceived a great regard for me, and was very unwilling that I should leave the house while he remained in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native county, which I began to think of ; he reminded me that Keimer was in debt for all he possessed, that his creditors began to be uneasy ; that he kept his shop miserably, sold often without a profit for ready money, and often trusted without keeping accounts ; that he must therefore fail, which would make a vacancy I might profit of. I objected my want of money. He then let me know that his father had a high opinion of me, and, from some discourse that had passed between them, he was sure would advance money to set me up, if I would enter into partnership with him. "My time," said he, "will be out with Keimer in the spring ; by that time we may have our press and types in from London. I am sensible I am no workman ; if you like it, your skill in the business shall be set against the stock I furnish, and we will share the profits equally."

The proposal was agreeable to me, and I consented; his father was in town, and approved of it; the more as he said I had great influence with his son, had prevailed on him to abstain long from dram-drinking, and he hoped might break him of that wretched habit entirely, when we came to be so closely connected. I gave an inventory to the father, who carried it to a merchant; the things were sent for, the secret was to be kept till they should arrive, and in the meantime I was to get work, if I could, at the other printing-house. But I found no vacancy there, and so remained idle a few days, when Keimer, on a prospect of being employed to print some paper money in New Jersey, which would require cuts and various types that I only could supply, and apprehending Bradford might engage me and get the job from him, sent me a very civil message, that old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion, and wishing me to return. Meredith persuaded me to comply, as it would give more opportunity for his improvement under my daily instructions; so I returned, and we went on more smoothly than for some time before. The New Jersey job was obtained; I contrived a copper-plate press for it, the first that had been seen in the country; I cut several ornaments and checks for the bills. We went together to Burlington, where I executed the whole to satisfaction; and he received so large a sum for the work, as to be enabled thereby to keep himself longer from ruin.

At Burlington I made acquaintance with many principal people of the province. Several of them had been appointed by the Assembly a committee to attend the press, and take care that no more bills were printed than the law directed. They were, therefore, by turns

constantly with us, and generally he who attended brought with him a friend or two for company. My mind having been much more improved by reading than Keimer's, I suppose it was for that reason my conversation seemed to be more valued. They had me to their houses, introduced me to their friends, and showed me much civility ; while he, though the master, was a little neglected. In truth, he was an odd creature ; ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing received opinions, slovenly to extreme dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal.

We continued there near three months ; and by that time I could reckon among my acquired friends, Judge Allen, Samuel Bustill, the Secretary of the Province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, and several of the Smiths, members of Assembly, and Isaac Decow, the Surveyor-General. The latter was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brick-makers ; learned to write after he was of age ; carried the chain for surveyors, who taught him surveying, and he had now, by his industry, acquired a good estate ; and said he, " I foresee that you will soon work this man out of his business, and make a fortune in it at Philadelphia." He had then not the least intimation of my intention to set up there or anywhere. These friends were afterwards of great use to me, as I occasionally was to some of them. They all continued their regard for me as long as they lived.

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind, with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious

impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of the Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of the sermons which had been preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them. For the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but, each of these having wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me, (who was another freethinker,) and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet, printed in 1725, which had for its motto these lines of Dryden:

“Whatever is, is right. But purblind man
Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest links;
His eyes not carrying to that equal beam,
That poises all above;”

and which from the attributes of God, His infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world; and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing; appeared now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument

so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

I grew convinced that *truth*, *sincerity*, and *integrity*, in dealings between man and man, were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practise them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me, as such; but I entertained an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favourable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me, through this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, free from any *wilful* gross immorality or injustice, that might have been expected from my want of religion. I say *wilful*, because the instances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had therefore a tolerable character to begin the world with; I valued it properly, and determined to preserve it.

We had not been long returned to Philadelphia before the new types arrived from London. We settled with Keimer, and left him by his consent before he heard of it. We found a house to let near the Market, and took it. To lessen the rent, which was then but twenty-four pounds_a year, though I have since known it let

for seventy, we took in Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, who were to pay a considerable part of it to us, and we to board with them. We had scarce opened our letters, and put our press in order, before George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought a countryman to us, whom he had met in the street, inquiring for a printer. All our cash was now expended in the variety of particulars we had been obliged to procure, and this countryman's five shillings, being our first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned; and the gratitude I felt towards House has made me often more ready than perhaps I otherwise should have been to assist young beginners.

There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such an one there lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look, and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopped me one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house? Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half bankrupts, or near being so; all the appearances of the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents being to his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were in fact among the things that would ruin us. Then he gave me such a detail of misfortunes now existing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This person

continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction ; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one, as he might have bought it for when he first began croaking.

CHAPTER V

The Junto—Description of its Original Members—Franklin writes the “ Busy Body ”—Establishes a Newspaper—Partnership with Meredith dissolved—Writes a Tract on the Necessity of a Paper Currency—Opens a Stationer’s Shop—His Habits of Industry and Frugality—Courtship—Marriage.

I SHOULD have mentioned before, that in the autumn of the preceding year I had formed most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club for mutual improvement, which we called the JUNTO. We met on Friday evenings. The rules that I drew up required that every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed by the company ; and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing, on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory ; and, to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions, or direct contradiction, were after some time made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.

The first members were Joseph Breintnal, a copier of deeds for the scriveners, a good-natured, friendly,

middle-aged man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable ; very ingenious in making little nicknackeries, and of sensible conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterwards inventor of what is now called *Hadley's Quadrant*.* But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion ; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in everything said, or was for ever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us.

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, afterwards Surveyor-General, who loved books, and sometimes made a few verses.

William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but loving reading had acquired a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, and afterwards laughed at it. He also became Surveyor-General.

William Maugridge, joiner, but a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb, I have characterized before.

Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty ; a lover of punning and of his friends.

Lastly, William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk, about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of almost any man I

* Godfrey's claims to this invention are fully explained and confirmed in MILLER'S *Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. I. pp. 468—480.

ever met with. He became afterwards a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upwards of forty years; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province; for our queries, which were read the week preceding their discussion, put us upon reading with attention on the several subjects, that we might speak more to the purpose; and here, too, we acquired better habits of conversation, everything being studied in our rules which might prevent our disgusting each other. Hence the long continuance of the club, which I shall have frequent occasion to speak further of hereafter.

But my giving this account of it here is to show something of the interest I had, every one of these exerting themselves in recommending business to us. Breintnal particularly procured us from the Quakers the printing of forty sheets of their history, the rest being to be done by Keimer; and upon these we worked exceedingly hard, for the price was low. It was a folio, *pro patriâ* size, in pica, with long primer notes. I composed a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at press. It was often eleven at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's work; for the little jobs sent in by our other friends now and then put us back. But so determined I was to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having imposed my formes, I thought my day's work over, one of them by accident was broken, and two pages reduced to *pie*. I immediately distributed and composed it over again before I went to bed; and this industry, visible to our neighbours, began to give us

character and credit. Particularly I was told that, mention being made of the new printing-office, at the merchants' every-night club, the general opinion was that it must fail, there being already two printers in the place, Keimer and Bradford. But Dr. Baird (whom you and I saw many years after at his native place, St. Andrew's, in Scotland) gave a contrary opinion; "For the industry of that Franklin," said he, "is superior to anything I ever saw of the kind. I see him still at work when I go home from club, and he is at work again before his neighbours are out of bed." This struck the rest, and we soon after had offers from one of them to supply us with stationery; but as yet we did not choose to engage in shop business.

I mention this industry more particularly and the more freely, though it seems to be talking in my own praise, that those of my posterity who shall read it, may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favour throughout this relation.

George Webb, who had found a female friend that lent him wherewith to purchase his time of Keimer, now came to offer himself as a journeyman to us. We could not then employ him; but I foolishly let him know, as a secret, that I soon intended to begin a newspaper, and might then have work for him. My hopes of success, as I told him, were founded on this: that the then only newspaper, printed by Bradford, was a paltry thing, wretchedly managed, no way entertaining, and yet was profitable to him,—I therefore freely thought a good paper would scarcely fail of good encouragement. I requested Webb not to mention it; but he told it to Keimer, who immediately, to be beforehand with me, published proposals for one himself, on which Webb was

to be employed. I was vexed at this ; and to counteract them, not being able to commence our paper, I wrote several amusing pieces for Bradford's paper, under the title of *THE BUSY BODY*, which Breintnal continued some months. By this means the attention of the public was fixed on that paper ; and Keimer's proposals, which we burlesqued and ridiculed, were disregarded. He began his paper, however ; and before carrying it on three quarters of a year, with at most only ninety subscribers, he offered it me for a trifle ; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly, and it proved in a few years extremely profitable to me.

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the singular number, though our partnership still continued ; it may be that in fact the whole management of the business lay upon me. Meredith was no compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober. My friends lamented my connection with him, but I was to make the best of it.

Our first papers made quite a different appearance from any before in the province ; a better type and better printed ; but some remarks of my writing, on the dispute then going on between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly, struck the principal people, occasioned the paper and the manager of it to be much talked of, and in a few weeks brought them all to be our subscribers.

Their example was followed by many, and our number went on growing continually. This was one of the first good effects of my having learned a little to scribble ; another was, that the leading men, seeing a newspaper now in the hands of those who could also handle a pen, thought it convenient to oblige and encourage me.

Bradford still printed the votes, and laws, and other public business. He had printed an address of the House to the Governor, in a coarse blundering manner ; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly, and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference, it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing.

Among my friends in the House I must not forget Mr. Hamilton, before mentioned, who was then returned from England, and had a seat in it. He interested himself for me strongly in that instance, as he did in many others afterwards, continuing his patronage till his death.*

Mr. Vernon, about this time, put me in mind of the debt I owed him, but did not press me. I wrote to him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craving his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me. As soon as I was able, I paid the principal with the interest, and many thanks ; so that *erratum* was in some degree corrected.

But now another difficulty came upon me, which I had never the least reason to expect. Mr. Meredith's father, who was to have paid for our printing-house, according to the expectations given me, was able to advance only one hundred pounds currency, which had been paid ; and a hundred more were due to the merchant, who grew impatient and sued us all. We gave bail, but saw that if the money could not be raised in time, the suit must soon come to a judgment and execution, and our hopeful prospects must with us be ruined, as the press and letters must be sold for payment, perhaps at half price.

In this distress two true friends, whose kindness I

* I afterwards obtained for his son *five hundred pounds*.

have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember anything, came to me separately, unknown to each other; and, without any application from me, offered each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith, who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the street, playing at low games in alehouses, much to our discredit. These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I told them I could not propose a separation while any prospect remained of the Merediths' fulfilling their part of our agreement, because I thought myself under great obligations to them for what they had done, and would do if they could; but if they finally failed in their performance, and our partnership must be dissolved, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the assistance of my friends.

Thus the matter rested for some time, when I said to my partner, "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you and me what he would for you. If that is the case tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." "No," said he, "my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable, and I am unwilling to distress him further. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was folly in me to come to town and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina, where land is cheap. I am inclined to go with them, and follow my old employment; you may find friends to assist you. If you will

take the debts of the company upon you, return to my father the hundred pounds he has advanced, pay my little personal debts, and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership and leave the whole in your hands." I agreed to this proposal; it was drawn up in writing, signed, and sealed immediately. I gave him what he demanded, and he went soon after to Carolina; whence he sent me next year two long letters, containing the best account that had been given of that country, the climate, the soil, and husbandry, for in those matters he was very judicious. I printed them in the papers, and they gave great satisfaction to the public.

As soon as he was gone I recurred to my two friends, and because I would not give an unkind preference to either, I took half of what each had offered and I wanted of one, and half of the other; paid off the company's debts, and went on with the business in my own name, advertising that the partnership was dissolved. I think this was in or about the year 1729.

About this time there was a cry among the people for more paper-money; only fifteen thousand pounds being extant in the province, and that soon to be sunk. The wealthy inhabitants opposed any addition, being against all paper currency, from the apprehension that it would depreciate as it had done in New England, to the injury of all creditors. We had discussed this point in our Junta, where I was on the side of an addition, being persuaded that the first small sum struck in 1723 had done much good by increasing the trade, employment, and number of inhabitants in the province, since I now saw all the old houses inhabited, and many new ones building; whereas I remembered well, when I first

walked about the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, I saw many of the houses in Walnut Street, between Second and Front Streets, with bills on their doors, "*To be let,*" and many likewise in Chestnut Street and other streets, which made me think the inhabitants of the city were, one after another, deserting it.

Our debates possessed me so fully of the subject, that I wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet on it, entitled, *The Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency*. It was well received by the common people in general; but the rich men disliked it, for it increased and strengthened the clamour for more money; and, they happening to have no writers among them that were able to answer it, their opposition slackened, and the point was carried by a majority in the House. My friends there, who considered I had been of some service, thought fit to reward me, by employing me in printing the money; a very profitable job, and a great help to me. This was another advantage gained by my being able to write.

The utility of this currency became by time and experience so evident, that the principles upon which it was founded were never afterwards much disputed; so that it grew soon to fifty-five thousand pounds; and in 1739, to eighty thousand pounds; trade, building, and inhabitants all the while increasing. Though I now think there are limits, beyond which the quantity may be hurtful.

I soon after obtained, through my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money, another profitable job, as I then thought it; small things appearing great to those in small circumstances; and these to me were really great advantages, as they were great

encouragements. Mr. Hamilton procured for me also the printing of the laws and votes of that Government, which continued in my hands as long as I followed the business.

I now opened a small stationer's shop. I had in it blanks of all kinds; the correctest that ever appeared among us. I was assisted in that by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, chapmen's books, etc. One Whitemarsh, a compositor I had known in London, an excellent workman, now came to me, and worked with me constantly and diligently; and I took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began now gradually to pay off the debt I was under for the printing-house. In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid the appearances to the contrary. I dressed plain, and was seen at no places of idle diversion. I never went out a fishing or shooting; a book indeed sometimes debauched me from my work, but that was seldom, was private, and gave no scandal; and, to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchased at the stores, through the streets on a wheelbarrow. Thus being esteemed an industrious, thriving young man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on prosperously. In the meantime, Keimer's credit and business declining daily, he was at last forced to sell his printing-house, to satisfy his creditors. He went to Barbadoes, and there lived some years in very poor circumstances.

His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed

while I worked with him, set up in his place at Philadelphia, having bought his materials. I was at first apprehensive of a powerful rival in Harry, as his friends were very able, and had a good deal of interest. I therefore proposed a partnership to him, which he fortunately for me rejected with scorn. He was very proud, dressed like a gentleman, lived expensively, took much diversion and pleasure abroad, ran in debt, and neglected his business; upon which, all business left him; and, finding nothing to do, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes, taking the printing-house with him. There this apprentice employed his former master as a journeyman; they quarrelled often, and Harry went continually behindhand, and at length was obliged to sell his types and return to country work in Pennsylvania. The person who bought them employed Keimer to use them, but a few years after he died.

There remained now no other printer in Philadelphia but the old Bradford; but he was rich and easy, did a little in the business by straggling hands, but was not anxious about it. However, as he held the post-office, it was imagined he had better opportunities of obtaining news, his paper was thought a better distributor of advertisements than mine, and therefore had many more; which was a profitable thing to him, and a disadvantage to me. For, though I did indeed receive and send papers by the post, yet the public opinion was otherwise; for what I did send was by bribing the riders, who took them privately; Bradford being unkind enough to forbid it, which occasioned some resentment on my part; and I thought so meanly of the practice that, when I afterwards came into his situation, I took care never to imitate it.

I had hitherto continued to board with Godfrey, who lived in a part of my house with his wife and children, and had one side of the shop for his glazier's business, though he worked little, being always absorbed in his mathematics. Mrs. Godfrey projected a match for me, with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensued; the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encouraged me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey managed our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing-house; which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one, the types would soon be worn out and more wanted; that Keimer and David Harry had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and therefore I was forbidden the house, and the daughter was shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleased, I know not. But I suspected the motive, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterwards some more favourable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn

me on again ; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was resented by the Godfreys, we differed, and they removed, leaving me the whole house, and I resolved to take no more inmates.

But this affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I looked round me and made overtures of acquaintance in other places ; but soon found that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife, unless with such a one as I should not otherwise think agreeable. In the meantime, that hard-to-be-governed passion of youth had hurried me frequently into intrigues with low women that fell in my way, which were attended with some expense and great inconvenience, besides a continual risk to my health by a distemper, which of all things I dreaded, though by great good luck I escaped it.

A friendly correspondence as neighbours had continued between me and Miss Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there and consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness ; though the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. That match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in

England ; but this could not easily be proved, because of the distance, etc. ; and, though there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, though it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1st, 1703. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended ; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending to the shop ; we throve together, and ever mutually endeavoured to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great *erratum* as well as I could.

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr. Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me, that, since our books were often referred to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them all together where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted ; and by thus clubbing our books in a common library, we should, while we liked to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if each owned the whole. It was liked and agreed to, and we filled one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected ; and, though they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection after about a year was separated ; and each took his books home again.

And now I set on foot my first project of a public nature—that for a subscription library. I drew up the proposals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and by the help of my friends in the Junto,

procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years, the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtained a charter, the company being increased to one hundred. This was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous ; it is become a great thing itself, and continually goes on increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges.

CHAPTER VI

Origin of the Philadelphia Library—Mode of obtaining Subscriptions—Thrives in his Business—Anecdote of the Silver Spoon and China Bowl—Religious Sentiments, and Remarks on Preaching—Scheme for arriving at Moral Perfection—Explanation of the Scheme—Lists of Virtues enumerated, and Rules for practising them—Division of Time, and the Occupation of each Hour—Amusing Anecdote—The Art of Virtue—A Treatise on that Subject proposed.

AT the time I established myself in Pennsylvania, there was not a good bookseller's shop in any of the colonies to the southward of Boston. In New York and Philadelphia, the printers were indeed stationers ; but they sold only paper, almanacs, ballads, and a few common school-books. Those who loved reading were obliged to send for their books from England ; the members of the Junto had each a few. We had left the ale-house, where we first met, and hired a room to hold

our club in. I proposed that we should all of us bring our books to that room, where they would not only be ready to consult in our conferences, but become a common benefit, each of us being at liberty to borrow such as he wished to read at home. This was accordingly done, and for some time contented us.

Finding the advantage of this little collection, I proposed to render the benefit from the books more common by commencing a public subscription library. I drew a sketch of the plan and rules that would be necessary, and got a skilful conveyancer, Mr. Charles Brockden, to put the whole in form of articles of agreement to be subscribed; by which each subscriber engaged to pay a certain sum down for the first purchase of the books, and an annual contribution for increasing them. So few were the readers at that time in Philadelphia, and the majority of us so poor, that I was not able with great industry to find more than fifty persons, mostly young tradesmen, willing to pay down for this purpose forty shillings each, and ten shillings per annum. With this little fund we began. The books were imported. The library was opened one day in the week for lending them to subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated by other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations, reading became fashionable; and our people having no public amusements to divert their attention from study, became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observed by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries.

When we were about to sign the above-mentioned articles, which were to be binding on us, our heirs, etc., for fifty years, Mr. Brockden, the scrivener, said to us, "You are young men, but it is scarcely probable that any of you will live to see the expiration of the term fixed in the instrument." A number of us, however, are yet living; but the instrument was after a few years rendered null, by a charter that incorporated and gave perpetuity to the company.

The objections and reluctances I met with in soliciting the subscriptions made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project that might be supposed to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's neighbours, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project. I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of *a number of friends*, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair went on more smoothly, and I ever after practised it on such occasions; and, from my frequent successes, can heartily recommend it. The present little sacrifice of your vanity will afterwards be amply repaid. If it remains a while uncertain to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself may be encouraged to claim it, and then even envy will be disposed to do you justice, by plucking those assumed feathers, and restoring them to their right owner.

This library afforded me the means of improvement by constant study, for which I set apart an hour or two each day, and thus repaired in some degree the loss of the learned education my father once intended

for me. Reading was the only amusement I allowed myself. I spent no time in taverns, games, or frolics of any kind ; and my industry in my business continued as indefatigable as it was necessary. I was indebted for my printing-house ; I had a young family coming on to be educated, and I had two competitors to contend with for business who were established in the place before me. My circumstances, however, grew daily easier. My original habits of frugality continuing, and my father having, among his instructions to me when a boy, frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, "*Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men,*" I thence considered industry as a means of obtaining wealth and distinction, which encouraged me—though I did not think that I should ever literally *stand before kings*, which, however, has since happened ; for I have stood before *five*, and even had the honour of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner.

We have an English proverb that says, "*He that would thrive must ask his wife.*" It was lucky for me that I had one as much disposed to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for the paper-makers, etc. We kept no idle servants, our table was plain and simple, our furniture of the cheapest. For instance, my breakfast was for a long time bread and milk (no tea), and I ate it out of a two-penny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon. But mark how luxury will enter families, and make a progress, in spite of principle ; being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a china bowl,

with a spoon of silver ! They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three and twenty shillings ; for which she had no other excuse or apology to make but that she thought *her* husband deserved a silver spoon and china bowl as well as any of his neighbours. This was the first appearance of plate and china in our house ; which afterwards, in a course of years, as our wealth increased, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value.

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian ; but, though some of the dogmas of that persuasion, such as *the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.*, appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of a Deity—that He made the world and governed it by His providence—that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man—that our souls are immortal—and that all crimes will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion ; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, though with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mixed with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, served principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induced me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion ; and as our province increased in people, and

new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Though I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility, when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He used to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations; and I was now and then prevailed on to do so; once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying; since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced; their aim seeming to be rather to make us *Presbyterians* than *good citizens*.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter to the Philippians, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagined, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confined himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle; 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the public worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but, as they were not the kind of good things that I

expected from that text, I despaired of ever meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before composed a little liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use, (in 1728,) entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*. I returned to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blamable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.

It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at *moral perfection*. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time, and to conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not *always* do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my attention was taken up, and care employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded at length that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore tried the following method.

In the various enumerations of the *moral virtues* I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. *Temperance*, for

example, was by some confined to eating and drinking ; while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas ; and I included, under thirteen names of virtues, all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable ; and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of *virtues*, with their precepts, were :

1. TEMPERANCE.—Eat not to dulness ; drink not to elevation.

2. SILENCE.—Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself ; avoid trifling conversation.

3. ORDER.—Let all your things have their places ; let each part of your business have its time.

4. RESOLUTION.—Resolve to perform what you ought ; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. FRUGALITY.—Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself ; that is, waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY.—Lose no time ; be always employed in something useful ; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY.—Use no hurtful deceit ; think innocently and justly ; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE.—Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION.—Avoid extremes ; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS.—Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY.—Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY.

13. HUMILITY.—Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on *one* of them at a time ; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another ; and so on, till I should have gone through the thirteen. And, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. *Temperance* first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head which are so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and a guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, *Silence* would be more easy ; and my desire being to gain knowledge, at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ear than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and jesting, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavours to obtain all the subsequent virtues ; *Frugality* and *Industry* relieving me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of *Sincerity* and *Justice*, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras

in his *Golden Verses*, daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the

FORM OF THE PAGES.

TEMPERANCE.

Eat not to dulness ; drink not to elevation.

	Sun.	M.	T.	W.	Th.	F.	S.
Tem.							
Sil.	*	*		*		*	
Ord.	*	*			*	*	*
Res.		*				*	
Fru.		*				*	
Ind.			*				
Sinc.							
Jus.							
Mod.							
Clea.							
Tran.							
Chas.							
Hum.							

week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues ; on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue, upon that day.

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offence against *Temperance*; leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could get through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second; so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots; till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:

“ Here will I hold. If there's a power above us,
 (And that there is, all nature cries aloud
 Through all her works,) He must delight in virtue;
 And that which He delights in must be happy.”

Another from Cicero:

“ O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus.”

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue :

“Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit His assistance for obtaining it ; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefixed to my tables of examination, for daily use :

“O powerful Goodness ! bountiful Father ! merciful Guide ! Increase in me that wisdom, which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolution to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to Thy other children, as the only return in my power for Thy continual favours to me.”

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's *Poems*, viz.,

“Father of light and life, Thou Good Supreme !
O teach me what is good ; teach me Thyself !
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit ; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss !”

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

I entered upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continued it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined ; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book,

which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferred my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which

SCHEME.

		Hours.
MORNING.	The <i>Question.</i> What good shall I do this day?	5 } Rise, wash, and address
		6 } <i>Powerful Goodness!</i> Contrive
		7 } resolution of the day; prose-
		8 } cute the present study, and
		9 } breakfast.
		10 } Work.
		11 } Work.
NOON.		12 } Read, or look over my ac-
		1 } counts, and dine.
AFTERNOON.		2 } Work.
		3 } Work.
	4 } Work.	
	5 } Put things in their places.	
EVENING.	The <i>Question.</i> What good have I done to-day?	6 } Supper. Music or diversion,
		7 } or conversation. Examination
		8 } of the day.
		9 } of the day.
		10 } of the day.
	11 } of the day.	
NIGHT.		12 } Sleep.
		1 } Sleep.
		2 } Sleep.
		3 } Sleep.
		4 } Sleep.

the lines were drawn with red ink that made a durable stain; and on those lines I marked my faults with a blacklead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After awhile I went through one course only in a year; and afterwards only one in several years; till at length I omitted them entirely,

being employed in voyages and business abroad with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered ; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of *Order* gave me the most trouble : and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. Order, too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to *method*, and, having an exceedingly good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect. Like the man who, in buying an axe of a smith, my neighbour, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him, if he would turn the wheel ; he turned, while the smith pressed the broad face of the axe hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on ; and at length would take his axe as it was, without further grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on, we shall have it bright by and by ; as yet it is only speckled." "Yes," said the man, "but *I think I like a speckled axe best.*" And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having for

want of some such means as I employed found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled axe is best.*" For something that pretended to be reason was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to *Order*; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been, if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavour, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his seventy-ninth year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To *Temperance* he ascribes his long continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to *Industry* and *Frugality*, the early

easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned ; to *Sincerity* and *Justice*, the confidence of his country, and the honourable employs it conferred upon him ; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which make his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his young acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit.

It will be remarked that, though my scheme was not wholly without religion, there was in it no mark of any of the distinguishing tenets of any particular sect. I had purposely avoided them ; for, being fully persuaded of the utility and excellency of my method, and that it might be serviceable to people in all religions, and intending some time or other to publish it, I would not have anything in it that should prejudice any one, of any sect, against it. I proposed writing a little comment on each virtue, in which I would have shown the advantages of possessing it, and the mischiefs attending its opposite vice ; I should have called my book *THE ART OF VIRTUE*, because it would have shown the means and manner of obtaining virtue, which would have distinguished it from the mere exhortation to be good, that does not instruct and indicate the means ; but is like the Apostle's man of verbal charity, who, without showing to the naked and hungry, how or where they might get clothes or victuals, only exhorted them to be fed and clothed. *James* ii. 15, 16.

But it so happened that my intention of writing and publishing this comment was never fulfilled. I had, indeed, from time to time, put down short hints of the sentiments and reasonings to be made use of in it, some of which I have still by me; but the necessary close attention to private business in the earlier part of life, and public business since, have occasioned my postponing it. For, it being connected in my mind with a *great and extensive project*, that required the whole man to execute, and which an unforeseen succession of employments prevented my attending to, it has hitherto remained unfinished.

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, *that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful*, the nature of man alone considered; that it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wished to be happy even in this world; and I should from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare) have endeavoured to convince young persons that no qualities are so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of *probity* and *integrity*.

My list of virtues contained at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride showed itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinced me by mentioning several instances, I determined to endeavour to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly

among the rest ; and I added *Humility* to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the appearance of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even forbade myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto, the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion ; such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*, or *I imagine*, a thing to be so or so ; or it so *appears to me at present*. When another asserted something that I thought an error, I denied myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition ; and in answering I began by observing that, in certain cases or circumstances, his opinions would be right, but in the present case there *appeared* or *seemed to me* some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manners ; the conversations I engaged in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I proposed my opinions procured them a readier reception and less contradiction ; I had less mortification, when I was found to be in the wrong ; and I more easily prevailed with others to give up their mistakes and join with me, when I happened to be in the right.

And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to natural inclination, became at length easy, and so habitual to me that perhaps for the last fifty years no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit (after my character of integrity) I think it principally owing that I had early

so much weight with my fellow citizens, when I proposed new institutions or alterations in the old ; and so much influence in public councils, when I became a member ; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my point.

In reality there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride*. Disguise it, struggle with it, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself ; you will see it, perhaps, often in this history. For, even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be *proud* of my *humility*.

CHAPTER VII

Scheme of a Society for extending the Influence of Virtue—Belief in one God, the Immortality of the Soul, and Future Rewards and Punishments—*Poor Richard's Almanac*—Rules for conducting a Newspaper—Controversy concerning Hemphill, the Preacher—Studies the French, Italian, and Spanish Languages—Visits Boston—The Junto—Chosen Clerk of the Assembly—Appointed Postmaster of Philadelphia—Suggests Improvements in the City Watch—Establishes a Fire Company.

HAVING mentioned a *great and extensive project* which I had conceived, it seems proper that some account should be here given of that project and its object. Its first rise in my mind appears in the following little paper, accidentally preserved, viz. :

“ *Observations on my reading history in the Library, May 9th, 1731.*

“ That the great affairs of the world, the wars and revolutions, are carried on and effected by parties.

“That the view of these parties is their present general interest, or what they take to be such.

“That the different views of these different parties occasion all confusion.

“That while a party is carrying on a general design, each man has his particular private interest in view.

“That as soon as a party has gained its general point, each member becomes intent upon his particular interest ; which, thwarting others, breaks that party into divisions, and occasions more confusion.

“That few in public affairs act from a mere view of the good of their country, whatever they may pretend ; and, though their actings bring real good to their country, yet men primarily considered that their own and their country’s interest were united, and so did not act from a principle of benevolence.

“That fewer still in public affairs act with a view to the good of mankind.

“There seems to me at present to be great occasion for raising a *United Party for Virtue*, by forming the virtuous and good men of all nations into a regular body, to be governed by suitable good and wise rules, which good and wise men may probably be more unanimous in their obedience to than common people are to common laws.

“I at present think that whoever attempts this aright, and is well qualified, cannot fail of pleasing God and of meeting with success.”

Revolving this project in my mind, as to be undertaken hereafter, when my circumstances should afford me the necessary leisure, I put down from time to time, on pieces of paper, such thoughts as occurred to me respecting it. Most of these are lost ; but I find one purporting to be the substance of an intended creed, containing, as I thought, the essentials of every known religion, and being free of everything that might shock the professors of any religion. It is expressed in these words, viz. :

“That there is one God, who made all things.

“That He governs the world by His providence.

“That He ought to be worshipped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving.

“But that the most acceptable service to God is doing good to man.

“That the soul is immortal.

“And that God will certainly reward virtue and punish vice, either here or hereafter.”

My ideas at that time were that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only; that each person to be initiated should not only declare his assent to such creed, but should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' examination and practice of the virtues, as in the beforementioned model; that the existence of such a society should be kept a secret, till it was become considerable, to prevent solicitations for the admission of improper persons; but that the members should, each of them, search among his acquaintance for ingenious, well-disposed youths, to whom, with prudent caution, the scheme should be gradually communicated. That the members should engage to afford their advice, assistance, and support to each other in promoting one another's interest, business, and advancement in life. That, for distinction, we should be called THE SOCIETY OF THE FREE AND EASY. Free, as being, by the general practice and habits of the virtues, free from the dominion of vice; and particularly, by the practice of industry and frugality, free from debt, which exposes a man to constraint, and a species of slavery to his creditors.

This is as much as I can now recollect of the project, except that I communicated it in part to two young men who adopted it with some enthusiasm; but my then narrow circumstances, and the necessity I was under

of sticking close to my business, occasioned my postponing the further prosecution of it at that time; and my multifarious occupations, public and private, induced me to continue postponing, so that it has been omitted, till I have no longer strength or activity left sufficient for such an enterprise. Though I am still of opinion it was a practicable scheme, and might have been very useful, by forming a great number of good citizens; and I was not discouraged by the seeming magnitude of the undertaking, as I have always thought that one man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan; and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, makes the execution of that same plan his sole study and business.

In 1732 I first published my Almanac, under the name of *Richard Saunders*; it was continued by me about twenty-five years, and commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac*. I endeavoured to make it both entertaining and useful, and it accordingly came to be in such demand that I reaped considerable profit from it; vending annually near ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighbourhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books. I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the Calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright*.

These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse prefixed to the Almanack of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. The bringing all these scattered counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the American Continent, reprinted in Britain on a large sheet of paper, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in France, and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication.

I considered my newspaper, also, as another means of communicating instruction, and in that view frequently reprinted in it extracts from the *Spectator*, and other moral writers; and sometimes published little pieces of my own, which had been first composed for reading in our Junto. Of these are a Socratic dialogue, tending to prove that, whatever might be his parts and abilities, a vicious man could not properly be called a man of sense; and a discourse on self-denial, showing that virtue was not secure till its practice became a *habitude*, and was free from the opposition of contrary inclinations. These may be found in the papers about the beginning of 1735.

In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libelling and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country. Whenever I was

solicited to insert anything of that kind, and the writers pleaded, as they generally did, the liberty of the press, and that a newspaper was like a stage-coach, in which any one who would pay had a right to a place, my answer was, that I would print the piece separately if desired, and the author might have as many copies as he pleased to distribute himself ; but that I would not take upon me to spread his detraction ; and that, having contracted with my subscribers to furnish them with what might be either useful or entertaining, I could not fill their papers with private altercation, in which they had no concern, without doing them manifest injustice. Now, many of our printers make no scruple of gratifying the malice of individuals, by false accusations of the fairest characters among ourselves, augmenting animosity even to the producing of duels ; and are, moreover, so indiscreet as to print scurrilous reflections on the government of neighbouring states, and even on the conduct of our best national allies, which may be attended with the most pernicious consequences. These things I mention as a caution to young printers, and that they may be encouraged not to pollute their presses and disgrace their profession by such infamous practices, but refuse steadily ; as they may see by my example that such a course of conduct will not on the whole be injurious to their interests.

In 1733 I sent one of my journeymen to Charleston, South Carolina, where a printer was wanting. I furnished him with a press and letters, on an agreement of partnership, by which I was to receive one third of the profits of the business, paying one third of the expense. He was a man of learning, but ignorant in matters of account ; and, though he sometimes made me remittances, I could

get no account from him, nor any satisfactory state of our partnership while he lived. On his decease, the business was continued by his widow, who, being born and bred in Holland, where, as I have been informed, the knowledge of accounts makes a part of female education, she not only sent me as clear a statement as she could find of the transactions past, but continued to account with the greatest regularity and exactness every quarter afterwards ; and managed the business with such success that she not only reputably brought up a family of children, but, at the expiration of the term, was able to purchase of me the printing-house, and establish her son in it.

I mention this affair chiefly for the sake of recommending that branch of education for our young women, as likely to be of more use to them and their children, in case of widowhood, than either music or dancing ; by preserving them from losses by imposition of crafty men, and enabling them to continue, perhaps, a profitable mercantile house, with established correspondence, till a son is grown up fit to undertake and go on with it ; to the lasting advantage and enriching of the family.

About the year 1734, there arrived among us a young Presbyterian preacher, named Hemphill, who delivered with a good voice, and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses ; which drew together considerable numbers of different persuasions, who joined in admiring them. Among the rest, I became one of his constant hearers, his sermons pleasing me, as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the practice of virtue, or what in the religious style are called *Good Works*. Those, however, of our congregation who

considered themselves as orthodox Presbyterians disapproved his doctrine, and were joined by most of the old ministers, who arraigned him of heterodoxy before the synod, in order to have him silenced. I became his zealous partisan, and contributed all I could to raise a party in his favour, and combated for him awhile with some hopes of success. There was much scribbling *pro* and *con* upon the occasion; and finding that, though an elegant preacher, he was but a poor writer, I wrote for him two or three pamphlets, and a piece in the *Gazette* of April, 1735. Those pamphlets, as is generally the case with controversial writings, though eagerly read at the time, were soon out of vogue, and I question whether a single copy of them now exists.

During the contest an unlucky occurrence hurt his cause exceedingly. One of our adversaries having heard him preach a sermon that was much admired, thought he had somewhere read the sermon before, or at least a part of it. On searching, he found that part quoted at length in one of the *British Reviews*, from a discourse of Dr. Foster's. This detection gave many of our party disgust, who accordingly abandoned his cause, and occasioned our more speedy discomfiture in the synod. I stuck by him, however; I rather approved his giving us good sermons composed by others, than bad ones of his own manufacture; though the latter was the practice of our common teachers. He afterwards acknowledged to me that none of those he preached were his own; adding, that his memory was such as enabled him to retain and repeat any sermon after once reading only. On our defeat, he left us in search elsewhere of better fortune, and I quitted the congregation, never attending

it after ; though I continued many years my subscription for the support of its ministers.

I had begun in 1733 to study languages ; I soon made myself so much a master of the French as to be able to read the books in that language with ease. I then undertook the Italian. An acquaintance, who was also learning it, used often to tempt me to play chess with him. Finding this took up too much of the time I had to spare for study, I at length refused to play any more, unless on this condition, that the victor in every game should have a right to impose a task, either of parts of the grammar to be got by heart, or in translations, which tasks the vanquished was to perform upon honour before our next meeting. As we played pretty equally, we thus beat one another into that language. I afterwards, with a little painstaking, acquired as much of the Spanish as to read their books also.

I have already mentioned that I had only one year's instruction in a Latin school, and that when very young, after which I neglected that language entirely. But, when I had attained an acquaintance with the French, Italian, and Spanish, I was surprised to find, on looking over a Latin Testament, that I understood more of that language than I had imagined ; which encouraged me to apply myself again to the study of it, and I met with more success, as those preceding languages had greatly smoothed my way.

From these circumstances I have thought there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and having acquired that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages which are derived from it ; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in

order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that if we can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, we shall more easily gain them in descending ; but certainly if we begin with the lowest, we shall with more ease ascend to the top ; and I would therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those, who begin with the Latin, quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learned becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian and Latin? For though after spending the same time they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life.

After ten years' absence from Boston, and having become easy in my circumstances, I made a journey thither to visit my relations ; which I could not sooner afford. In returning I called at Newport to see my brother James, then settled there with his printing-house. Our former differences were forgotten, and our meeting was very cordial and affectionate. He was fast declining in health, and requested me that, in case of his death, which he apprehended was not far distant, I would take home his son, then but ten years of age, and bring him up to the printing business. This I accordingly performed ; sending him a few years to school before I took him into the office. His mother carried on the business till he was grown up, when I assisted him with an assortment of new types, those of his father being in a manner

worn out. Thus it was that I made my brother ample amends for the service I had deprived him of by leaving him so early.

In 1736 I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the smallpox, taken in the common way. I long regretted him bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it; my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and therefore that the safer should be chosen.

Our club, the Junto, was found so useful, and afforded such satisfaction to the members, that some were desirous of introducing their friends, which could not well be done without exceeding what we had settled as a convenient number, viz. twelve. We had from the beginning made it a rule to keep our institution a secret, which was pretty well observed; the intention was to avoid applications of improper persons for admittance, some of whom, perhaps, we might find it difficult to refuse. I was one of those who were against any addition to our number, but instead of it made in writing a proposal that every member separately should endeavour to form a subordinate club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connexion with the Junto. The advantages proposed were the improvement of so many more young citizens by the use of our institutions; our better acquaintance with the general sentiments of the inhabitants on any occasion, as the Junto member might propose what queries we should desire, and was to report to the Junto what passed at his separate club; the

promotion of our particular interests in business by more extensive recommendation, and the increase of our influence in public affairs, and our power of doing good by spreading through the several clubs the sentiments of the Junto.

The project was approved, and every member undertook to form his club; but they did not all succeed. Five or six only were completed, which were called by different names, as the *Vine*, the *Union*, the *Band*. They were useful to themselves, and afforded us a good deal of amusement, information, and instruction; besides answering, in some considerable degree, our views of influencing the public on particular occasions; of which I shall give some instances in course of time as they happened.

My first promotion was my being chosen, in 1736, clerk of the General Assembly. The choice was made that year without opposition; but the year following, when I was again proposed, (the choice like that of the members being annual,) a new member made a long speech against me, in order to favour some other candidate. I was, however, chosen, which was the more agreeable to me as, besides the pay for the immediate service of clerk, the place gave me a better opportunity of keeping up an interest among the members, which secured to me the business of printing the votes, laws, paper-money, and other occasional jobs for the public, that on the whole were very profitable.

I therefore did not like the opposition of this new member, who was a gentleman of fortune and education, with talents that were likely to give him in time great influence in the House, which indeed afterwards happened. I did not, however, aim at gaining his

favour by paying any servile respect to him, but, after some time, took this other method. Having heard that he had in his library a certain very scarce and curious book, I wrote a note to him, expressing my desire of perusing that book, and requesting that he would do me the favour of lending it to me for a few days. He sent it immediately ; and I returned it in about a week with another note, expressing strongly the sense of the favour. When we next met in the House he spoke to me, which he had never done before, and with great civility ; and he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions, so that we became great friends, and our friendship continued to his death. This is another instance of the truth of an old maxim I had learned, which says, "*He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself have obliged.*" And it shows how much more profitable it is prudently to remove, than to resent, return, and continue, inimical proceedings.

In 1737, Colonel Spotswood, late governor of Virginia, and then Postmaster-General, being dissatisfied with the conduct of his deputy at Philadelphia, respecting some negligence in rendering, and want of exactness in framing, his accounts, took from him the commission and offered it to me. I accepted it readily, and found it of great advantage ; for, though the salary was small, it facilitated the correspondence that improved my newspaper, increased the number demanded, as well as the advertisements to be inserted, so that it came to afford me a considerable income. My old competitor's newspaper declined proportionably, and I was satisfied, without retaliating his refusal, while postmaster, to permit my papers being carried by the riders. Thus he suffered

greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention it as a lesson to those young men who may be employed in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts, and make remittances, with great clearness and punctuality. The character of observing such a conduct is the most powerful of all recommendations to new employments and increase of business.

I began now to turn my thoughts to public affairs, beginning, however, with small matters. The city watch was one of the first things that I conceived to want regulation. It was managed by the constables of the respective wards in turn; the constable summoned a number of housekeepers to attend him for the night. Those who chose never to attend paid him six shillings a year to be excused, which was supposed to go to hiring substitutes, but was in reality much more than was necessary for that purpose, and made the constableship a place of profit; and the constable, for a little drink, often got such ragamuffins about him as a watch that respectable housekeepers did not choose to mix with. Walking the rounds, too, was often neglected, and most of the nights spent in tippling. I thereupon wrote a paper to be read in the Junto, representing these irregularities, but insisting more particularly on the inequality of the six shilling tax of the constable, respecting the circumstances of those who paid it; since a poor widow housekeeper, all whose property to be guarded by the watch did not perhaps exceed the value of fifty pounds, paid as much as the wealthiest merchant, who had thousands of pounds' worth of goods in his stores.

On the whole I proposed as a more effectual watch,

the hiring of proper men to serve constantly in the business ; and as a more equitable way of supporting the charge, the levying a tax that should be proportioned to the property. This idea, being approved by the Junto, was communicated to the other clubs, but as originating in each of them ; and though the plan was not immediately carried into execution, yet, by preparing the minds of people for the change, it paved the way for the law obtained a few years after, when the members of our clubs were grown into more influence.

About this time I wrote a paper (first to be read in the Junto, but it was afterwards published,) on the different accidents and carelessnesses by which houses were set on fire, with cautions against them, and means proposed of avoiding them. This was spoken of as a useful piece, and gave rise to a project, which soon followed it, of forming a company for the more ready extinguishing of fires, and mutual assistance in removing and securing of goods when in danger. Associates in this scheme were presently found amounting to thirty. Our articles of agreement obliged every member to keep always in good order, and fit for use, a certain number of leathern buckets, with strong bags and baskets (for packing and transporting of goods), which were to be brought to every fire ; and we agreed about once a month to spend a social evening together, in discoursing and communicating such ideas as occurred to us upon the subject of fires, as might be useful in our conduct on such occasions.

The utility of this institution soon appeared, and many more desiring to be admitted than we thought convenient for one company, they were advised to form another, which was accordingly done ; and thus went on one new

company after another, till they became so numerous as to include most of the inhabitants who were men of property; and now, at the time of my writing this, though upwards of fifty years since its establishment, that which I first formed, called the *Union Fire Company*, still subsists; though the first members are all deceased but one, who is older by a year than I am. The fines that have been paid by members for absence at the monthly meetings have been applied to the purchase of fire-engines, ladders, fire-hooks, and other useful implements for each company; so that I question whether there is a city in the world better provided with the means of putting a stop to beginning conflagrations; and, in fact, since these institutions, the city has never lost by fire more than one or two houses at a time, and the flames have often been extinguished before the house in which they began has been half consumed.

CHAPTER VIII

Forms an Intimacy with Whitefield—Building erected for Preachers of all Denominations—Character of Whitefield, his Oratory and Writings—Partnerships in the Printing Business—Proposes a Philosophical Society—Takes an active Part in providing Means of Defence in the Spanish War—Forms an Association for that Purpose—Sentiments of the Quakers—James Logan—Anecdote of William Penn—The Sect called Dunkers—Religious Creeds—New-invented Fireplace.

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he

was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was a matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them, they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, than sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground, and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad ; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of *any preacher of any religious persuasion* who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia ; the design in building being not to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general ; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mahometanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, on leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had been lately begun, but, instead of

being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labour, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shopkeepers and other insolvent debtors ; many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity, and made large collections ; for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house at Philadelphia, and brought the children to it. This I advised ; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver ; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the

collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had by precaution emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbour, who stood near him, to lend him some money for the purpose. The request was fortunately made to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely ; but not now ; for thee seems to be out of thy right senses."

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument ; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him, being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, never had the least suspicion of his integrity ; but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man* ; and methinks my testimony in his favour ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connexion. He used, indeed, sometimes, to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.

The following instance will show the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer

was, "You know my house ; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, that if I made that kind offer for *Christ's* sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, "Don't let me be mistaken ; it was not for *Christ's* sake, but for *your* sake." One of our common acquaintance jocosely remarked that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favour, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contrived to fix it on earth.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan-House concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly that he might be heard and understood at a great distance ; especially as his auditors observed the most perfect silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-House steps, which are in the middle of Market Street, and on the west side of Second Street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river ; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front Street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it was filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his

having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the history of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.¹

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he had often preached in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explained or qualified by supposing others that might have accompanied them; or they

¹ In the early part of his life, Mr. Whitefield was preaching in an open field, when a drummer happened to be present, who was determined to interrupt his pious business, and rudely beat his drum in a violent manner, in order to drown the preacher's voice. Mr. Whitefield spoke very loud, but was not as powerful as the instrument. He therefore called out to the drummer in these words, "Friend, you and I serve the two greatest masters existing, but in different callings; you beat up for volunteers for King George, I for the Lord Jesus. In God's name then let us not interrupt each other; the world is wide enough for both; and we may get recruits in abundance." This speech had such an effect on the drummer that he went away in great good humour, and left the preacher in full possession of the field.

might have been denied ; but *litera scripta manet*. Critics attacked his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries, and prevent their increase. So that I am satisfied that, if he had never written anything he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect ; and his reputation might in that case have been still growing even after his death ; as, there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure, and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to attribute to him as great a variety of excellences as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

My business was now constantly augmenting, and my circumstances growing daily easier, my newspaper having become very profitable, as being for a time almost the only one in this and the neighbouring provinces. I experienced, too, the truth of the observation, "*that after getting the first hundred pounds, it is more easy to get the second,*" money itself being of a prolific nature.

The partnership at Carolina having succeeded, I was encouraged to engage in others, and to promote several of my workmen who had behaved well, by establishing them in printing-houses in different colonies, on the same terms with that in Carolina. Most of them did well, being enabled at the end of our term, six years, to purchase the types of me and go on working for themselves, by which means several families were raised. Partnerships often finish in quarrels ; but I was happy in this, that mine were all carried on and ended amicably ; owing, I think, a good deal to the precaution of having very explicitly settled, in our

articles, everything to be done by, or expected from, each partner, so that there was nothing to dispute ; which precaution I would therefore recommend to all who enter into partnerships ; for, whatever esteem partners may have for, and confidence in, each other at the time of the contract, little jealousies and disgusts may arise, with ideas of inequality in the care and burden, business, etc., which are attended often with breach of friendship and of the connection ; perhaps with lawsuits and other disagreeable consequences.

I had, on the whole, abundant reason to be satisfied with my being established in Pennsylvania. There were, however, some things that I regretted, there being no provision for defence, nor for a complete education of youth ; no militia, nor any college. I, therefore, in 1743, drew up a proposal for establishing an Academy ; and at that time, thinking the Reverend Richard Peters, who was out of employ, a fit person to superintend such an institution, I communicated the project to him ; but he, having more profitable views in the service of the Proprietors, which succeeded, declined the undertaking ; and, not knowing another at that time suitable for such a trust, I let the scheme lie awhile dormant. I succeeded better the next year, 1744, in proposing and establishing a *Philosophical Society*. The paper I wrote for that purpose will be found among my writings, if not lost with many others.

With respect to defence, Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being at length joined by France, which brought us into great danger ; and the laboured and long-continued endeavour of our governor, Thomas, to prevail with our Quaker Assembly

to pass a militia law, and make other provisions for the security of the province, having proved abortive, I proposed to try what might be done by a voluntary subscription of the people. To promote this, I first wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *PLAIN TRUTH*, in which I stated our helpless situation in strong lights, with the necessity of union and discipline for our defence, and promised to propose in a few days an association, to be generally signed for that purpose. The pamphlet had a sudden and surprising effect. I was called upon for the instrument of association. Having settled the draft of it with a few friends, I appointed a meeting of the citizens in the large building before mentioned. The house was pretty full; I had prepared a number of printed copies, and provided pens and ink dispersed all over the room. I harangued them a little on the subject, read the paper, explained it, and then distributed the copies, which were eagerly signed, not the least objection being made.

When the company separated, and the papers were collected, we found above twelve hundred signatures; and other copies being dispersed in the country, the subscribers amounted at length to upwards of ten thousand. These all furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, formed themselves into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week to be instructed in the manual exercise and other parts of military discipline. The women, by subscriptions among themselves, provided silk colours, which they presented to the companies, painted with different devices and mottoes, which I supplied.

The officers of the companies composing the Philadelphia regiment being met, chose me for their colonel,

but, conceiving myself unfit, I declined that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and a man of influence, who was accordingly appointed. I then proposed a lottery to defray the expense of building a battery below the town, and furnished with cannon. It filled expeditiously, and the battery was soon erected, the merlons being framed of logs, and filled with earth. We bought some old cannon from Boston; but these not being sufficient, we wrote to London for more, soliciting at the same time our Proprietaries for some assistance, though without much expectation of obtaining it.

Meanwhile Colonel Lawrence, Mr. Allen, Abraham Taylor, and myself were sent to New York by the associators, commissioned to borrow some cannon of Governor Clinton. He at first refused us peremptorily; but at a dinner with his council, where there was great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of that place then was, he softened by degrees, and said he would lend us six. After a few more bumpers he advanced to ten, and at length he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which were soon transported and mounted on our batteries, where the associators kept a nightly guard, while the war lasted, and among the rest I regularly took my turn of duty as a common soldier.

My activity in these operations was agreeable to the Governor and Council; they took me into confidence, and I was consulted by them in every measure where their concurrence was thought useful to the Association. Calling in the aid of religion, I proposed to them the proclaiming a fast, to promote reformation, and implore

the blessing of heaven on our undertaking. They embraced the motion; but, as it was the first fast ever thought of in the province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of some advantage; I drew it in the accustomed style; it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and circulated through the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregations to join the Association, and it would probably have been general among all but the Quakers, if the peace had not soon intervened.

It was thought by some of my friends that, by my activity in these affairs, I should offend that sect, and thereby lose my interest in the Assembly of the province, where they formed a great majority. A young man, who had likewise some friends in the Assembly, and wished to succeed me as their clerk, acquainted me that it was decided to displace me at the next election; and he, through good will, advised me to resign, as more consistent with my honour than being turned out. My answer to him was that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offered to him. "I approve," said I, "of this rule, and shall practise it with a small addition; I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever RESIGN an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of it to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or another making reprisal on my adversaries." I heard, however, no more of this; I was chosen again unanimously as clerk at the next

election. Possibly, as they disliked my late intimacy with the members of Council, who had joined the governors in all the disputes about military preparations, with which the House had long been harassed, they might have been pleased if I would voluntarily have left them ; but they did not care to displace me on account merely of my zeal for the Association, and they could not well give another reason.

Indeed, I had some cause to believe that the defence of the country was not disagreeable to any of them, provided they were not required to assist in it. And I found that a much greater number of them than I could have imagined, though against *offensive* war, were clearly for the *defensive*. Many pamphlets *pro* and *con* were published on the subject, and some by good Quakers, in favour of *defence* ; which, I believe, convinced most of their young people.

A transaction in our fire company gave me some insight into their prevailing sentiments. It had been proposed that we should encourage the scheme for building a battery by laying out the present stock, then about sixty pounds, in tickets of the lottery. By our rules no money could be disposed of till the next meeting after the proposal. The company consisted of thirty members, of whom twenty-two were Quakers, and eight only of other persuasions. We eight punctually attended the meeting, but, though we thought that some of the Quakers would join us, we were by no means sure of a majority. Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appeared to oppose the measure. He expressed much sorrow that it had ever been proposed, as he said *Friends* were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. We told him that

we saw no reason for that ; we were the minority, and if *Friends* were against the measure and out-voted us, we must and should, agreeably to the usage of all societies, submit. When the hour for business arrived, it was moved to put this to the vote ; he allowed we might do it by the rules, but, as he could assure us that a number of members intended to be present for the purpose of opposing it, it would be but candid to allow a little time for their appearing.

While we were disputing this a waiter came to tell me that two gentlemen below desired to speak with me. I went down, and found there two of our Quaker members. They told me there were eight of them assembled at a tavern just by ; that they were determined to come and vote with us if there should be occasion, which they hoped would not be the case, and desired we would not call for their assistance if we could do without it, as their voting for such a measure might embroil them with their elders and friends. Being thus secure of a majority I went up, and, after a little seeming hesitation, agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris allowed to be extremely fair. Not one of his opposing friends appeared, at which he expressed great surprise ; and, at the expiration of the hour, we carried the resolution eight to one ; and as of the twenty-two Quakers eight were ready to vote with us, and thirteen by their absence manifested that they were not inclined to oppose the measure, I afterwards estimated the proportion of Quakers sincerely against defence as one to twenty-one only. For these were all regular members of the society and in good reputation among them, and who had notice of what was proposed at that meeting.

The honourable and learned Mr. Logan, who had

always been of that sect, wrote an address to them, declaring his approbation of *defensive* war, and supported his opinion by many strong arguments. He put into my hands sixty pounds to be laid out in lottery tickets for the battery, with directions to apply what prizes might be drawn wholly to that service. He told me the following anecdote of his old master, William Penn, respecting defence. He came over from England when a young man with that Proprietary, and as his secretary. It was war time, and their ship was chased by an armed vessel, supposed to be an enemy. Their captain prepared for defence, but told William Penn and his company of Quakers that he did not expect their assistance, and they might retire into the cabin, which they did, except James Logan, who chose to stay upon deck, and was quartered to a gun. The supposed enemy proved a friend, so there was no fighting; but when the secretary went down to communicate the intelligence, William Penn rebuked him severely for staying upon deck, and undertaking to assist in defending the vessel, contrary to the principles of Friends; especially as it had not been required by the captain. This reprimand, being before all the company, piqued the secretary, who answered, "I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger."

My being many years in the Assembly, a majority of which were constantly Quakers, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing the embarrassment given them by their principle against war whenever application was made to them, by order of the Crown, to grant aids for military purposes. They were unwilling to offend

Government on the one hand, by a direct refusal, and their friends, the body of the Quakers, on the other, by a compliance contrary to their principles, using a variety of evasions to avoid complying, and modes of disguising the compliance when it became unavoidable. The common mode at last was to grant money under the phrase of its being "*for the King's use,*" and never to inquire how it was applied.

But if the demand was not directly from the Crown, that phrase was found not so proper, and some other was to be invented. Thus, when powder was wanting (I think it was for the garrison at Louisburg) and the Government of New England solicited a grant of some from Pennsylvania, which was much urged on the House by Governor Thomas, they would not grant money to buy *powder*, because that was an ingredient of war, but they voted an aid to New England of three thousand pounds, to be put into the hands of the Governor, and appropriated it for the purpose of bread, flour, wheat, or *other grain*. Some of the Council, desirous of giving the House still further embarrassment, advised the Governor not to accept that provision, as not being the thing he had demanded; but he replied, "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; *other grain* is gunpowder;" which he accordingly bought, and they never objected to it.

It was in allusion to this fact that, when in our fire company we feared the success of our proposal in favour of the lottery, and I had said to a friend of mine, one of our members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire engine with the money, the Quakers can have no objection to that: and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great

gun, which is certainly a *fire engine*:" "I see," said he, "you have improved by being so long in the Assembly; your equivocal project would be just a match for their wheat or *other grain*."

Those embarrassments that the Quakers suffered, from having established and published it as one of their principles that no kind of war was lawful, and which, being once published, they could not afterwards, however they might change their minds, easily get rid of, reminds me of what I think a more prudent conduct in another sect among us, that of the Dunkers. I was acquainted with one of its founders, Michael Weffare, soon after it appeared. He complained to me that they were grievously calumniated by the zealots of other persuasions, and charged with abominable principles and practices to which they were utter strangers. I told him this had always been the case with new sects, and that to put a stop to such abuse I imagined it might be well to publish the articles of their belief and the rules of their discipline. He said that it had been proposed among them, but not agreed to for this reason: "When we were first drawn together as a society," said he, "it had pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines which were esteemed truths were errors, and that others which we had esteemed errors were real truths. From time to time He has been pleased to afford us further light, and our principles have been improving and our errors diminishing. Now we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progression and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge; and we fear that if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves as if bound and confined by it, and perhaps be unwilling to receive

further improvement, and our successors still more so, as conceiving what their elders and founders had done to be something sacred—never to be departed from.”

This modesty in a sect is perhaps a single instance in the history of mankind, every other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man travelling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side; but near him all appears clear, though, in truth, he is as much in the fog as any of them. To avoid this kind of embarrassment the Quakers have of late years been gradually declining the public service in the Assembly and in the magistracy, choosing rather to quit their power than their principle.

In order of time I should have mentioned before that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand I wrote and published a pamphlet entitled “An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvanian Fire-places, wherein their Construction and Manner of Operation are particularly explained, their advantages above every other Method of Warming Rooms demonstrated, and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated,” etc. This pamphlet had a good effect; Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he

offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years, but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., *that as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours, and this we should do freely and generously.*

An ironmonger in London, however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own, and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there, and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out of my inventions by others, though not always with the same success; which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fire-places in very many houses, both here in Pennsylvania and the neighbouring States, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.

CHAPTER IX

Proposals relating to the Education of Youth—Subscriptions for that Object—An Academy established—Appointed one of the Trustees for managing it—Partnership with David Hall—Electrical Experiments—Chosen a Member of the Assembly—A Commissioner for making a Treaty with the Indians—Pennsylvania Hospital—Writes in Favour of it, and procures Subscriptions—Advice to Gilbert Tennent—Suggests Plans for cleaning, paving, and lighting the Streets of Philadelphia—Project for cleaning the Streets of London—Appointed Post-master-General for America—Receives the Degree of Master of Arts from Harvard and Yale Colleges.

PEACE being concluded, and the Association business therefore at an end, I turned my thoughts again to the

affair of establishing an academy. The first step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled, *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*. This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy; it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it I judged the subscription might be larger; and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds.

In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication not as an act of mine, but of some *public-spirited gentlemen*; avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the public as the author of any scheme for their benefit.

The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees, and appointed Mr. Francis, then Attorney-General, and myself, to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engaged, and the schools opened; I think in the same year, 1749.

The scholars increasing fast, the house was soon found too small, and we were looking out for a piece of ground, properly situated, with intent to build, when accident threw into our way a large house ready built, which with a few alterations might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner.

It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground were to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was for this reason that one of each sect was appointed: viz., one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, etc., who, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happened not to please his colleagues, and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mentioned me, with the observation, that I was merely an honest man, and of *no sect* at all, which prevailed with them to choose me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground rent, and discharging some other debts the building had occasioned, which embarrassed them greatly. Being now a member of both boards of trustees, that for the building, and that for the academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy; the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep for ever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the original intention, and

maintain a free school for the instruction of poor children. Writings were accordingly drawn: and, on paying the debts, the trustees of the academy were put in possession of the premises; and, by dividing the great and lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools, and purchasing some additional ground, the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars removed into the building. The whole care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials, and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went through it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business; having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted, as he had worked for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing-office, paying me punctually my share of the profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the Governor; their funds were increased by contributions in Britain, and grants of land from the Proprietaries, to which the Assembly had since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth, who have received their education in it, distinguished by their improved abilities, serviceable in public stations, and ornaments to their country.

When I was disengaged myself, as above mentioned, from private business, I flattered myself that, by the

sufficient though moderate fortune I had acquired, I had found leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies and amusements. I purchased all Dr. Spence's apparatus, who had come from England to lecture in Philadelphia, and I proceeded in my electrical experiments with great alacrity; but the public, now considering me as a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes, every part of our civil government, and almost at the same time, imposing some duty upon me. The Governor put me into the commission of the peace; the corporation of the city chose me one of the common council, and soon after alderman; and the citizens at large elected me a burgess to represent them in the Assembly. This latter station was more agreeable to me, as I grew at length tired with sitting there to hear the debates, in which, as clerk, I could take no part; and which were often so uninteresting that I was induced to amuse myself with making magic squares or circles, or anything to avoid weariness; and I conceived my becoming a member would enlarge my power of doing good. I would not, however, insinuate that my ambition was not flattered by all these promotions; it certainly was, for, considering my low beginning, they were great things to me; and they were still more pleasing as being so many spontaneous testimonies of the public good opinion, and by me entirely unsolicited.

The office of justice of the peace I tried a little, by attending a few courts, and sitting on the bench to hear causes; but finding that more knowledge of the common law than I possessed was necessary to act in that station with credit, I gradually withdrew from it; excusing myself by being obliged to attend the higher duties of a legislator in the Assembly. My election to this trust was

repeated every year for ten years, without my ever asking any elector for his vote, or signifying, either directly or indirectly, any desire of being chosen. On taking my seat in the House, my son was appointed their clerk.

The year following, a treaty being to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, the Governor sent a message to the House, proposing that they should nominate some of their members, to be joined with some members of Council, as commissioners for that purpose. The House named the Speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself; and, being commissioned, we went to Carlisle, and met the Indians accordingly.

As those people are extremely apt to get drunk, and when so are very quarrelsome and disorderly, we strictly forbade the selling any liquor to them; and when they complained of this restriction, we told them that if they would continue sober during the treaty, we would give them plenty of rum when the business was over. They promised this, and they kept their promise, because they could get no rum; and the treaty was conducted very orderly, and concluded to mutual satisfaction. They then claimed and received the rum; this was in the afternoon. They were near one hundred men, women, and children; and were lodged in temporary cabins, built in the form of a square, just without the town. In the evening, hearing a great noise among them, the commissioners walked to see what was the matter. We found they had made a great bonfire in the middle of the square; they were all drunk, men and women, quarrelling and fighting. Their dark-coloured bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid

yellings, formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined. There was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice.

The next day, sensible they had misbehaved in giving us that disturbance, they sent three of their old counsellors to make their apology. The orator acknowledged the fault, but laid it upon the rum; and then endeavoured to excuse the rum, by saying, "The Great Spirit, who made all things, made everything for some use; and whatever use he designed anything for, that use it should always be put to. Now, when he made rum, he said, '*Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with;*' and it must be so." And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for the cultivators of the earth, it seems not impossible that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast.

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia, (a very beneficent design, which has been ascribed to me, but was originally and truly his,) for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavouring to procure subscriptions for it; but the proposal being a novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met but with little success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such a thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concerned in it. "For," said he, "I am often asked by those to

whom I propose subscribing, *Have you consulted Franklin on this business? And what does he think of it?* And when I tell them that I have not, supposing it rather out of your line, they do not subscribe, but say, *they will consider it.*" I inquired into the nature and probable utility of this scheme, and receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscribed to it myself, but engaged heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation, I endeavoured to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in the newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases, but which Dr. Bond had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous; but, beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly, and therefore proposed to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at first relish the project. They objected that it could only be serviceable to the city, and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it; and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approved of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I formed my plan; and asking leave to bring in a Bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition, and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the Bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one: viz. "And be it

enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that, when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, and shall have raised by their contribution a capital stock of two thousand pounds' value, (the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the accommodation of the sick poor in the said hospital, and of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines,) and *shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the Speaker of the Assembly for the time being*, that then it shall and may be lawful for the said Speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same."

This condition carried the Bill through; for the members who had opposed the grant, and now conceived they might have the credit of being charitable without the expense, agreed to its passage. And then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urged the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause worked both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claimed and received the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected: the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day; and I do not remember any of my political manœuvres the success of which at the time gave me more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excused myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Reverend Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow citizens by too frequently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refused. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refused to give such a list. He then desired I would at least give him my advice. "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those who you know will give something; next to those who you are uncertain whether they will give anything or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing; for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laughed and thanked me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he asked of *everybody*; and he obtained a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch Street.

Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages ploughed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather

the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud, while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing; but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the brick foot pavement that was on the side next the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry-shod; but the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor industrious man, who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean, by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbours' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighbourhood that might be obtained from this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having in windy weather the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences; it was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness

of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved; and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a Bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone, and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment which I thought not for the better; but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, giving a sample of the utility of lamps, by placing one at his door, that the people were first impressed with the idea of lighting all the city. The honour of this public benefit has also been ascribed to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supplied with from London. They were found inconvenient in these respects; they admitted no air below; the smoke therefore did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodged on its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford; giving besides the daily trouble of wiping them clean; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it, and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting the air below to facilitate the ascent of the smoke; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continued bright till morning; and an accidental

stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repaired.

I have sometimes wondered that the Londoners did not, from the effect holes in the bottom of the globe lamps used at Vauxhall have in keeping them clean, learn to have such holes in their street lamps. But these holes being made for another purpose, viz., to communicate flame more suddenly to the wick by a little flax hanging down through them, the other use, of letting in air, seems not to have been thought of; and therefore, after the lamps have been lit a few hours, the streets of London are very poorly illuminated.

The mention of these improvements puts me in mind of one I proposed, when in London, to Dr. Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects. I had observed that the streets, when dry, were never swept, and the light dust carried away; but it was suffered to accumulate till wet weather reduced it to mud; and then, after lying some days so deep on the pavement that there was no crossing but in paths kept clean by poor people with brooms, it was with great labour raked together and thrown up into carts, open above, the sides of which suffered some of the slush at every jolt on the pavement to shake out and fall; sometimes to the annoyance of foot passengers. The reason given for not sweeping the dusty streets was that the dust would fly into the windows of shops and houses.

An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven Street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavement with a birch-broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of

sickness. I asked who employed her to sweep there ; she said, "Nobody ; but I am poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentlefolk's doors, and hopes they will give me something." I bade her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling ; this was at nine o'clock ; and at noon she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working, I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street was swept perfectly clean, and all the dust placed in the gutter which was in the middle ; and the next rain washed it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean.

I then judged that, if that feeble woman could sweep such a street in three hours, a strong active man might have done it in half the time. And here let me remark the convenience of having but one gutter in such a narrow street running down its middle instead of two, one on each side near the footway. For where all the rain that falls on a street runs from the sides and meets in the middle, it forms there a current strong enough to wash away all the mud it meets with ; but when divided into two channels, it is often too weak to cleanse either, and only makes the mud it finds more fluid ; so that the wheels of carriages and feet of horses throw and dash it upon the foot pavement, which is thereby rendered foul and slippery, and sometimes splash it upon those who are walking. My proposal, communicated to the Doctor, was as follows :

"For the more effectually cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster, it is proposed that the several watchmen be contracted with to have the dust swept up in dry seasons and the mud raked

up at other times, each in the several streets and lanes of his round, that they be furnished with brooms and other proper instruments for these purposes, to be kept at their respective stands, ready to furnish the poor people they may employ in the service.

“That in the dry summer months the dust be all swept up into heaps at proper distances, before the shops and windows of houses are usually opened ; when scavengers, with close covered carts, shall also carry it all away.

“That the mud, when raked up, be not left in heaps to be spread abroad again by the wheels of carriages and trampling of horses ; but that the scavengers be provided with bodies of carts, not placed high upon wheels, but low upon sliders, with lattice bottoms, which, being covered with straw, will retain the mud thrown into them, and permit the water to drain from it ; whereby it will become much lighter, water making the greatest part of the weight. These bodies of carts to be placed at convenient distances, and the mud brought to them in wheelbarrows ; they remaining where placed till the mud is drained, and then horses brought to draw them away.”

I have since had doubts of the practicability of the latter part of this proposal, in all places, on account of the narrowness of some streets, and the difficulty of placing the draining sleds so as not to encumber too much the passage ; but I am still of opinion that the former, requiring the dust to be swept up and carried away before the shops are open, is very practicable in the summer, when the days are long ; for, in walking through the Strand and Fleet Street one morning at seven o'clock, I observed there was not one shop open, though it had been daylight and the sun up above

three hours; the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live much by candle-light, and sleep by sunshine: and yet they often complain, a little absurdly, of the duty on candles and the high price of tallow.

Some may think these trifling matters not worth minding or relating; but when they consider that though dust blown into the eyes of a single person, or into a single shop on a windy day, is but of small importance, yet the great number of the instances in a populous city, and its frequent repetition, gives it weight and consequence, perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some attention to affairs of this seemingly low nature. Human felicity is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. This sum may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it; but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument. With these sentiments I have hazarded the few preceding pages, hoping they may afford hints which some time or other may be useful to a city I love, having lived many years in it very happily, and perhaps to some of our towns in America.

Having been some time employed by the Postmaster-General of America as his comptroller in regulating several offices, and bringing the officers to account, I

was, upon his death, in 1753, appointed jointly with Mr. William Hunter to succeed him, by a commission from the Postmaster-General in England. The American office had hitherto never paid anything to that of Britain. We were to have six hundred pounds a year between us, if we could make that sum out of the profits of the office. To do this, a variety of improvements was necessary; some of these were inevitably at first expensive: so that in the first four years the office became above nine hundred pounds in debt to us. But it soon after began to repay us: and before I was displaced by a freak of the ministers, of which I shall speak hereafter, we had brought it to yield *three times* as much clear revenue to the Crown as the post-office of Ireland. Since that imprudent transaction, they have received from it—not one farthing!

The business of the post-office occasioned my taking a journey this year to New England, where the College of Cambridge, of their own motion, presented me with the degree of Master of Arts. Yale College in Connecticut had before made me a similar compliment. Thus, without studying in any college, I came to partake of their honours. They were conferred in consideration of my improvements and discoveries in the electric branch of natural philosophy.

CHAPTER X

Attends a General Convention at Albany, as a Delegate from Pennsylvania—Proposes a Plan of Union for the Colonies, which is adopted by the Convention—Interview with Governor Shirley at Boston—Conversations with Governor Morris on Pennsylvanian Affairs—Assists Mr. Quincy in procuring Aids for New England—Visits General Braddock's Army in Maryland—Procures Horses and Wagons to facilitate the March of the Army—Obtains Supplies for the Officers—Character of Braddock—Account of his Defeat in the Battle of the Monongahela—Braddock commends his Services in Letters to the Government—These Services poorly rewarded—Society for the Relief and Instruction of Germans in Pennsylvania.

IN 1754, war with France being again apprehended, a congress of commissioners from the different colonies was by an order of the Lords of Trade to be assembled at Albany, there to confer with the chiefs of the Six Nations concerning the means of defending both their country and ours. Governor Hamilton having received this order, acquainted the House with it, requesting they would furnish proper presents for the Indians, to be given on this occasion; and naming the Speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself to join Mr. John Penn and Mr. Secretary Peters as commissioners to act for Pennsylvania. The House approved the nomination, and provided the goods for the presents, though they did not much like treating out of the province; and we met the other commissioners at Albany about the middle of June.

In our way thither, I projected and drew up a plan for the union of all the colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defence, and other important general purposes. As we passed through New York, I had there shown my project to Mr. James

Alexander and Mr. Kennedy, two gentlemen of great knowledge in public affairs ; and, being fortified by their approbation, I ventured to lay it before the congress. It then appeared that several of the commissioners had formed plans of the same kind. A previous question was first taken, whether a union should be established, which passed in the affirmative unanimously. A committee was then appointed, one member from each colony, to consider the several plans and report. Mine happened to be preferred ; and, with a few amendments, was accordingly reported.

By this plan the general government was to be administered by a President-General, appointed and supported by the Crown ; and a grand council was to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several colonies, met in their respective assemblies. The debates upon it in congress went on daily, hand in hand with the Indian business. Many objections and difficulties were started ; but at length they were all overcome, and the plan was unanimously agreed to, and copies ordered to be transmitted to the Board of Trade and to the Assemblies of the several provinces. Its fate was singular ; the Assemblies did not adopt it, as they all thought there was too much *prerogative* in it ; and in England it was judged to have too much of the *democratic*. The Board of Trade did not approve it, nor recommend it for the approbation of His Majesty ; but another scheme was formed, supposed to answer the same purpose better, whereby the governors of the provinces, with some members of their respective councils, were to meet and order the raising of troops, building of forts, etc., and to draw on the treasury of Great Britain for the expense, which was afterwards to be refunded by an Act of

Parliament, laying a tax on America. My plan, with my reasons in support of it, is to be found among my political papers that were printed.

Being the winter following in Boston, I had much conversation with Governor Shirley upon both the plans. Part of what passed between us on this occasion may also be seen among those papers. The different and contrary reasons of dislike to my plan makes me suspect that it was really the true medium; and I am still of opinion it would have been happy for both sides if it had been adopted. The colonies so united would have been sufficiently strong to have defended themselves; there would then have been no need of troops from England: of course the subsequent pretext for taxing America, and the bloody contest it occasioned, would have been avoided. But such mistakes are not new; history is full of the errors of states and princes.

“Look round the habitable world, how few
Know their own good, or, knowing it, pursue!”

Those who govern, having much business on their hands, do not generally like to take the trouble of considering and carrying into execution new projects. The best public measures are therefore seldom adopted from previous wisdom, but forced by the occasion.

The Governor of Pennsylvania, in sending it down to the Assembly, expressed his approbation of the plan, “as appearing to him to be drawn up with great clearness and strength of judgment, and therefore recommended it as well worthy of their closest and most serious attention.” The House, however, by the management of a certain member, took it up when I happened to be absent, which I thought not very fair, and reprobated it

without paying any attention to it at all, to my no small mortification.

In my journey to Boston this year, I met at New York with our new Governor, Mr. Morris, just arrived there from England, with whom I had been before intimately acquainted. He brought a commission to supersede Mr. Hamilton, who, tired with the disputes his proprietary instructions subjected him to, had resigned. Mr. Morris asked me if I thought he must expect as uncomfortable an administration. I said, "No; you may on the contrary have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly." "My dear friend," said he pleasantly, "how can you advise my avoiding disputes? You know I love disputing, it is one of my greatest pleasures; however, to show the regard I have for your counsel, I promise you I will, if possible, avoid them." He had some reason for loving to dispute, being eloquent, an acute sophister, and therefore generally successful in argumentative conversation. He had been brought up to it from a boy, his father, as I have heard, accustoming his children to dispute with one another for his diversion, while sitting at table after dinner; but I think the practice was not wise, for, in the course of my observation, those disputing, contradicting, and confuting people are generally unfortunate in their affairs. They get victory sometimes, but they never get goodwill, which would be of more use to them. We parted; he going to Philadelphia, and I to Boston.

In returning I met at New York with the votes of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, by which it appeared that, notwithstanding his promise to me, he and the House were already in high contention; and it was a continual

battle between them as long as he retained the government. I had my share of it ; for, as soon as I got back to my seat in the Assembly, I was put on every committee for answering his speeches and messages, and by the committees always desired to make the drafts. Our answers, as well as his messages, were often tart and sometimes indecently abusive ; and, as he knew I wrote for the Assembly, one might have imagined that when we met we could hardly avoid cutting throats. But he was so good-natured a man that no personal difference between him and me was occasioned by the contest, and we often dined together.

One afternoon, in the height of this public quarrel, we met in the street. "Franklin," said he, "you must go home with me and spend the evening ; I am to have some company that you will like ;" and, taking me by the arm, led me to his house. In gay conversation over our wine after supper, he told us jokingly that he much admired the idea of Sancho Panza, who when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of blacks ; as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them. One of his friends, who sat next to me, said, "Franklin, why do you continue to side with those damned Quakers ? Had you not better sell them ? The Proprietor would give you a good price." "The Governor," said I, "has not yet *blacked* them enough." He indeed had laboured hard to blacken the Assembly in all his messages, but they wiped off his colouring as fast as he laid it on, and placed it, in return, thick upon his own face ; so that finding he was likely to be *negrofied* himself, he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tired of the contest, and quitted the government.

These public quarrels were all at bottom owing to the

Proprietaries, our hereditary governors, who, when any expense was to be incurred for the defence of their province, with incredible meanness instructed their deputies to pass no Act for levying the necessary taxes unless their vast estates were in the same Act expressly exonerated; and they had even taken the bonds of these deputies to observe such instructions. The Assemblies for three years held out against this injustice, though constrained to bend at last. At length Captain Denny, who was Governor Morris's successor, ventured to disobey those instructions; how that was brought about I shall show hereafter.

But I am got forward too fast with my story; there are still some transactions to be mentioned that happened during the administration of Governor Morris.

War being in a manner commenced with France, the Government of Massachusetts Bay projected an attack upon Crown Point, and sent Mr. Quincy to Pennsylvania, and Mr. Pownall, afterwards Governor Pownall, to New York, to solicit assistance. As I was in the Assembly, knew its temper, and was Mr. Quincy's countryman, he applied to me for my influence and assistance. I dictated his address to them, which was well received. They voted an aid of ten thousand pounds, to be laid out in provisions. But the Governor refusing his assent to their Bill, (which included this with other sums granted for the use of the Crown,) unless a clause were inserted, exempting the proprietary estate from bearing any part of the tax that would be necessary, the Assembly, though very desirous of making their grant to New England effectual, were at a loss how to accomplish it. Mr. Quincy laboured hard with the Governor to obtain his assent, but he was obstinate.

I then suggested a method of doing the business without the Governor, by orders on the trustees of the Loan Office, which by law the Assembly had the right of drawing. There was indeed little or no money at the time in the office, and, therefore, I proposed that the orders should be payable in a year, and to bear an interest of five per cent. With these orders I supposed the provisions might easily be purchased. The Assembly, with very little hesitation, adopted the proposal. The orders were immediately printed, and I was one of the committee directed to sign and dispose of them. The fund for paying them was the interest of all the paper currency then extant in the province upon loan, together with the revenue arising from the excise, which being known to be more than sufficient, they obtained credit, and were not only taken in payment for the provisions, but many moneyed people who had cash lying by them, vested it in those orders, which they found advantageous, as they bore interest while upon hand, and might on any occasion be used as money; so that they were eagerly all bought up, and in a few weeks none of them was to be seen. Thus this important affair was by my means completed. Mr. Quincy returned thanks to the Assembly in a handsome memorial, went home highly pleased with the success of his embassy, and ever after bore for me the most cordial and affectionate friendship.

The British Government, not choosing to permit the union of the colonies as proposed at Albany, and to trust that union with their defence, lest they should thereby grow too military, and feel their own strength, suspicion and jealousies at this time being entertained of them, sent over General Braddock, with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at

Alexandria in Virginia, and thence marched to Fredericktown in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. Our Assembly apprehending, from some information, that he had received violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wished me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as Postmaster-General, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the despatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom he must necessarily have continual correspondence, and of which they proposed to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

We found the General at Fredericktown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent through the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect wagons. I stayed with him several days, dined with him daily, and had full opportunities of removing his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of wagons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appeared that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The General and all the officers were surprised, declared the expedition was then at an end, being impossible, and exclaimed against the ministers for ignorantly sending them into a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, etc., not less than one hundred and fifty wagons being necessary.

I happened to say I thought it was a pity they had not been landed in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had a wagon. The General eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, "Then you, Sir, who

are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us, and I beg you will undertake it." I asked what terms were to be offered the owners of the wagons, and I was desired to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepared immediately. What those terms were will appear in the advertisement I published as soon as I arrived at Lancaster, which being, from the great and sudden effect it produced, a piece of some curiosity, I shall insert it at length as follows :

“ ADVERTISEMENT.

“ Lancaster, April 26th, 1755.

“ Whereas, one hundred and fifty wagons, with four horses to each wagon, and fifteen hundred saddle or pack-horses, are wanted for the service of his Majesty's forces, now about to rendezvous at Will's Creek ; and his Excellency General Braddock having been pleased to empower me to contract for the hire of the same ; I hereby give notice that I shall attend for that purpose, at Lancaster, from this day to next Wednesday evening ; and at York, from next Thursday morning till Friday evening ; where I shall be ready to agree for wagons and teams, or single horses, on the following terms, viz. 1. That there shall be paid for each wagon, with four good horses and a driver, fifteen shillings *per diem* ; and for each able horse with a pack-saddle, or other saddle and furniture, two shillings *per diem* ; and for each able horse without a saddle, eighteen pence *per diem*. 2. That the pay commence from the time of their joining the forces, at Will's Creek, which must be on or before the 20th of May ensuing, and that a reasonable allowance be paid over and above, for the time necessary for their travelling to Will's Creek, and home again after their discharge. 3. Each wagon and team, and every saddle or pack-horse is to be valued by indifferent persons, chosen between me and the owner ; and, in case of the loss of any wagon, team, or other horse in the service, the price according to such valuation is to be allowed and paid. 4. Seven days' pay is to be advanced and paid in hand by me to the owner of each wagon and team, or horse, at the time of contracting if required ; and the remainder to be paid by General Braddock, or by the paymaster of the army, at the time of their discharge ; or from time to time, as it shall be demanded. 5. No drivers of wagons, or persons taking care of the hired horses, are on any account to be

called upon to do the duty of soldiers, or be otherwise employed than in conducting or taking care of their carriages or horses. 6. All oats, Indian corn, or other forage, that wagons or horses bring to the camp, more than is necessary for the subsistence of the horses, is to be taken for the use of the army, and a reasonable price paid for the same.

“*Note.*—My son, William Franklin, is empowered to enter into like contracts with any person in Cumberland County.

“B. FRANKLIN.”

“*To the Inhabitants of the Counties of Lancaster, York, and Cumberland.*

“Friends and Countrymen,

“Being occasionally at the camp at Frederic a few days since, I found the General and officers extremely exasperated on account of their not being supplied with horses and carriages, which had been expected from this province, as most able to furnish them; but, through the dissensions between our Governor and Assembly, money had not been provided, nor any steps taken for that purpose.

“It was proposed to send an armed force immediately into these counties, to seize as many of the best carriages and horses as should be wanted, and compel as many persons into the service as would be necessary to drive and take care of them.

“I apprehended that the progress of British soldiers through these counties on such an occasion, especially considering the temper they are in, and their resentment against us, would be attended with many and great inconveniences to the inhabitants, and therefore more willingly took the trouble of trying first what might be done by fair and equitable means. The people of these back counties have lately complained to the Assembly that a sufficient currency was wanting; you have an opportunity of receiving and dividing among you a very considerable sum; for, if the service of this expedition should continue, as it is more than probable it will, for one hundred and twenty days, the hire of these wagons and horses will amount to upwards of thirty thousand pounds, which will be paid you in silver and gold, of the King’s money.

“The service will be light and easy, for the army will scarce march above twelve miles per day, and the wagons and baggage horses as they carry those things that are absolutely necessary to the welfare of the army, must march with the army, and no faster; and are, for the army’s sake, always placed where they can be most secure, whether in a march or in a camp.

“If you are really, as I believe you are, good and loyal subjects to his Majesty, you may now do a most acceptable service, and make it easy to yourselves; for three or four of such as cannot separately spare from the business of their plantations, a wagon

and four horses and a driver, may do it together ; one furnishing the wagon, another one or two horses, and another the driver, and divide the pay proportionably between you. But, if you do not this service to your King and country voluntarily, when such good pay and reasonable terms are offered to you, your loyalty will be strongly suspected. The King's business must be done; so many brave troops, come so far for your defence, must not stand idle through your backwardness to do what may be reasonably expected from you ; wagons and horses must be had ; violent measures will probably be used ; and you will be left to seek for a recompense where you can find it, and your case perhaps be little pitied or regarded.

"I have no particular interest in this affair, as, except the satisfaction of endeavouring to do good, I shall have only my labour for my pains. If this method of obtaining the wagons and horses is not likely to succeed, I am obliged to send word to the General in fourteen days ; and I suppose Sir John St. Clair, the hussar, with a body of soldiers, will immediately enter the province for the purpose ; which I shall be sorry to hear, because I am very sincerely and truly your friend and well-wisher,

"B. FRANKLIN."

I received of the General about eight hundred pounds, to be disbursed in advance money to the wagon owners ; but, that sum being insufficient, I advanced upwards of two hundred pounds more ; and in two weeks the one hundred and fifty wagons, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying horses, were on their march for the camp. The advertisement promised payment according to the valuation, in case any wagons or horses should be lost. The owners, however, alleging they did not know General Braddock, or what dependence might be had on his promise, insisted on my bond for the performance, which I accordingly gave them.

While I was at the camp, supping one evening with the officers of Colonel Dunbar's regiment, he represented to me his concern for the subalterns, who, he said, were generally not in affluence, and could ill afford in this dear country to lay in the stores that might be necessary in so long a march through a wilderness,

where nothing was to be purchased. I commiserated their case, and resolved to endeavour procuring them some relief. I said nothing, however, to him of my intention, but wrote the next morning to the Committee of the Assembly, who had the disposition of some public money, warmly recommending the case of these officers to their consideration, and proposing that a present should be sent them of necessaries and refreshments. My son, who had some experience of a camp life, and of its wants, drew up a list for me, which I inclosed in my letter. The committee approved, and used such diligence that conducted by my son, the stores arrived at the camp as soon as the wagons. They consisted of twenty parcels, each containing

6lbs. loaf sugar.	1 keg containing 20lbs. good butter.
6 do. Muscovado do.	2 dozen old Madeira wine.
1 do. green tea.	2 gallons Jamaica spirits.
1 do. bohea do.	1 bottle flour of mustard.
6 do. ground coffee.	2 well-cured hams.
6 do. chocolate.	$\frac{1}{2}$ dozen dried tongues.
$\frac{1}{2}$ chest best white biscuit.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pepper.
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. pepper.	6lbs. rice.
1 quart white vinegar.	6lbs. raisins.
1 Gloucester cheese.	

These parcels, well packed, were placed on as many horses, each parcel, with the horse, being intended as a present for one officer. They were very thankfully received, and the kindness acknowledged by letters to me, from the colonels of both regiments, in the most grateful terms. The General too was highly satisfied with my conduct in procuring him the wagons, and readily paid my account of disbursements; thanking me repeatedly, and requesting my further assistance in sending provisions after him. I undertook this also, and was busily employed in it till we heard of his

defeat; advancing for the service, of my own money, upwards of one thousand pounds sterling; of which I sent him an account. It came to his hands, luckily for me, a few days before the battle, and he returned me immediately an order on the paymaster for the round sum of one thousand pounds, leaving the remainder to the next account. I consider this payment as good luck, having never been able to obtain that remainder; of which more hereafter.

This General was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. George Croghan, our Indian interpreter, joined him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army as guides and scouts, if he had treated them kindly; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him.

In conversation with him one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. "After taking Fort Duquesne," said he, "I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time, and I suppose it will; for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara." Having before revolved in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French who invaded the Illinois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign. But I

ventured only to say, "To be sure, Sir, if you arrive well before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, the fort, though completely fortified, and assisted with a very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from the ambuscades of the Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces which, from their distance, cannot come up in time to support each other."

He smiled at my ignorance, and replied, "These savages may indeed be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia: but upon the King's regular and disciplined troops, Sir, it is impossible they should make any impression." I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more. The enemy, however, did not take the advantage of his army which I apprehended its long line of march exposed it to, but let it advance without interruption till within nine miles of the place; and then, when more in a body, (for it had just passed a river, where the front had halted till all were come over,) and in a more open part of the woods than any it had passed, attacked its advanced guard by a heavy fire from behind trees and bushes, which was the first intelligence the General had of an enemy's being near him. This guard being disordered, the General hurried the troops up to their assistance, which was done in great confusion through wagons, baggage, and cattle; and presently the fire came upon their flank; the officers being on horseback were more

easily distinguished, picked out as marks, and fell very fast ; and the soldiers were crowded together in a huddle, having or hearing no orders, and standing to be shot at till two-thirds of them were killed ; and then, being seized with a panic, the remainder fled with precipitation.

The wagoners took each a horse out of his team, and scampered ; their example was immediately followed by others ; so that all the wagons, provisions, artillery, and stores were left to the enemy. The General, being wounded, was brought off with difficulty ; his secretary, Mr. Shirley, was killed by his side, and out of eighty-six officers sixty-three were killed or wounded ; and seven hundred and fourteen men killed of eleven hundred. These eleven hundred had been picked men from the whole army ; the rest had been left behind with Colonel Dunbar, who was to follow with the heavier part of the stores, provisions, and baggage. The flyers, not being pursued, arrived at Dunbar's camp, and the panic they brought with them instantly seized him and all his people. And, though he had now above one thousand men, and the enemy who had beaten Braddock did not at most exceed four hundred Indians and French together, instead of proceeding, and endeavouring to recover some of the lost honour, he ordered all the stores, ammunition, etc., to be destroyed, that he might have more horses to assist his flight towards the settlements, and less lumber to remove. He was there met with requests from the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, that he would post his troops on the frontiers, so as to afford some protection to the inhabitants ; but he continued his hasty march through all the country, not thinking himself safe till he arrived at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him.

This whole transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regular troops had not been well founded.

In their first march, too, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, they had plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people, if they remonstrated. This was enough to put us out of conceit of such defenders, if we had really wanted any. How different was the conduct of our French friends in 1781, who, during a march through the most inhabited part of our country, from Rhode Island to Virginia, near seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple.

Captain Orme, who was one of the General's aides-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continued with him to his death, which happened in a few days, told me that he was totally silent all the first day, and at night only said, "Who would have thought it?"—that he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, "We shall better know how to deal with them another time;" and died in a few minutes after.

The secretary's papers, with all the General's orders, instructions, and correspondence, falling into the enemy's hands, they selected and translated into French a number of the articles, which they printed, to prove the hostile intentions of the British Court before the declaration of war. Among these I saw some letters of the General to the ministry, speaking highly of the great service I had rendered the army, and recommending me to their notice. David Hume, who was some years

afterwards secretary to Lord Hertford, when minister in France, and afterwards to General Conway, when Secretary of State, told me he had seen among the papers in that office letters from Braddock, highly recommending me. But the expedition having been unfortunate, my service, it seems, was not thought of much value, for those recommendations were never of any use to me.

As to rewards from himself, I asked only one, which was that he would give orders to his officers not to enlist any more of our bought servants, and that he would discharge such as had been already enlisted. This he readily granted, and several were accordingly returned to their masters, on my application. Dunbar, when the command devolved on him, was not so generous. He being at Philadelphia, on his retreat, or rather flight, I applied to him for the discharge of the servants of three poor farmers of Lancaster County that he had enlisted, reminding him of the late General's orders on that head. He promised me that if the masters would come to him at Trenton, where he should be in a few days on his march to New York, he would there deliver their men to them. They accordingly were at the expense and trouble of going to Trenton, and there he refused to perform his promise, to their great loss and disappointment.

As soon as the loss of the wagons and horses was generally known, all the owners came upon me for the valuation which I had given bond to pay. Their demands gave me a great deal of trouble. I acquainted them that the money was ready in the paymaster's hands, but the order for paying it must first be obtained from General Shirley, and that I had applied for it, but he

being at a distance an answer could not soon be received, and they must have patience. All this, however, was not sufficient to satisfy them, and some began to sue me. General Shirley at length relieved me from this terrible situation, by appointing commissioners to examine the claims, and ordering payment. They amounted to near twenty thousand pounds, which to pay would have ruined me.

Before we had the news of this defeat, the two Doctors Bond came to me with a subscription paper for raising money to defray the expense of a grand firework, which it was intended to exhibit at a rejoicing on receiving the news of our taking Fort Duquesne. I looked grave, and said it would, I thought, be time enough to prepare the rejoicing when we knew we should have occasion to rejoice. They seemed surprised that I did not immediately comply with their proposal. "Why the d—l!" said one of them, "you surely don't suppose that the fort will not be taken?" "I don't know that it will not be taken; but I know that the events of war are subject to great uncertainty." I gave them the reasons of my doubting; the subscription was dropped, and the projectors thereby missed the mortification they would have undergone if the firework had been prepared. Dr. Bond, on some other occasion afterwards, said that he did not like Franklin's forebodings.

CHAPTER XI

Appointed one of the Commissioners for appropriating the Public Money for Military Defence—Proposes a Militia Bill, which passes the Assembly—Commissioned to take Charge of the Frontier, and build a Line of Forts—Marches at the Head of a Body of Troops—Account of the March—Operations at Gnadenhutten—Indian Massacres—Moravians at Bethlehem—Returns to Philadelphia—Chosen Colonel of a Regiment—Journey to Virginia—Declines accepting the Governor's Proposal to lead an Expedition against Fort Duquesne—Account of his Electrical Discoveries—Chosen a Member of the Royal Society—Receives the Copley Medal.

GOVERNOR MORRIS, who had continually worried the Assembly with message after message before the defeat of Braddock, to beat them into the making of Acts to raise money for the defence of the province, without taxing among others the proprietary estates, and had rejected all their Bills for not having such an exempting clause, now redoubled his attacks with more hope of success, the danger and necessity being greater. The Assembly, however, continued firm, believing they had justice on their side, and that it would be giving up an essential right if they suffered the Governor to amend their money bills. In one of the last, indeed, which was for granting fifty thousand pounds, his proposed amendment was only of a single word. The Bill expressed, "that all estates real and personal were to be taxed; those of the Proprietaries *not* excepted." His amendment was, for *not*, read *only*. A small, but very material alteration. However, when the news of the disaster reached England, our friends there, whom we had taken care to furnish with all the Assembly's answers to the Governor's messages, raised a clamour against the

Proprietaries for their meanness and injustice in giving their Governor such instructions ; some going so far as to say that by obstructing the defence of their province they forfeited their right to it. They were intimidated by this, and sent orders to their Receiver-General to add five thousand pounds of their money to whatever sum might be given by the Assembly for such purpose.

This being testified to the House, was accepted in lieu of their share of a general tax ; and a new Bill was formed with an exempting clause, which passed accordingly. By this Act I was appointed one of the commissioners for disposing of the money—sixty thousand pounds. I had been active in modelling the Bill and procuring its passage, and had at the same time drawn one for establishing and disciplining a voluntary militia ; which I carried through the House without much difficulty, as care was taken in it to leave the Quakers at liberty. To promote the association necessary to form the militia, I wrote a Dialogue stating and answering all the objections I could think of to such a militia ; which was printed, and had, as I thought, great effect.

While the several companies in the city and country were forming, and learning their exercise, the Governor prevailed with me to take charge of our north-western frontier, which was infested by the enemy, and provide for the defence of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts. I undertook this military business, though I did not conceive myself well qualified for it. He gave me a commission with full powers, and a parcel of blank commissions for officers, to be given to whom I thought fit. I had but little difficulty in raising men, having soon five hundred and sixty under

my command. My son, who had in the preceding war been an officer in the army raised against Canada, was my aide-de-camp, and of great use to me. The Indians had burned Gnadenhutten, a village settled by the Moravians, and massacred the inhabitants; but the place was thought a good situation for one of the forts.

In order to march thither, I assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief establishment of these people. I was surprised to find it in so good a posture of defence; the destruction of Gnadenhutten had made them apprehend danger. The principal buildings were defended by a stockade; they had purchased a quantity of arms and ammunition from New York, and had even placed quantities of small paving stones between the windows of their high stone houses, for their women to throw them down upon the heads of any Indians that should attempt to force into them. The armed brethren, too, kept watch and relieved each other on guard, as methodically as in any garrison town. In conversation with the bishop, Spangenberg, I mentioned my surprise; for knowing they had obtained an Act of Parliament exempting them from military duties in the colonies, I had supposed they were conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms. He answered me that it was not one of their established principles; but that, at the time of their obtaining that Act, it was thought to be a principle with many of their people. On this occasion, however, they to their surprise found it adopted by but a few. It seems they were either deceived in themselves, or deceived the Parliament; but common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions.

It was the beginning of January when we set out upon

this business of building forts. I sent one detachment towards the Minisink, with instructions to erect one for the security of that upper part of the country ; and another to the lower part, with similar instructions ; and I concluded to go myself with the rest of my force to Gnadenhutten, where a fort was thought more immediately necessary. The Moravians procured me five wagons for our tools, stores, and baggage.

Just before we had left Bethlehem, eleven farmers, who had been driven from their plantations by the Indians, came to me requesting a supply of firearms, that they might go back and bring off their cattle. I gave them each a gun with suitable ammunition. We had not marched many miles before it began to rain, and it continued raining all day ; there were no habitations on the road to shelter us, till we arrived near night at the house of a German, where, and in his barn, we were all huddled together, as wet as water could make us. It was well we were not attacked in our march, for our arms were of the most ordinary sort, and our men could not keep the locks of their guns dry. The Indians are dexterous in contrivances for that purpose, which we had not. They met that day the eleven poor farmers above mentioned, and killed ten of them. The one that escaped informed us that his and his companions' guns would not go off, the priming being wet with the rain.

The next day being fair, we continued our march, and arrived at the desolated Gnadenhutten. There was a mill near, round which were left several pine boards, with which we soon huted ourselves ; an operation the more necessary at that inclement season, as we had no tents. Our first work was to bury more effectually the

dead we found there, who had been half interred by the country people.

The next morning our fort was planned and marked out, the circumference measuring four hundred and fifty-five feet, which would require as many palisades to be made, one with another, of a foot diameter each. Our axes, of which we had seventy, were immediately set to work to cut down trees; and, our men being dexterous in the use of them, great despatch was made. Seeing the trees fall so fast, I had the curiosity to look at my watch when two men began to cut at a pine; in six minutes they had it upon the ground, and I found it of fourteen inches diameter. Each pine made three palisades of eighteen feet long, pointed at one end. While these were preparing, our other men dug a trench all round, of three feet deep, in which the palisades were to be planted; and, the bodies being taken off our wagons, and the fore and hind wheels separated, by taking out the pin which united the two parts of the perch, we had ten carriages, with two horses each, to bring the palisades from the woods to the spot. When they were set up, our carpenters built a platform of boards all round within, about six feet high, for the men to stand on when firing through the loopholes. We had one swivel gun, which we mounted on one of the angles, and fired it as soon as fixed, to let the Indians know, if any were within hearing, that we had such pieces; and thus our fort, if that name may be given to so miserable a stockade, was finished in a week, though it rained so hard every other day that the men could not work.

This gave me occasion to observe that, when men are employed, they are best contented; for on the days they

worked they were good-natured and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day's work, they spent the evening jollily ; but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with the pork, the bread, etc., and were continually in bad humour ; which put me in mind of a sea captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work ; and when his mate once told him that they had done everything, and there was nothing further to employ them about, "Oh !" said he, "make them scour the anchor."

This kind of fort, however contemptible, is a sufficient defence against Indians, who have no cannon. Finding ourselves now posted securely, and having a place to retreat to on occasion, we ventured out in parties to scour the adjacent country. We met with no Indians, but we found the places on the neighbouring hills where they had lain to watch our proceedings. There was an art in their contrivance of those places that seems worth mentioning. It being winter, a fire was necessary for them ; but a common fire on the surface of the ground would by its light have discovered their position at a distance. They had therefore dug holes in the ground about three feet diameter, and somewhat deeper ; we found where they had with their hatchets cut off the charcoal from the sides of burnt logs lying in the woods. With these coals they had made small fires in the bottom of the holes, and we observed among the weeds and grass the prints of their bodies, made by their lying all round with their legs hanging down in the holes to keep their feet warm, which with them is an essential point. This kind of fire so managed could not discover them either by its light, flame, sparks, or even smoke ; it appeared that the number was not great, and it seems

they saw we were too many to be attacked by them with prospect of advantage.

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually served out to them, half in the morning and the other half in the evening, and I observed they were punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, "It is perhaps below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were only to distribute it out after prayers you would have them all about you." He liked the thought, undertook the task, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended. So that I think this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

I had hardly finished this business and got my fort well stored with provisions, when I received a letter from the Governor acquainting me that he had called the Assembly, and wished my attendance there if the posture of affairs on the frontiers was such that my remaining there was no longer necessary. My friends, too, of the Assembly pressing me by their letters to be, if possible, at the meeting, and my three intended forts being now completed and the inhabitants contented to remain on their farms under that protection, I resolved to return; the more willingly as a New England officer, Colonel Clapham, experienced in Indian war, being on a visit to our establishment, consented to accept the command.

I gave him a commission, and, parading the garrison, had it read before them, and introduced him to them as an officer who, from his skill in military affairs, was much more fit to command them than myself, and giving them a little exhortation, took my leave. I was escorted as far as Bethlehem, where I rested a few days to recover from the fatigue I had undergone. The first night, lying in a good bed, I could hardly sleep, it was so different from my hard lodging on the floor of a hut at Gnadenhutten with only a blanket or two.

While at Bethlehem, I inquired a little into the practices of the Moravians; some of them had accompanied me, and all were very kind to me. I found they worked for a common stock, ate at common tables, and slept in common dormitories, great numbers together. In the dormitories I observed loopholes, at certain distances all along just under the ceiling, which I thought judiciously placed for change of air. I went to their church, where I was entertained with good music, the organ being accompanied with violins, hautboys, flutes, clarinets, etc. I understood their sermons were not usually preached to mixed congregations of men, women, and children, as is our common practice; but that they assembled sometimes the married men, at other times their wives, then the young men, the young women, and the little children; each division by itself. The sermon I heard was to the latter, who came in, and were placed in rows on benches; the boys under the conduct of a young man, their tutor, and the girls conducted by a young woman. The discourse seemed well adapted to their capacities, and was delivered in a pleasing, familiar manner, coaxing them, as it were, to be good. They behaved very orderly, but looked pale

and unhealthy ; which made me suspect they were kept too much within doors or not allowed sufficient exercise.

I inquired concerning the Moravian marriages, whether the report was true that they were by lot. I was told that lots were used only in particular cases ; that generally when a young man found himself disposed to marry, he informed the elders of his class, who consulted the elder ladies that governed the young women. As these elders of the different sexes were well acquainted with the tempers and dispositions of their respective pupils, they could best judge what matches were suitable, and their judgments were generally acquiesced in. But if, for example, it should happen that two or three young women were found to be equally proper for the young man, the lot was then! recurred to. I objected if the matches are not made by the mutual choice of the parties, some of them may chance to be very unhappy. "And so they may," answered my informer, "if you let the parties choose for themselves." Which indeed I could not deny.

Being returned to Philadelphia, I found the Association went on with great success. The inhabitants that were not Quakers having pretty generally come into it, formed themselves into companies, and chose their captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, according to the new law. Dr. Bond visited me, and gave me an account of the pains he had taken to spread a general good liking to the law, and ascribed much to those endeavours. I had the vanity to ascribe all to my *Dialogue* ; however, not knowing but that he might be in the right, I let him enjoy his opinion, which I take to be generally the best way in such cases. The officers, meeting, chose me to be colonel of the regiment, which I this time accepted.

I forget how many companies we had, but we paraded about twelve hundred well-looking men, with a company of artillery, who had been furnished with six brass field-pieces, which they had become so expert in the use of as to fire twelve times in a minute. The first time I reviewed my regiment they accompanied me to my house, and would salute me with some rounds fired before my door, which shook down and broke several glasses of my electrical apparatus. And my new honour proved not much less brittle ; for all our commissions were soon after broken, by a repeal of the law in England.

During this short time of my colonelship, being about to set out on a journey to Virginia, the officers of my regiment took it into their heads that it would be proper for them to escort me out of town, as far as the lower Ferry. Just as I was getting on horseback they came to my door, between thirty and forty, mounted, and all in their uniforms. I had not been previously acquainted with their project, or I should have prevented it, being naturally averse to the assuming of state on any occasion; and I was a good deal chagrined at their appearance, as I could not avoid their accompanying me. What made it worse was that, as soon as we began to move, they drew their swords and rode with them naked all the way. Somebody wrote an account of this to the Proprietor, and it gave him great offence. No such honour had been paid to him, when in the province, nor to any of his governors ; and he said it was only proper to princes of the blood royal ; which may be true for aught I know, who was, and still am, ignorant of the etiquette in such cases.

This silly affair, however, greatly increased his rancour against me, which was before considerable on account of

my conduct in the Assembly respecting the exemption of his estate from taxation, which I had always opposed very warmly, and not without severe reflections on the meanness and injustice of contending for it. He accused me to the ministry as being the great obstacle to the King's service, preventing by my influence in the House the proper form of the bills for raising money ; and he instanced the parade with my officers, as a proof of my having an intention to take the government of the province out of his hands by force. He also applied to Sir Everard Fawkener, the Postmaster-General, to deprive me of my office. But it had no other effect than to procure from Sir Everard a gentle admonition.

Notwithstanding the continual wrangle between the Governor and the House, in which I as a member had so large a share, there still subsisted a civil intercourse between that gentleman and myself, and we never had any personal difference. I have sometimes since thought that his little or no resentment against me, for the answers it was known I drew up to his messages, might be the effect of professional habit, and that, being bred a lawyer, he might consider us both as merely advocates for contending clients in a suit ; he for the Proprietaries, and I for the Assembly. He would therefore sometimes call in a friendly way to advise with me on difficult points, and sometimes, though not often, take my advice.

We acted in concert to supply Braddock's army with provisions ; and, when the shocking news arrived of his defeat, the Governor sent in haste for me, to consult with him on measures for preventing the desertion of the back counties. I forget now the advice I gave ; but I think it was that Dunbar should be written to, and prevailed with, if possible, to post his troops on the

frontiers for their protection, until, by reinforcements from the colonies, he might be able to proceed in the expedition. And, after my return from the frontier, he would have had me undertake the conduct of such an expedition with provincial troops, for the reduction of Fort Duquesne, Dunbar and his men being otherwise employed; and he proposed to commission me as General. I had not so good an opinion of my military abilities as he professed to have, and I believe his professions must have exceeded his real sentiments; but probably he might think that my popularity would facilitate the business with the men, and influence in the Assembly the grant of money to pay for it; and that perhaps without taxing the Proprietary. Finding me not so forward to engage as he expected, the project was dropped; and he soon after left the government, being superseded by Captain Denny.

Before I proceed in relating the part I had in public affairs under this new Governor's administration, it may not be amiss to give here some account of the rise and progress of my philosophical reputation.

In 1746, being in Boston, I met there with a Dr. Spence, who was lately arrived from Scotland, and showed me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly performed, as he was not very expert; but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surprised and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company received from Mr. Peter Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube, with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquired great readiness in

performing those also which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with persons who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown in our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbour, who being out of business, I encouraged him to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were ranged in such order, and accompanied with explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procured an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were neatly formed by instrument makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction; and after some time he went through the colonies, exhibiting them in every capital town, and picked up some money. In the West India Islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Obliged as we were to Mr. Collinson for the present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be informed of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society, where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their *Transactions*. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Mr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine, and

one of the members also of the Society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought them of too much value to be stifled, and advised the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine*; but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet, and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profession, for by the additions that arrived afterwards they swelled to a quarto volume, which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count De Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and indeed all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dubourg to translate them into French; and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the Royal Family, and an able experimenter, who had formed and published a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to oppose his system. Afterwards, having been assured that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of Letters, chiefly addressed to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduced from them.

I once purposed answering the Abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my

writings contained a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and, if not to be verified, could not be defended; or of observations offered as *conjectures*, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, written in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations, and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the Abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet; and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. Le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contained was by degrees generally adopted by the philosophers of Europe, in preference to that of the Abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B——, of Paris, his *élève* and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messieurs Dalibard and De Lor at Marley, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engaged the public attention everywhere. M. De Lor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectured in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments*; and, after they were performed before the King and Court, all the

curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I received in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The Society on this resumed the consideration of the letters that had been read to them; and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of them, and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their *Transactions*; and, some members of the Society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainted them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honour, they chose me a member; and voted that I should be excused the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their *Transactions* gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley, for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honoured.

CHAPTER XII

Conversations with Governor Denny—Disputes between the Governor and Assembly—Deputed by the Assembly to present a Petition to the King, and to act in England as an Agent for Pennsylvania—Meets Lord Loudoun in New York—Anecdotes illustrating his Character—Sails from New York—Incidents of the Voyage—Arrives in England.

OUR new governor, Captain Denny, brought over for me the before-mentioned medal from the Royal Society, which he presented to me at an entertainment given him by the city. He accompanied it with very polite expressions of his esteem for me, having, as he said, been long acquainted with my character. After dinner, when the company, as was customary at that time, were engaged in drinking, he took me aside into another room, and acquainted me that he had been advised by his friends in England to cultivate a friendship with me, as one who was capable of giving him the best advice, and of contributing most effectually to the making his administration easy. That he therefore desired of all things to have a good understanding with me, and he begged me to be assured of his readiness on all occasions to render me every service that might be in his power. He said much to me also of the Proprietor's good disposition towards the province, and of the advantage it would be to us all, and to me in particular, if the opposition that had been so long continued to his measures was dropped, and harmony restored between him and the people; in effecting which it was thought no one could be more serviceable than myself; and I might depend on adequate acknowledgements and recompenses. The drinkers, finding we did not return

immediately to the table, sent us a decanter of Madeira, which the Governor made a liberal use of, and in proportion became more profuse of his solicitations and promises.

My answers were to this purpose, that my circumstances, thanks to God, were such as to make Proprietary favours unnecessary to me ; and that, being a member of the Assembly, I could not possibly accept of any ; that, however, I had no personal enmity to the Proprietary, and that, whenever the public measures he proposed should appear to be for the good of the people, no one would espouse and forward them more zealously than myself, my past opposition having been founded on this, that the measures which had been urged were evidently intended to serve the Proprietary interest, with great prejudice to that of the people ; that I was much obliged to him (the Governor) for his profession of regard to me, and that he might rely on everything in my power to render his administration as easy to him as possible, hoping, at the same time, that he had not brought with him the same unfortunate instructions his predecessors had been hampered with.

On this he did not then explain himself ; but when he afterwards came to do business with the Assembly, they appeared again, the disputes were renewed, and I was as active as ever in the opposition, being the penman, first of the request to have a communication of the instructions, and then of the remarks upon them, which may be found in the Votes of the times, and in the *Historical Review* I afterwards published. But between us personally no enmity arose ; we were often together ; he was a man of letters, had seen much of the world, and was entertaining and pleasing in conversation.

He gave me information that my old friend Ralph was still alive ; that he was esteemed one of the best political writers in England ; had been employed in the dispute between Prince Frederick and the King, and had obtained a pension of three hundred pounds a year ; that his reputation was indeed small as a poet, Pope having damned his poetry in the Dunciad ; but his prose was thought as good as any man's.

The Assembly finally finding the Proprietary obstinately persisted in shackling the deputies, with instructions inconsistent not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the Crown, resolved to petition the King against them, and appointed me their agent to go over to England, to present and support the petition. The House had sent up a bill to the Governor granting a sum of sixty thousand pounds for the King's use, (ten thousand pounds of which was subjected to the orders of the then General, Lord Loudoun,) which the Governor, in compliance with his instructions, absolutely refused to pass.

I had agreed with Captain Morris, of the packet at New York, for my passage, and my stores were put on board, when Lord Loudoun arrived at Philadelphia, expressly, as he told me, to endeavour an accommodation between the Governor and Assembly, that His Majesty's service might not be obstructed by their dissensions. Accordingly he desired the Governor and myself to meet him, that he might hear what was to be said on both sides. We met and discussed the business. In behalf of the Assembly, I urged the various arguments that may be found in the public papers of that time, which were of my writing, and are printed with the minutes of the Assembly ; and the

Governor pleaded his instructions, the bond he had given to observe them, and his ruin if he disobeyed ; yet seemed not unwilling to hazard himself, if Lord Loudoun would advise it. This his Lordship did not choose to do, though I once thought I had nearly prevailed with him to do it ; but finally he rather chose to urge the compliance of the Assembly ; and he entreated me to use my endeavours with them for that purpose, declaring that he would spare none of the King's troops for the defence of our frontiers, and that, if we did not continue to provide for that defence ourselves, they must remain exposed to the enemy.

I acquainted the House with what had passed, and—presenting them with a set of resolutions I had drawn up, declaring our rights, that we did not relinquish our claim to those rights, but only suspended the exercise of them on this occasion through *force*, against which we protested—they at length agreed to drop that Bill, and frame another conformable to the Proprietary instructions. This of course the Governor passed, and I was then at liberty to proceed on my voyage. But in the meantime the packet had sailed with my sea-stores, which was some loss to me, and my only recompense was his Lordship's thanks for my service ; all the credit of obtaining the accommodation falling to his share.

He set out for New York before me ; and, as the time for despatching the packet-boats was at his disposition, and there were two then remaining there, one of which, he said, was to sail very soon, I requested to know the precise time, that I might not miss her by any delay of mine. The answer was : “ I have given out that she is to sail on Saturday next ; but I may let you know, *entre nous*, that if you are there by Monday morning, you will

be in time, but do not delay longer." By some accidental hindrance at a ferry, it was Monday noon before I arrived, and I was much afraid she might have sailed, as the wind was fair ; but I was soon made easy by the information that she was still in the harbour, and would not move till the next day. One would imagine that I was now on the very point of departing for Europe. I thought so ; but I was not then so well acquainted with his Lordship's character, of which *indecision* was one of the strongest features. I shall give some instances. It was about the beginning of April that I came to New York, and I think it was near the end of June before we sailed. There were then two of the packet-boats, which had been long in readiness, but were detained for the General's letters, which were always to be ready *tomorrow*. Another packet arrived ; she too was detained ; and, before we sailed, a fourth was expected. Ours was the first to be despatched, as having been there longest. Passengers were engaged for all, and some extremely impatient to be gone, and the merchants uneasy about their letters, and for the orders they had given for insurance (it being war time), and for autumnal goods ; but their anxiety availed nothing ; his Lordship's letters were not ready ; and yet whoever waited on him found him always at his desk, pen in hand, and concluded he must needs write abundantly.

Going myself one morning to pay my respects, I found in his antechamber one Innis, a messenger of Philadelphia, who had come thence express, with a packet from Governor Denny, for the General. He delivered to me some letters from my friends there, which occasioned my inquiring when he was to return, and where he lodged, that I might send some letters by him. He told

me he was ordered to call to-morrow at nine for the General's answer to the Governor, and should set off immediately. I put my letters into his hands the same day. A fortnight after I met him again in the same place. "So, you are soon returned, Innis?" "Returned! no, I am not gone yet." "How so?" "I have called here this and every morning these two weeks past for his Lordship's letters, and they are not yet ready." "Is it possible, when he is so great a writer? for I see him constantly at his escritoire." "Yes," said Innis, "but he is like St. George on the signs, *always on horseback, and never rides on.*" This observation of the messenger was, it seems, well founded; for, when in England, I understood that Mr. Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham, gave it as one reason for removing this general, and sending Generals Amherst and Wolfe, *that the minister never heard from him, and could not know what he was doing.*

In this daily expectation of sailing, and all the three packets going down to Sandy Hook, to join the fleet there, the passengers thought it best to be on board, lest by a sudden order the ships should sail, and they be left behind. There, if I remember, we were about six weeks, consuming our sea-stores, and obliged to procure more. At length the fleet sailed, the General and all his army on board, bound to Louisbourg, with intent to besiege and take that fortress; and all the packet-boats in company were ordered to attend the General's ship, ready to receive his despatches when they should be ready. We were out five days before we got a letter with leave to part, and then our ship quitted the fleet and steered for England. The other two packets he still detained, carried them with him to Halifax, where

he stayed some time to exercise the men in sham attacks upon sham forts, then altered his mind as to besieging Louisbourg, and returned to New York, with all his troops, together with the two packets above mentioned, and all their passengers! During his absence the French and savages had taken Fort George, on the frontier of that province, and the Indians had massacred many of the garrison after capitulation.

On the whole, I wondered much how such a man came to be intrusted with so important a business as the conduct of a great army; but, having since seen more of the great world, and the means of obtaining and motives for giving places and employments, my wonder is diminished. General Shirley, on whom the command of the army devolved upon the death of Braddock, would, in my opinion, if continued in place, have made a much better campaign than that of Loudoun in 1756, which was frivolous, expensive, and disgraceful to our nation beyond conception. For though Shirley was not bred a soldier, he was sensible and sagacious in himself, and attentive to good advice from others, capable of forming judicious plans, and quick and active in carrying them into execution. Loudoun, instead of defending the colonies with his great army, left them totally exposed, while he paraded idly at Halifax, by which means Fort George was lost; besides, he deranged all our mercantile operations, and distressed our trade, by a long embargo on the exportation of provisions, on pretence of keeping supplies from being obtained by the enemy, but in reality for beating down their price in favour of the contractors, in whose profits, it was said, perhaps from suspicion only, he had a share; and, when at length

the embargo was taken off, neglecting to send notice of it to Charleston, where the Carolina fleet was detained near three months, and whereby their bottoms were so much damaged by the worm, that a great part of them foundered in their passage home.

Shirley was, I believe, sincerely glad of being relieved from so burdensome a charge as the conduct of an army must be to a man unacquainted with military business. I was at the entertainment given by the city of New York to Lord Loudoun, on his taking upon him the command. Shirley, though thereby superseded, was present also. There was a great company of officers, citizens, and strangers, and, some chairs having been borrowed in the neighbourhood, there was one among them very low, which fell to the lot of Mr. Shirley. I sat by him, and perceiving it, I said, "They have given you a very low seat." "No matter, Mr. Franklin," said he, "I find a *low seat* the easiest."

While I was, as before mentioned, detained at New York, I received all the accounts of the provisions, etc., that I had furnished to Braddock, some of which accounts could not sooner be obtained from the different persons I had employed to assist in the business. I presented them to Lord Loudoun, desiring to be paid the balance. He caused them to be examined by the proper officer, who, after comparing every article with its voucher, certified them to be right; and his Lordship promised to give me an order on the paymaster for the balance due to me. This was, however, put off from time to time; and, though I called often for it by appointment, I did not get it. At length, just before my departure, he told me he had, on better consideration, concluded not to mix his accounts with

those of his predecessors. "And you," said he, "when in England, have only to exhibit your accounts to the Treasury, and you will be paid immediately."

I mentioned, but without effect, a great and unexpected expense I had been put to by being detained so long at New York, as a reason for my desiring to be presently paid; and, on my observing that it was not right I should be put to any further trouble or delay in obtaining the money I had advanced, as I charged no commission for my service, "Oh," said he, "you must not think of persuading us that you are no gainer; we understand better those matters, and know that every one concerned in supplying the army finds means, in the doing it, to fill his own pockets." I assured him that was not my case, and that I had not pocketed a farthing; but he appeared clearly not to believe me; and, indeed, I afterwards learned that immense fortunes are often made in such employments. As to my balance, I am not paid it to this day; of which more hereafter.

Our captain of the packet boasted much, before we sailed, of the swiftness of his ship; unfortunately, when we came to sea, she proved the dullest of ninety-six sail, to his no small mortification. After many conjectures respecting the cause, when we were near another ship almost as dull as ours, which, however, gained upon us, the captain ordered all hands' to come aft and stand as near the ensign staff as possible. We were, passengers included, about forty persons. While we stood there, the ship mended her pace, and soon left her neighbour far behind, which proved clearly what our captain suspected, that she was loaded too much by the head. The casks of water, it seems,

had been all placed forward ; these he therefore ordered to be moved further aft, on which the ship recovered her character, and proved the best sailer in the fleet.

The foregoing fact I give for the sake of the following observation. It has been remarked, as an imperfection in the art of ship-building, that it can never be known till she is tried, whether a new ship will, or will not, be a good sailer ; for that the model of a good-sailing ship has been exactly followed in a new one, which has been proved on the contrary remarkably dull. I apprehend that this may partly be occasioned by the different opinions of seamen respecting the modes of loading, rigging, and sailing of a ship ; each has his method ; and the same vessel, laden by the method and orders of one captain, shall sail worse than when by the orders of another. Besides, it scarce ever happens that a ship is formed, fitted for the sea, and sailed by the same person. One man builds the hull, another rigs her, a third loads and sails her. No one of these has the advantage of knowing all the ideas and experience of the others, and, therefore, cannot draw just conclusions from a combination of the whole.

Even in the simple operation of sailing when at sea, I have often observed different judgments in the officers who commanded the successive watches, the wind being the same. One would have the sails trimmed sharper or flatter than another, so that they seemed to have no certain rule to govern by. Yet I think a set of experiments might be instituted, first, to determine the most proper form of the hull for swift sailing ; next, the best dimensions and most proper place for the masts ; then the form and quantity of sails, and their position, as the winds may be ; and lastly, the disposition of the

lading. This is an age of experiments, and I think a set accurately made and combined would be of great use.

We were several times chased in our passage, but out-sailed everything; and in thirty days had soundings. We had a good observation, and the captain judged himself so near our port, Falmouth, that, if we made a good run in the night, we might be off the mouth of that harbour in the morning; and by running in the night might escape the notice of the enemy's privateers, who often cruised near the entrance of the Channel. Accordingly all the sail was set that we could possibly carry, and the wind being very fresh and fair, we stood right before it, and made great way. The captain, after his observation, shaped his course, as he thought, so as to pass wide of the Scilly Rocks; but it seems there is sometimes a strong current setting up St. George's Channel, which formerly caused the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's squadron, in 1707. This was probably also the cause of what happened to us.

We had a watchman placed in the bow, to whom they often called, "*Look well out before there;*" and he as often answered "*Ay, ay;*" but perhaps had his eyes shut, and was half asleep at the time; they sometimes answering, as is said, mechanically: for he did not see a light just before us, which had been hid by the studding-sails from the man at the helm, and from the rest of the watch, but by an accidental yaw of the ship was discovered, and occasioned a great alarm, we being very near it; the light appearing to me as large as a cart-wheel. It was midnight, and our captain fast asleep; but Captain Kennedy, jumping upon deck, and seeing the danger, ordered the ship to wear round, all sails standing; an operation dangerous to the masts,

but it carried us clear, and we avoided shipwreck, for we were running fast on the rocks on which the light was erected. This deliverance impressed me strongly with the utility of lighthouses, and made me resolve to encourage the building some of them in America, if I should live to return thither.

In the morning it was found by the soundings that we were near our port, but a thick fog hid the land from our sight. About nine o'clock the fog began to rise, and seemed to be lifted up from the water like the curtain of a theatre, discovering underneath the town of Falmouth, the vessels in the harbour, and the fields that surround it. This was a pleasing spectacle to those who had been long without any other prospect than the uniform view of a vacant ocean, and it gave us the more pleasure, as we were now free from the anxieties which had arisen.

I set out immediately, with my son, for London, and we only stopped a little by the way to view Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, and Lord Pembroke's house and gardens, with the very curious antiquities at Wilton. We arrived in London the 27th of July, 1757.*

* Here close Dr. Franklin's Memoirs, as written by himself. From several passages in his letters it would seem that it was his intention to continue them further, and perhaps to the end of his life; but public business for some time, and afterwards his declining health, prevented him from executing his purpose.—J. S.

FRANKLIN'S BIOGRAPHY (ABRIDGED)

FROM THE CLOSE OF HIS OWN MEMOIRS
UNTIL HIS DEATH

By JARED SPARKS



CHAPTER I

State of Affairs in Pennsylvania—Defects of the Government—Legislation—Conduct of the Proprietaries—Object of Franklin's Agency in England—His Fame as a Philosopher—His English Friends—His Serious Illness—Delays in his Public Business—He travels in England—Visits Cambridge and his Ancestral Town—Acquaintance with Baskerville of Birmingham, the Famous Printer.

THE dissensions, which had long existed and continually increased, between the Governors and Assemblies of Pennsylvania, had their origin in the peculiar structure of the Government, and the manner of its administration. The system, possessing in itself many excellent principles, became vicious, and almost impracticable, in its operation. William Penn, the founder and first Proprietor, while he was careful of his own interest, made to the original settlers some valuable concessions. The Royal Charter obtained by him was such as to secure political rights on the broad basis of English freedom; and the charter of privileges which he granted to the people established unlimited toleration in religion, and gave them so large a share in the making of the laws, as to place civil liberty, and the protection of property, almost entirely in their own keeping. These were substantial benefits; and the liberal and benevolent motives of Penn in conferring them, and his enlightened views on the subject of legislation, cannot be questioned. It was a maxim with him that freedom can exist only where

the laws rule, and the people are parties in making those laws.

Theoretically considered, his frame of government promised all that could be desired by a free people in a state of colonial dependence. But it was marred with defects, which admitted of no remedy, and which in practice often defeated the best aims for the general welfare. In the first place, there was a charter from the King, imposing restraints and conditions by which he and the inhabitants were equally bound. In the next place, as Proprietor, he retained for himself and his descendants certain rights of property and a political control which conflicted with the public interests and abridged the freedom of legislation. During his lifetime these evils were so manifest, and perplexed him so much, that he was on the point of surrendering the jurisdiction of the province to the Crown, reserving to himself and family the right of property only in the territory, which had been confirmed to him by the Royal Charter. And afterwards, when his sons became Proprietaries as successors to their father, the difficulties were constantly increased by their mode of administering the Government. They sent out Deputy-Governors, armed with instructions so imperative and pointed, as to leave them neither discretion nor power to conform to circumstances by yielding to the will or wishes of the representatives of the people. Hence these Governors refused their assent to laws which the Assemblies regarded as of vital importance both to the safety and prosperity of the commonwealth.

Again, the King added his instructions, forbidding laws of a particular description to be passed by the Governors, without a clause suspending their operation

till they had received the royal sanction. This was a violation of the charter. By that instrument, all laws were permitted to take effect as soon as they were passed, although they were to be sent to England within five years, and, if disapproved by the King, they were then to be null and void. And even this process was slow, vexatious, and expensive. When a law had gone through all the forms in Pennsylvania, it was transmitted to an agent in London, by whom it was laid before the Board of Trade. It was next referred to the King's solicitor for his opinion, after which it came back to the Board of Trade, where it was considered and acted upon. Thence it made its way to the King's Council, and here it was at last confirmed or rejected. If the Proprietaries took exception to an act, they employed counsel to argue against it before the Board, and it was necessary for the agent of the Assembly to do the same on the other side. Meantime the business was attended with endless delays and heavy expenses. Harassed in this way from year to year, it is no wonder that the patience of the Assembly was gradually worn out, and that they resolved to seek redress.

The conduct of the Proprietaries was censured chiefly on the ground of attempts to strengthen their pecuniary interests, though in some instances they also sought to extend their political powers. They owned large tracts of land in various parts of the province, which had been selected and surveyed for them wherever a new purchase was made of the Indians. This land was of the choicest quality, and it rose rapidly in value as the country around it became settled. The Proprietaries set up a pretension that their lands ought not to be taxed for the public service, and they instructed

their Governors not to pass 'any Bill in which such a tax was imposed. For many years this was not necessary, as the revenue for defraying the expenses of the Government was derived from an excise, and from the interest on bills of credit lent out to landholders.

In times of war, however, extraordinary contributions were required for the defence of the province, and for the King's use in prosecuting the war. A land tax was then resorted to; and the Assembly, considering it just that the Proprietaries should bear their proportion in providing the means for defending their own property, included their lands in the laws for raising money. The Governors, bound by their instructions, uniformly rejected these laws, and insisted that the proprietary estates should in no case be taxed. Frequent altercations ensued. Franklin was the champion of the Assembly, being well qualified for this task, not more by his talents and skill as a writer than by his perfect knowledge of the subjects in dispute. The able and elaborate replies, which from time to time were made to the objections and arguments of the Governors, were nearly all from his pen.

When it was determined, therefore, to send an agent to England with a remonstrance to the Proprietaries, and, should this prove ineffectual, with a petition to the King, Franklin was selected as the most competent person for this important mission. His instructions embraced several objects, tending to a removal of the obstacles to the peace and prosperity of the province; but the principal one was the complaint against the Proprietaries for refusing to bear their just share of the public burdens for defence, in common with the inhabitants, and in proportion to the value of their

estates in Pennsylvania. He was, in general, to make such representations, and demand such redress, as would restore the violated rights of the people, and establish them on the fundamental principles of charter privileges and English liberty.

Franklin's fame as a philosopher, and as a political writer, had preceded him in England. His brilliant discoveries in electricity had been made known to the world ten years before. He was already a member of the Royal Society, that body having rendered ample justice to his merits as an original discoverer, though tardily, and not till these merits had elicited the applause of the learned in France and other countries. When he arrived in England, therefore, he did not find himself a stranger or without friends.

His letters on electricity had been written to Peter Collinson, a member of the Royal Society, and a benevolent and worthy man, who had raised himself to usefulness and some degree of celebrity by his zeal and exertions in promoting the researches of others in various branches of science, and collecting the results of their labours. Mr. Collinson kindly invited him to his house, where he stayed till he took lodgings at Mrs. Stevenson's, in Craven Street, a few doors from the Strand. Mrs. Stevenson's house had been recommended to him by some of his Pennsylvania friends, who had lodged there; and so well was he pleased with the accommodation, and the amiable character of the family, that he remained in the same place during the whole of his residence in England, a period of fifteen years. This circumstance is the more worthy of being mentioned, as he often alludes to the family in his letters. Mrs. Stevenson had an only daughter, Miss

Mary Stevenson, an accomplished young lady, whose fondness for study and acuteness of mind early attracted his notice ; and some of his best papers on philosophical subjects were written for her instruction, or in answer to her inquiries.

Mr. Strahan, afterwards the King's printer and a member of Parliament, who acquired wealth by his occupation and eminence by his talents, had long been one of Franklin's correspondents, and he now extended to him the welcome and the substantial kindnesses of a cordial friendship. In London he also met Governor Shirley, with whom he had been much acquainted in America, and who had consulted him confidentially on several important subjects relating to the administration of the colonies. They visited each other frequently. But his chief associates were men of science, who sought his society, and whose conversation he relished ; for, although he had recently been much devoted to politics, yet his taste for philosophical investigations, originally strong and confirmed by success, had not abated ; and he seemed at all times to derive from it more real satisfaction than from the bustle of political life, into which he had first been drawn rather by circumstances and accident than by inclination. His arrival in England was likewise soon known on the Continent, and he received congratulatory letters from some of the most distinguished men of the time, expressing admiration of his scientific achievements and respect for his character.

The business of his mission, however, was his first and principal care. But this was retarded by a severe illness, which confined him to his rooms for nearly eight weeks. A violent cold terminated in an intermitting

fever, during which he suffered extremely from pain in the head, accompanied with occasional delirium. By cupping, a copious use of Peruvian bark, and other remedies, Dr. Fothergill succeeded in removing the disease, but not till it had reduced his patient to a very low and feeble state. As soon as his strength enabled him to go abroad, he applied himself again to his public duties.

His instructions required that, as a preliminary step, he should see the Proprietaries, present to them the remonstrance with which he had been furnished by the Assembly, and endeavour to bring about an amicable arrangement which might render further proceedings unnecessary. He accordingly had an interview with them, and explained the tenor of his instructions, the embarrassments under which public affairs laboured in Pennsylvania, and the claims and wishes of the Assembly.

The Proprietaries were not in a humour to listen to these representations, or to yield anything to the complaints of the people. They insisted on their right to instruct the Governors according to their own interpretation of the charters, defended what had been done, and complained of the encroachments of the Assembly upon their prerogatives. They agreed, however, to consider the matter, and to give an answer to the remonstrance. From the temper in which they discussed the subject, Franklin foresaw that it would be impossible to bring them to any change of sentiments or of conduct on the points at issue, and that he should be obliged in the end to appeal to the higher tribunals. The Proprietaries at this time were Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn, the founder of the colony.

The delays necessarily attending all affairs of this kind left no room to hope for a speedy termination. The public mind was so much occupied with European politics and the war on the Continent, and the attention of the ministers and other officers of the Government was so deeply engaged with these great concerns, that there was as little leisure as inclination to meddle with the colonial disputes, and least of all to go through a laborious investigation of facts, and a discussion of the complex difficulties in which the subject was involved.

In a letter to his wife, dated January 21st, 1758, Franklin says: "I begin to think I shall hardly be able to return before this time twelve months. I am for doing effectually what I came about; and I find it requires both time and patience."

For more than a year afterwards scarcely any progress seems to have been made. He spent the summer in journeying through various parts of England. He visited the University of Cambridge twice, and was present by invitation at the Commencement. He expresses himself as having been particularly gratified with the civilities and regard shown to him by the Chancellor and the heads of Colleges. Curiosity led him also to the town where his father was born, and where his ancestors had lived; and he sought out with a lively interest such traditions concerning them as could be gathered from the memory of ancient persons, from parish registers, and inscriptions on their tombstones. At Wellingborough he found a Mrs. Fisher, the only daughter of Thomas Franklin, his father's eldest brother, advanced in years, but in good circumstances.

At Birmingham he became acquainted with the celebrated type-founder and printer, Baskerville, one of

those men, the results of whose labours prove how much can be achieved in the arts by resolution, perseverance, and an energetic devotion to a favourite object. Franklin always loved the profession by which he had first gained a livelihood and afterwards a liberal competency; and, even when he had risen to eminence, and whilst he associated with statesmen and courtiers, he was fond of talking with printers, entering into their schemes, and suggesting or aiding improvements in their art. So far was he from being reserved on the subject of his early condition and pursuits, that he often alluded to them as giving value to his experience, and as furnishing incidents illustrative of his maxims of life. One day at his dinner-table in Passy, surrounded by men of rank and fashion, a young gentleman was present who had just arrived from Philadelphia. He showed a marked kindness to the young stranger, conversed with him about the friends he had left at home, and then said, "I have been under obligation to your family; when I set up business in Philadelphia, being in debt for my printing materials and wanting employment, the first job I had was a pamphlet written by your grandfather; it gave me encouragement and was the beginning of my success." A similarity of taste was the foundation of an intimate and lasting friendship between him and Baskerville.

CHAPTER II.

Franklin advises the Conquest of Canada—His Plan adopted by the Ministry—Journey to Scotland—Lord Kames, Robertson, Hume—His Mission finally Successful—Tour to the North of England—Receives Public Money for Pennsylvania—Tour in Holland, etc.—Honours from Edinburgh and Oxford Universities—High Praise of Franklin from David Hume—Returns to America, visiting Madeira on the Way.

ALTHOUGH Franklin devoted himself mainly to the affairs of his agency, yet a mind like his could not be inattentive to the great events that were taking place around him, and he entered warmly into the general politics of the nation. Just before his arrival in England Mr. Pitt had become prime minister. In the hope of drawing the attention of this sagacious statesman to the concerns of Pennsylvania, he made several attempts to gain an introduction to him, but without success. Alluding to this circumstance at a subsequent date, he said of Mr. Pitt; "He was then too great a man, or too much occupied in affairs of greater moment. I was therefore obliged to content myself with a kind of non-apparent and unacknowledged communication through Mr. Potter and Mr. Wood, his secretaries, who seemed to cultivate an acquaintance with me by their civilities, and drew from me what information I could give relative to the American war, with my sentiments occasionally on measures that were proposed or advised by others, which gave me the opportunity of recommending and enforcing the utility of conquering Canada. I afterwards considered Mr. Pitt as an *inaccessible*. I admired him at a distance, and made no more attempts for a nearer acquaintance" It will be seen hereafter, when Mr. Pitt

was no longer minister, that his reserve had softened, and that he not only sought the acquaintance of Franklin, but consulted him confidentially on important national affairs.

It is known, moreover, that his advice at this time was both received and followed. It has been said on good authority, that the expedition against Canada, and its consequences in the victory of Wolfe at Quebec and the conquest of that country, may be chiefly ascribed to Franklin. He disapproved the policy by which the ministry had hitherto been guided, of carrying on the war against the French in the heart of Germany, where, if successful, it would end in no real gain to the British nation, and no essential loss to the enemy. In all companies, and on all occasions, he urged the reduction of Canada as an object of the utmost importance. It would inflict a blow upon the French power in America from which it could never recover, and which would have a lasting influence in advancing the prosperity of the British Colonies. These sentiments he conveyed to the minister's friends, with such remarks on the practicability of the enterprise, and the manner of conducting it, as his intimate knowledge of the state of things in America enabled him to communicate. They made the impression he desired, and the result verified his prediction.

In the summer of this year Franklin made a journey to Scotland, accompanied by his son. His reputation as a philosopher was well established there, and he was received and entertained in a manner that evinced the highest respect for his character. The University of St. Andrews had some time before honoured him with the degree of Doctor of Laws. He formed an acquaintance

with nearly all the distinguished men who then adorned Scotland by their talents and learning, particularly Lord Kames, Dr. Robertson, and Mr. Hume, with whom he kept up long afterwards a friendly correspondence. The pleasure he derived from his visit is forcibly expressed in a letter to Lord Kames. "On the whole, I must say, I think the time we spent there was six weeks of the *densest* happiness I have met with in any part of my life ; and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty has left so pleasing an impression on my memory that, did not strong connexions draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in." Similar sentiments are repeated at a later date, and he often resolved to renew his visit ; but this he was not able to do till several years afterwards, being prevented by his numerous occupations, and by the increasing pressure of public business.

After a delay of nearly three years, Franklin finally succeeded in bringing his public business to a termination. The case was decided in June, 1760. Governor Denny had given his assent to several acts of the Assembly which displeased the Proprietaries, and on account of which they removed him from office. Among them was an act for raising one hundred thousand pounds by a tax, in which the proprietary estates were put on the same footing as the estates of other landholders in the province. These laws were sent over to England, as usual, to be approved by the King ; but the Proprietaries opposed them, and exerted their endeavours to procure their rejection.

Able lawyers were employed on both sides to argue the points at issue before the Board of Trade, and in

the end all the laws were repealed except the one for raising money. This was strenuously resisted by the counsel for the Proprietaries, on the ground that it was an invasion of the prerogative, and an encroachment upon the proprietary rights; but the equity of the case was too plain to be misunderstood or eluded. The law was confirmed, under certain conditions, requiring that the Governor should have a voice in the disposal of the money, that the waste lands of the Proprietaries should not be taxed, and that their unimproved lands should be rated as low as those of any of the inhabitants. The agent engaged, on the part of the Assembly, that these conditions should be complied with. In fact, they did not materially affect the original claim of the Assembly, as the great principle, so long contended for, of taxing the proprietary estates, was established.

Thus, after much embarrassment and vexatious delay, Franklin succeeded in accomplishing the main object of his mission, and his services met with the entire approbation of his constituents. It was obvious, however, from the spirit which had been shown in the course of these proceedings, that the administration were not disposed to favour popular rights in the colonies; and it was deemed inexpedient at that time to press further upon their notice the grievances of which the people of Pennsylvania complained. The Proprietaries submitted to their defeat with as good a grace as they could, after holding out so long; but, in writing to the Governor, they expressed themselves not well pleased that the Board of Trade did not "privately confer with them in drawing up their report," which they say had formerly been the usage.

Whilst he resided in England, it was his custom to

spend several weeks of each summer in travelling. This year he made a tour to the north, returning through Cheshire and Wales to Bristol and Bath. He at first proposed going over to Ireland, and thence to Scotland, but he relinquished this part of his design.

When he came back to London, he found a letter from Mr. Norris, Speaker of the Assembly in Pennsylvania, informing him that he had been appointed by that body to receive the proportion of the Parliamentary grant which had been assigned to that province. During the latter years of the war, the annual sum of two hundred thousand pounds sterling was allowed by Parliament to the colonies, in consideration of the heavy charges to which they were subjected in providing an army, and the losses they sustained from the inroads of the enemy on the frontiers. This sum was apportioned to each colony according to the number of effective men employed in the field under the British generals. The share of Pennsylvania and the Delaware Counties for the first year was about thirty thousand pounds. This amount was paid into the hands of Franklin, by whom it was invested in the stocks, and otherwise disposed of as directed by his constituents. The trust, though involving a high responsibility, and attended with embarrassments, was executed to the entire satisfaction of the Assembly.

The Governor endeavoured at the outset to prevent his appointment, and then he insisted that he had a right to nominate other commissioners to act with the Assembly's agent in receiving the money. The Proprietaries used their influence, also, to thwart his proceedings, alleging that their deputy ought to have a voice in the disposal of this money after it reached

Pennsylvania. This pretence was not tolerated by the Assembly. The grant was meant as a relief to the people, a just remuneration for the services they had rendered; and it was maintained that the only proper authority for disposing of it rested with the people's representatives. The ministers seemed to view the matter in the same light, for the money was paid to the agent of the Assembly.

Having now finished the most important parts of his public business, he had leisure for other employments. In the summer of 1761, he went over to the Continent, and travelled through Holland and Flanders, visiting the large cities, and returning in time to be present at the coronation of George III. There is no record of the incidents of this tour, except a short letter to his wife written at Utrecht, in which he says, he "had seen almost all the principal places, and the things worthy of notice, in those two countries, and received a good deal of information that would be useful when he returned to America."

At the beginning of the year 1762 Dr. Franklin began to think seriously about returning to his native country, and to prepare for his departure.

Before he left England he received the degree of Doctor of Laws from the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford. Other friends, besides Mr. Strahan, regretted his departure. Mr. Hume wrote: "I am very sorry that you intend soon to leave our hemisphere. America has sent us many good things, gold, silver, sugar, tobacco, indigo, etc.; but you are the first philosopher, and indeed the first great man of letters, for whom we are beholden to her. It is our own fault that we have not kept him; whence it appears that we do not agree

with Solomon, that wisdom is above gold ; for we take care never to send back an ounce of the latter which we once lay our fingers upon." Franklin replied : " Your compliment of *gold* and *wisdom* is very obliging to me, but a little injurious to your country. The various value of everything in every part of this world arises, you know, from the various proportions of the quantity to the demand. We are told that gold and silver in Solomon's time were so plenty, as to be of no more value in his country than the stones in the street. You have here at present just such a plenty of wisdom. Your people are, therefore, not to be censured for desiring no more among them than they have ; and, if I have *any*, I should certainly carry it where, from its scarcity, it may probably come to a better market."

Dr. Franklin sailed from England about the end of August, having resided there more than five years. In a letter, dated at Portsmouth on the 17th of that month, bidding farewell to Lord Kames, he said : " I am now waiting here only for a wind to waft me to America, but cannot leave this happy island and my friends in it without extreme regret, though I am going to a country and a people that I love. I am going from the Old World to the New ; and I fancy I feel like those who are leaving this world for the next : grief at the parting ; fear of the passage ; hope of the future." He arrived at Philadelphia on the 1st of November. The fleet in which he took passage, under the convoy of a man-of-war, touched at Madeira, and was detained there a few days. They were kindly received and entertained by the inhabitants, on account of the protection afforded them by the English fleet against the united invasion of France and Spain. Not long after his return to Philadelphia

he wrote to Mr. Richard Jackson a full account of the island of Madeira, its population, soil, climate, and productions; but the letter has never been published, and it is supposed to be lost.

CHAPTER III

Receives the Thanks of the Assembly—Tour through the Middle and Eastern Colonies—Again busy in Public Affairs—Colonel Bouquet's Testimony to Franklin's Services—Further Disputes between the Governor and the Assembly—Militia Bill rejected by Governor—Franklin Speaker of the Assembly—Petition of Assembly to the King—Franklin loses his Seat—Sent as Special Agent to the Court of Great Britain.

No sooner was his arrival known in Philadelphia than his friends, both political and private, whose attachment had not abated during his long absence, flocked around him to offer their congratulations on the success of his mission, and his safe return to his family. At each election, while he was abroad, he had been chosen a member of the Assembly, and he again took his seat in that body. The subject of his agency was brought before the House. A committee was appointed to examine his accounts, who reported that they were accurate and just; and a resolve was passed, granting him three thousand pounds sterling, as a remuneration for his services while engaged in the public employment. This resolve was followed by a vote of thanks "for his many services, not only to the province of Pennsylvania, but to America in general, during his late agency at the Court of Great Britain."

As the contest was one, however, in which two parties were enlisted in opposition, with all the violence of zeal and acrimony of personal feeling which usually attend

controversies of this nature, he had the misfortune to draw down upon himself the enmity of one party, in proportion to 'the applause which his successful endeavours elicited from the other. And it may here be observed that the part he took in these proprietary quarrels for the defence and protection of popular rights, which he sustained by the full weight of his extraordinary abilities, was the foundation of the inveterate hostility against his political character, with which he was assailed in various ways to the end of his life, and the effects of which have scarcely disappeared at the present day. Yet no one who now impartially surveys the history of the transactions in which he was engaged, can doubt the justice of the cause he espoused with so much warmth, and which he upheld to the last with unwavering constancy and firmness.

Circumstances raised him to a high position as a leader, his brilliant talents kept him there, and he thus became the object of a malevolence which had been engendered by disappointment, and embittered by defeat. This he bore with a philosophical equanimity, and went manfully onward with the resolution of a stern and true patriot, forgiving his enemies, and never deserting his friends, faithful to every trust, and, above all, faithful to the liberties and best interests of his country.

In consequence of so long an absence from home, his private affairs required attention for some time after his return. Holding the office of Postmaster-General in America, he spent five months of the year 1763 in travelling through the northern colonies for the purpose of inspecting the post-offices. He went eastward as far as New Hampshire, and the whole extent of his tour, in going and coming, was about sixteen hundred miles.

In this journey he was accompanied by his daughter, and it was performed in a light carriage, driven by himself. A saddle-horse made a part of the equipage, on which his daughter rode, as he informs us, nearly all the way from Rhode Island to Philadelphia. The meeting of his old friends in Boston, Rhode Island, and New York afforded him much enjoyment, and he was detained many days in each place by their hospitality. At New York he met General Amherst, commander-in-chief of the British army in America, who received him with flattering civilities.

His duties as a member of the Board of Commissioners for the disposal of the public money, in carrying on the war against the Indians, were arduous and faithfully performed. Colonel Bouquet commanded the army in Pennsylvania, consisting of regular troops and provincial levies. He applied to the Governor and Commissioners for liberty to enlist more men, his ranks having been thinned by desertions. On this subject he wrote a letter to Franklin, containing a recital of his public services, which justly claims the reader's notice. It is dated at Fort Loudoun, August 22nd, 1764.

"My dependence was, as usual, upon you; and indeed, had you not supported my request in the warmest manner, it must have miscarried, and left me exposed to many inconveniences. Your conduct on this occasion does not surprise me, as I have not alone experienced the favourable effects of your readiness to promote the service. I know that General Shirley owed to you the considerable supply of provisions this Government voted for his troops, besides warm clothing; that you alone could and did procure for General Braddock the carriages, without which he could not have proceeded on his

expedition ; that you had a road opened through this province to supply more easily his army with provisions, and spent a summer in those different services without any other reward than the satisfaction of serving the public. And I am not unacquainted with the share you had in carrying safely through the House, at a very difficult time, the Bill for sixty thousand pounds during Lord Loudoun's command. But, without recapitulating instances in which I was not directly concerned, I remember gratefully that as early as 1756, when I was sent by Lord Loudoun to obtain quarters in Philadelphia for the first battalion of the Royal American Regiment, I could not have surmounted the difficulties made by your people, who, at that time unacquainted with the quartering of troops, expressed the greatest reluctance to comply with my request, till you were so good as to take the affair in hand, and obtain all that was desired.

“I have not been less obliged to you in the execution of the present Act, having been an eye-witness of your forwardness to carry at the board, as a Commissioner, every measure I proposed for the success of this expedition. This acknowledgment being the only return I can make, for the repeated services I have received from you in my public station, I beg you will excuse my prolixity upon a subject so agreeable to myself as the expression of my gratitude.”

In October, 1763, John Penn arrived in Pennsylvania, as successor to Governor Hamilton. Being connected by family ties with the Proprietaries, it was hoped that he was invested with larger discretionary powers than had been intrusted to the late Deputy Governors, and that he would be both enabled and disposed to administer

the government in a manner better adapted to the condition, wants, and privileges of the people.

He called the Assembly together by a special summons, and his first message abounded in good wishes and patriotic professions. It was received by the Assembly, as stated in their reply, "with the most cordial satisfaction." The session opened propitiously; six hundred pounds were granted to the Governor towards his support for the first year; and a vote was passed to raise, pay, and supply one thousand men, to be employed in the King's service during the approaching campaign against the Western Indians. It was soon perceived, however, that the hope of a change in the temper and aims of the Proprietaries was not to be realized. The old controversies were revived, with as much warmth and pertinacity as ever, and with as little prospect of a reconciliation. Franklin, from the position he held, necessarily became a leader, on the side of the Assembly, in these new disputes.

The recent disorders in the province convinced the Governor that the civil power required a stronger support than any that could then be brought to its aid. He recommended a militia law, by which the citizens might be embodied for their own protection and the public defence. The proposal was well received by the Assembly, and a committee was instructed to frame a Bill. Franklin was a member of this committee. A Bill was reported, similar to the one which he had framed and carried through the House at the beginning of the late war. Each company was allowed to choose three persons for each of the offices of captain, lieutenant, and ensign. Out of these three the Governor was to select and commission the one he thought most proper. In

like manner the officers of companies were to choose the officers of regiments, three for each office being recommended to the Governor, any one of whom he might select and commission. Fines were imposed for offences, and the offenders were to be tried by judges and juries in the courts of law.

In this shape the Bill was passed, and presented to the Governor for his signature. He refused his assent, and returned it to the House with amendments, claiming to himself the sole appointment of officers, enhancing the amounts of the fines, requiring all trials to be by a court-martial, and making some offences punishable by death.

The Assembly would not for a moment listen to an assumption so dangerous to the liberties of the people. It was no less than putting the power of imposing exorbitant fines, and even of inflicting the punishment of death, into the hands of a set of officers depending on the Governor alone for their commissions, and responsible to him alone for the manner in which these were executed. The Bill was accordingly lost. Dr. Franklin wrote and published an account of the proceedings, in relation to this Militia Bill, showing the causes of its failure, and the unjustifiable conduct and designs of the proprietary party in the course they had taken to defeat it.

This was only the prelude to a more important dispute, in which the Governor contrived to embroil himself with the Assembly. Money was to be provided for paying the expenses of the Indian war. It was proposed to raise fifty thousand pounds by emitting bills of credit; and, for the redemption of these bills, a land tax, among other sources of revenue, was to be laid. Conformably

to the decision of the King in Council, the proprietary lands were to be included in this tax. In one part of that decision the words were, "The located uncultivated lands of the Proprietaries shall not be assessed higher than the lowest rate, at which any located uncultivated lands belonging to the inhabitants shall be assessed." The Assembly understood this clause to mean, that the proprietary lands should not be rated higher than lands of a similar quality belonging to other persons. The Governor, availing himself of an ambiguity in the language, gave it a different sense, insisting that all the proprietary lands, however good their quality, were to be rated as low as the worst and least valuable lands belonging to the people.

The Assembly replied that, if it were possible to torture the clause into this meaning, it was nevertheless a forced construction, unheard of before, contrary to justice, and discreditable to the Proprietaries, since it was bottomed on selfishness, and brought their interest in conflict with their honour. After much wrangling and delay, the Assembly were obliged to waive their rights, and consent to the passage of the Act on the Governor's terms. The savages were invading their borders, and the troops must be supported.

These vexations exhausted the patience of the Assembly. Convinced that they must continually fight the same battles over with the new Governor, and with every succeeding Governor appointed by the Proprietaries, they passed a series of resolves, just before their adjournment, stating the oppressions which the inhabitants of Pennsylvania suffered from their rulers, and expressing their belief that peace and happiness could never be restored to the province till the power of governing it

should be lodged in the Crown. They then adjourned, for the avowed purpose of consulting their constituents on the subject of presenting a petition to the King, praying him to take the government into his own hands.

Numerous petitions to the King for a change of government, signed by more than three thousand of the inhabitants and coming from all parts of the province, were laid before the Assembly.

Encouraged by this manifestation of public sentiment, the House decided by a large majority to promote and sustain the prayer of the petitioners. A petition to the King from the Assembly, for the same object, was accordingly drafted by Dr. Franklin. The debates were animated, both parties exerting their whole strength in the conflict. The majority in favour of the measure was so great, however, that the war of words produced no effect on the result.

At the next session the most important business which engaged the attention of the House was the proposal of the British ministry to raise a revenue by stamp duties in the colonies. The Assembly of Pennsylvania, participating in the excitement which this intelligence had caused throughout the country, sent instructions to their agent in England, remonstrating against any such scheme, as tending to "deprive the people of their most essential rights as British subjects." The signing of these instructions was the last act of Dr. Franklin as Speaker of the House.

The election in the autumn of this year, 1764, was sharply contested. It turned on the question of a change of government. The proprietary party, having much at stake, redoubled their efforts; and in the city

of Philadelphia and some of the counties they were successful. Franklin, after having been chosen fourteen years successively, now lost his election, there being against him a majority of about twenty-five votes in four thousand. But, after all, it was an empty triumph. When the members convened, there were two to one in favour of the measures of the last Assembly, and they resolved to carry these measures into effect. Being determined to pursue their object with all the force they could bring to bear upon it, they appointed Dr. Franklin as a special agent to proceed to the Court of Great Britain, and there to take charge of the petition for a change of government, and to manage the general affairs of the province.

There being no money in the treasury that could be immediately appropriated to defray the agent's expenses, the Assembly voted that these expenses should be provided for in the next Bill that should be passed for raising money. Upon the strength of this pledge, the merchants, in two hours, subscribed eleven hundred pounds as a loan to the public for this object. On the 7th of November, only twelve days after his appointment, Franklin left Philadelphia, accompanied by a cavalcade of three hundred citizens, who attended him to Chester, where he was to go on board the vessel. "The affectionate leave taken of me by so many dear friends at Chester," said he, "was very endearing; God bless them and all Pennsylvania." He sailed the next day, but the vessel was detained overnight at Reedy Island, in the Delaware.

After a tempestuous voyage of thirty days, he landed at Portsmouth, and proceeded immediately to London, where he again took lodgings at Mrs. Stevenson's, in

Craven Street. When the news of his safe arrival came back to Philadelphia, his friends celebrated the event by the ringing of bells and other demonstrations of joy.

CHAPTER IV

Origin of the Stamp Act—Franklin's Opposition to it—Effects of the Stamp Act in the Colonies—Franklin's Examination before Parliament—Stamp Act repealed—Mr. Pitt's Attitude—Declaratory Act—Franklin's Mission—He visits Paris—Change in British Ministry—Lord Hillsborough in Charge of Colonial Affairs.

HENCEFORTH we are to pursue the career of Franklin on a broader theatre of action. Although he went to England as a special agent for Pennsylvania, yet circumstances soon led him to take an active and conspicuous part in the general affairs of the colonies. The policy avowed by the British Government after the treaty of Paris, and the fruits of that policy in new restrictions on the colonial trade, had already spread discontent throughout the country. The threatened measure of the Stamp Act had contributed to increase this discontent, and fix it more deeply in the hearts of the people. The colonies were unanimous in remonstrating against this new mode of taxation, as hostile to the liberties of Englishmen, and an invasion of the charter rights which had been granted to them, and which they had hitherto enjoyed.

The Assembly of Pennsylvania, entertaining this view of the subject, in common with all the other Assemblies on the continent, instructed Dr. Franklin to use his efforts in behalf of the province to prevent the passage of the Act. The first steps he took for this object, as well as the origin of the measure itself, are briefly

explained by him in a letter written some years afterwards to Mr. William Alexander. It is dated at Passy, March 12th, 1778.

“In the pamphlet you were so kind as to lend me there is one important fact misstated, apparently from the writer’s not having been furnished with good information ; it is the transaction between Mr. Grenville and the colonies, wherein he understands that Mr. Grenville demanded of them a specific sum, that they refused to grant anything, and that it was on their refusal only that he made the motion for the Stamp Act. No one of these particulars is true. The fact was this :

“Some time in the winter of 1763-4, Mr. Grenville called together the agents of the several colonies, and told them that he proposed to draw a revenue from America, and to that end his intention was to levy a stamp duty on the colonies by Act of Parliament in the ensuing session, of which he thought it fit that they should be immediately acquainted, that they might have time to consider, and, if any other duty equally productive would be more agreeable to them, they might let him know it. The agents were therefore directed to write this to their respective Assemblies, and communicate to him the answers they should receive ; the agents wrote accordingly.

“I was a member in the Assembly of Pennsylvania when this notification came to hand. The observations there made upon it were, that the ancient, established, and regular method of drawing aids from the colonies was this. The occasion was always first considered by their sovereign in his Privy Council, by whose sage advice he directed his Secretary of State to write circular letters to the several Governors, who were directed to lay

them before their Assemblies. In those letters the occasion was explained for their satisfaction, with gracious expressions of his Majesty's confidence in their known duty and affection, on which he relied, that they would grant such sums as should be suitable to their abilities, loyalty, and zeal for his service. That the colonies had always granted liberally on such requisitions, and so liberally during the late war that the King, sensible they had granted much more than their proportion, had recommended it to Parliament, five years successively, to make them some compensation, and the Parliament accordingly returned them two hundred thousand pounds a year, to be divided among them. That the proposition of taxing them in Parliament was therefore both cruel and unjust. That, by the constitution of the colonies, their business was with the *King*, in matters of aid; they had nothing to do with any *financier*, nor he with them; nor were the agents the proper channels through which requisitions should be made; it was therefore improper for them to enter into any stipulation, or make any proposition, to Mr. Grenville about laying taxes on their constituents by Parliament, which had really no right at all to tax them, especially as the notice he had sent them did not appear to be by the King's order, and perhaps was without his knowledge; as the King, when he would obtain anything from them, always accompanied his requisition with good words; but this gentleman, instead of a decent demand, sent them a menace that they should certainly be taxed, and only left them the choice of the manner. But, all this notwithstanding, they were so far from refusing to grant money, that they resolved to the following purpose; 'That, as they always had, so they always should think it their duty to grant aid to the

Crown, according to their abilities, whenever required of them in the usual constitutional manner.'

"I went soon after to England, and took with me an authentic copy of this resolution, which I presented to Mr. Grenville before he brought in the Stamp Act. I asserted in the House of Commons (Mr. Grenville being present) that I had done so, and he did not deny it. Other colonies made similar resolutions. And, had Mr. Grenville, instead of that Act, applied to the King in Council for such requisitional letters to be circulated by the Secretary of State, I am sure he would have obtained more money from the colonies by their voluntary grants than he himself expected from his stamps. But he chose compulsion rather than persuasion, and would not receive from their good will what he thought he could obtain without it. And thus the golden bridge, which the ingenious author thinks the Americans unwisely and unbecomingly refused to hold out to the minister and Parliament, was actually held out to them, but they refused to walk over it. This is the true history of that transaction; and, as it is probable there may be another edition of that excellent pamphlet, I wish this may be communicated to the candid author, who, I doubt not, will correct that error."

It is here to be observed that the alternative allowed by the minister was, that the colonists might either submit to a stamp duty, or suggest some other tax, which should yield an equal amount to the revenue. At all events the tax was to be levied by Parliament. The proposal in both forms was universally rejected by the colonists, who denied that Parliament had any right to tax them, since they were not represented in that body; it being a fundamental principle of the British Constitution

that no man shall be taxed except by himself or his representatives. It was affirmed that this principle, constituting the bulwark of British freedom, recognised in the colonial charters, and confirmed by numerous laws which had received the King's assent, could not now be violated without an exercise of power as unjust and tyrannical as it was unprecedented. But the ministry had formed their plans, and were not in a humour to recede. The Stamp Act was passed, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the American Assemblies and the strenuous opposition of all their agents in London.

The news of the passage of the Stamp Act produced a universal excitement in America. The Assemblies, as soon as they came together, passed resolutions in which the Act was declared to be iniquitous, oppressive, and without precedent in the annals of British legislation. The same tone and temper, the same firmness of purpose, and the same enthusiastic attachment to their liberties pervaded them all. Yet their public proceedings were marked with decorum and moderation. They were resolute in proclaiming their rights, and their determination to preserve them unimpaired. The authority of the British Government, within its former just limits, was acknowledged. Their resolves were pointed and strong, but respectful in temper and language. To procure a repeal of the Stamp Act was the immediate object, and, to effect this, petitions were sent from all quarters to the agents in London, with instructions to have them laid before the King and Parliament.

While the Assemblies were thus engaged, the people testified their sentiments in a different manner. They showed their resentment particularly against the dis-

tributors of stamps, officers odious in their sight, as having consented to be agents in executing the detested Act. By riots, mobs, burning in effigy, threats, and violent assaults, they compelled every stamp officer in the country to resign his commission, and to declare publicly that he would not act in his office. The people's wrath was kindled against the stamped paper, as if it were fraught with the seeds of a pestilence, or a contagious poison. They resolved that the American soil should never be contaminated by its touch; and, when it arrived, the Governors and other principal officers were forced to keep it on board armed vessels in the harbours, till it was finally all sent back to England.

Such was the state of things in America when the subject was again brought before Parliament at the beginning of the year 1766. In the meantime there had been a change of ministry, Mr. Grenville giving place to the Marquis of Rockingham. The petitions of the colonies were laid on the table, and left there unnoticed; but, as they had generally been published, their contents were well known, and the new ministry came to a resolution to advise a repeal of the Act.

The subject was discussed with great warmth on both sides of the House. While the debates were in progress, Dr. Franklin was called before Parliament, to be examined respecting the state of affairs in America. This motion probably originated with the ministers, who were now striving for a repeal of the Act, and was seconded by Dr. Franklin's friends, who had confidence in the result; but he was questioned in the presence of a full House by various individuals of both parties, including the late ministers; and his answers were given

without premeditation, and without knowing beforehand the nature or form of the question that was to be put. The dignity of his bearing, his self-possession, the promptness and propriety with which he replied to each interrogatory, the profound knowledge he displayed upon every topic presented to him, his perfect acquaintance with the political condition and internal affairs of his country, the fearlessness with which he defended the late doings of his countrymen and censured the measures of Parliament, his pointed expressions and characteristic manner—all these combined to rivet the attention and excite the astonishment of his audience. And indeed, there is no event in this great man's life more creditable to his talents and character, or more honourable to his fame, than this examination before the British Parliament. It is an enduring monument of his wisdom, firmness, sagacity, and patriotism.

When he was asked whether the Americans would pay the stamp duty if it were moderated, he answered: "No, never, unless compelled by force of arms." Again, when it was inquired how the Americans would receive another tax, imposed upon the same principles, he said: "Just as they do this; they will never pay it." And again, he was asked whether the Americans would rescind their resolutions if the Stamp Act were repealed. To this he replied: "No, never; they will never do it unless compelled by force of arms." He was also questioned as to the non-importation agreements, and asked whether the Americans would not soon become tired of them, and fall back to purchasing British manufactures as before. He said he did not believe they would; that he knew his countrymen; that they had materials, and industry to work them up; that they could make their

own clothes, and would make them; that they loved liberty, and would maintain their rights. The examination was closed with the two following questions and answers: "What used to be the pride of the Americans?" He answered; "To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain." "What is now their pride?" Answer: "To wear their old clothes over again till they can make new ones."

After much stormy debate in Parliament, the Stamp Act was repealed; but, as if unwilling to do their work thoroughly, or fearing that they should concede too much, they accompanied the repeal with a declaration which never ceased to rankle in the hearts of the colonists. They passed what was called a *Declaratory Act*, in which it was affirmed that "Parliament had a right to bind the colonies *in all cases whatsoever*." It was said at the time that the partisans of the ministers were driven to this act by the indiscreet warmth of Mr. Pitt, who openly denied the right of Parliament to tax the colonies in any manner, and said, in the course of his speech, "*I am glad America has resisted*." Such a doctrine as this, from so high a source, was not to be tolerated; and, to make amends for its having been uttered in Parliament, the members opposed to him hit upon the device of declaring solemnly that they had a right, not only to tax, but to do what else they pleased. Lord Mansfield, who was against the repeal of the Stamp Act, said in the House of Lords that this declaration amounted to nothing, and that it was a poor contrivance to save the dignity of Parliament.

But, whatever may have been the origin or design of the Declaratory Act, it was looked upon as a sober reality and with great concern by the colonists. If

Parliament could *declare*, it was natural to suppose that, when occasion offered, they would *act* accordingly ; and taxing was one of the least evils they might inflict, if they chose to exercise their assumed sovereign power. What should prevent them from putting an end to the very existence of the colonial governments, and annihilating every right they possessed? According to this doctrine, not only the property, but the liberty, and even the life, of every American were held at the will of Parliament : a body always agitated by party strifes, moving at the beck of a minister, and irresponsible to any power for the tyranny it might exercise over distant colonists, who had no representatives in Parliament to defend their cause or vindicate their rights.

It is no wonder that such a doctrine, maintained with great unanimity by the British lawgivers, should excite the astonishment and indignation of the Americans. The result proved that their fears were not groundless ; for they were soon taught to understand and to feel that the Declaratory Act was meant to be more than a form of words or a mere expression of opinion.

The joy diffused by the repeal of the Stamp Act, however, quieted for a time all uneasiness. No one who reads Dr. Franklin's *Examination*, as it was afterwards published, can doubt that he performed a very important and effective part in promoting this measure. The facts he communicated, drawn from his long experience and knowledge of American affairs, and the sentiments he expressed concerning the designs and character of his countrymen, were many of them new to his hearers, and were conveyed in language so clear and forcible as to make a deep impression. Moreover, his personal endeavours with men in power and men of

influence, wherever he met them, were unremitting. His services were well known and properly valued in London, by those who sought to bring about the repeal. Letters were written to his friends by gentlemen acquainted with the particulars, acknowledging and applauding these services; and when the repeal of the Stamp Act was celebrated by a public festivity at Philadelphia, his name was honoured with unusual expressions of respect and gratitude.

The main business of his mission to England, which was to prosecute the petition for a change of the government in Pennsylvania, received his early and continued attention. The ministers listened to the application so far as to raise encouraging hopes of its ultimate success. As the change desired by the Pennsylvanians was such as to enlarge the authority of the Crown in that province, there was no reluctance on the part of the Administration to agree to an arrangement, whenever it could be done consistently with the proprietary claims. It was proposed that the Government should purchase of the Proprietaries their right of jurisdiction, leaving them in possession of the lands and other property belonging to them in the province. The affair was discussed from time to time; but the increasing disorders in the colonies, and the resistance to Acts of Parliament, in which the Pennsylvanians joined as heartily as any of their neighbours, prevented its being brought to an issue till the war broke out. If quiet had been restored by establishing the relations between the two countries on the old footing, as they stood before the Stamp Act, which was demanded by the colonists, the change would doubtless have been effected.

The temporary tranquillity in the colonies which

followed the repeal of the Stamp Act afforded Dr. Franklin a respite from the public duties in which he was constantly engaged before that event, and again afterwards when the controversy was revived. A portion of this period he devoted to travelling. In September, 1767, he visited Paris, accompanied, as he had been the year preceding in Germany, by his "steady, good friend, Sir John Pringle." The French ambassador in London, who had been particularly civil to him of late, gave him letters of introduction to several eminent persons. His papers on electricity had long before been translated and published in Paris, and his philosophical discoveries were probably better known and more highly estimated there than in any other part of Europe. The reception he met with was in all respects gratifying to him. He was introduced to the King and royal family, and formed an acquaintance with the distinguished men in the scientific and political circles. These advantages, and the knowledge he gained by his observations and inquiries in France, were not only serviceable to him at the time, but they prepared the way for the successful execution of the important trust which he was destined to hold in that country at a later period, as minister plenipotentiary from the American States.

Scarcely had he returned to London, when the news arrived of commotions in Boston, occasioned by Mr. Townshend's Revenue Act, and by the laws for establishing commissioners of the customs in America, and making the salaries of governors, judges, and other officers, dependent on the Crown. These Acts of Parliament the Bostonians regarded as a continuation of the same oppressive system which had commenced with the Stamp Act, and which it had been fondly hoped would

cease with its repeal. Disappointed and indignant, they assembled in town meeting, and passed a series of spirited resolutions, recommending that all prudent and lawful measures should be taken for the encouragement of industry, economy, and domestic manufactures. A paper was drawn up, and circulated among the inhabitants for their signature, by which they engaged to promote the use and consumption of American manufactures, and, after a stated time, not to purchase certain enumerated articles which had been imported from abroad.

At the beginning of the year 1768 there was a change in the ministry. The American business had been in the charge of Lord Shelburne, but it was now transferred to Lord Hillsborough, as Secretary of State for America, this being made a distinct department. He was likewise placed at the head of the Board of Trade. In these stations he had so large a control over the affairs of the colonies that almost everything depended on his dispositions towards them. He was accounted a man of integrity and honest purposes, but too fond of his own opinions, and obstinate in carrying out his schemes. It was not known that he had any special hostility to the colonies, yet the American agents regarded his appointment as by no means auspicious to the interests of their countrymen. His general character gave a countenance to this apprehension, and his conduct in his office proved it not to be groundless.

CHAPTER V

Dr. Franklin is appointed Agent for Georgia—Chosen President of the American Philosophical Society—On a Committee to provide Lightning-Conductors—Encourages his Countrymen to adhere to their Non-Importation Agreements—Views on Supremacy of Parliament—Repeal of some of the American Revenue Acts—Franklin makes a Tour through North of England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland—Visit to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

DURING the year 1768 Dr. Franklin was on the point of returning to America. In the present agitated condition of public affairs with respect to the colonies, he despaired of drawing the attention of the British rulers to the principal purpose of his mission, a change of government in Pennsylvania, although the Assembly had renewed their application every year with increased urgency, and the last time by a vote of every member except one. His private concerns, he said, required his presence at home, and the general business of the province could be transacted by his associate, Mr. Jackson, who resided in London.

At this juncture he received intelligence, in a letter from Governor Wright, of his having been appointed agent for Georgia. He then felt it his duty to wait for the papers and instructions of the Georgia Assembly, which would probably demand his special care. The appointment had been made without any previous intimation, and therefore he was under no obligation to accept it; yet he was unwilling to decline a trust which had been spontaneously conferred upon him by so respectable a portion of his countrymen, and which he might possibly execute for their benefit. This kept him till winter; other business followed, and he found

himself detained in England much longer than he had anticipated.

As early as the year 1743, when Franklin was much engaged in philosophical studies, he projected a society, which was to include the principal men in America who were fond of such pursuits, and who would thus be enabled to combine their efforts for the promotion of science. The plan met with favour, and an association was formed. The original members, besides Franklin, were Thomas Hopkinson, John Bartram the botanist, Thomas Godfrey the mathematician, Dr. Thomas Bond, Dr. Phineas Bond, William Parsons, Samuel Rhoads, and William Coleman, of Philadelphia; Chief Justice Morris, Mr. Home, John Coxe, and Mr. Martyn, of New Jersey; Cadwallader Colden and William Alexander, of New York. Other members were soon added, whose names are not known. Hopkinson was president, and Franklin secretary.

This association proceeded with some degree of vigour at first, but it gradually declined. It was revived at a later day, and in January, 1769, it was united with another society, which had been formed in Philadelphia for similar objects. The institution which grew out of this union took the name of the *American Philosophical Society*. Franklin was chosen president, and the same honour was annually conferred upon him to the end of his life, although he was much the larger part of the time absent from the country. He contributed several valuable papers to the second volume of the Society's Transactions.

The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's having requested the opinion of the Royal Society in regard to the best method of protecting the cathedral from lightning,

Dr. Franklin was one of the committee appointed to investigate the subject. The other members were Mr. Canton, Dr. Watson, Mr. Delaval, and Mr. Wilson. On the 8th of June they made a report, which was approved by the Society, and the method recommended by them for putting up electrical conductors was accordingly followed.

Dr. Franklin did not cease, in writing to his friends in America, to urge upon them a strict adherence to the resolutions, which had been universally adopted, not to import or use British goods. The more he reflected on what was passing before him, the more he was convinced that the British Government would not relax from the measures so much and so justly complained of by the colonists, which, it was now said, even if they had originated in ignorance and a false policy, must be continued for the honour and dignity of Parliament. The supremacy of the national legislature was not to be questioned by the King's subjects anywhere, and opposition was to be suppressed without reference to the cause or the consequences. Parliament might repeal its Acts, when besought to do so by humble petitions; but it could never yield to a demand, or tolerate a refractory spirit.

This was the doctrine of the ruling party in Great Britain, and perhaps not a very extravagant one when viewed in the abstract. But unfortunately it was at variance with practice. The colonists had petitioned, till their patience was exhausted, without obtaining relief or even a hearing. When thus neglected and trifled with, they thought it time to take care of themselves, not by resisting the laws, but by rendering these laws ineffectual in their application. They resolved to provide

for their own wants by their industry and frugality and such other means as Providence had blessed them with, and not to depend on a foreign people for supplying them at exorbitant prices, loaded with such additional burdens of taxation as, in the plenitude of their power, they might choose to impose.

A committee of merchants in Philadelphia sent to Dr. Franklin a copy of their non-importation agreements, with a request that he would communicate them to the British merchants who were concerned in the American trade. In his reply, dated July 9th, 1769, he commended their zeal, and remarked: "By persisting steadily in the measures you have so laudably entered into, I hope you will, if backed by the general honest resolution of the people to buy British goods of no others, but to manufacture for themselves, or use colony manufactures only, be the means, under God, of recovering and establishing the freedom of our country entire, and of handing it down complete to posterity." This advice he often repeated; and, although he was too far distant to partake of the feeling kindled by sympathy throughout the colonies, yet his sentiments accorded perfectly with those of his countrymen.

In regard to the supremacy of Parliament so much talked of, Dr. Franklin said the best way of preserving it was to make a very sparing use of it, and never to use it at all to the prejudice of one part of the empire for the advantage of another part. By such a prudent course he imagined the supremacy might be established, but otherwise it would be disputed and lost. The colonies had submitted to it in regulations of commerce; but this was voluntary, as they were not bound to yield obedience to Acts of Parliament by their original

constitution. An assumed authority might safely be exercised when it aimed only to do good and render equal justice to all ; but if it erred in this respect, its dignity might be impaired, and the most likely method of restoring it would be to correct the error as soon as an opportunity offered. And thus the British Legislature might easily keep its dignity from harm, in relation to the colonies, by repealing the Revenue Act intended to operate against them.

When Parliament assembled, the subject was brought forward ; and in April, 1770, after an experiment of three years, the British ministry finding the Americans still obstinate in refusing to import goods, and trade declining, procured a repeal of the duties on all the commodities enumerated in the Revenue Act, except tea. This was done with a view to commercial policy, and not with any regard to the rights of the colonists, or the least pretence that it was meant to remove the cause of their complaints. On the contrary, the insignificant tea duty was retained for the express purpose of upholding the sovereignty of Parliament. The consequence was, that it rather increased than allayed the popular ferment in America ; for it implied that they estimated their grievances by the amount of money demanded of them, and not by the principle upon which this demand was made. They renewed their non-importation agreements with more zeal than ever.

Having in his charge the concerns of four colonies, Dr. Franklin's time was necessarily much occupied with them. Little being done by Parliament, however, relating to American affairs, in the year 1771, he had leisure for his annual excursions, which, from his confinement and close attention to business while in

London, he found essential to his health. He made short journeys through different parts of England, stopping and passing some time at gentlemen's country seats to which he had been invited. He visited Dr. Priestley at Leeds, Dr. Percival at Manchester, and Dr. Darwin at Lichfield, and assisted them in performing some new philosophical experiments. With each of these gentlemen he corresponded for many years, chiefly on scientific subjects. Priestley's celebrated experiments on air, and discoveries in the economy of vegetation, were regularly communicated to him during their progress. When Dr. Priestley was in London, their intercourse was constant and intimate. They belonged to a club of "honest Whigs," as it was designated by Dr. Franklin, which held stated meetings, and of which Dr. Price and Dr. Kippis were also members.

After these little excursions, he made a tour through Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. He had never been in Ireland before. He was entertained, as he says, "by both parties, the courtiers and the patriots; the latter treating him with particular respect."

In Scotland he had many friends, who received him with a cordial welcome and an open-handed hospitality. He spent five days with Lord Kames at Blair Drummond, near Stirling, two or three days at Glasgow, and about three weeks at Edinburgh, where he lodged with David Hume. His old acquaintances, Sir Alexander Dick, Drs. Robertson, Cullen, Black, Ferguson, Russel, and others, renewed the civilities which they had formerly shown to him, and which attached him so strongly to Scottish manners and society. His intimacy with Dr. Robertson had before enabled him to be the means of rendering a just tribute to the merit of some of his

countrymen, by obtaining for them honorary degrees from the University of Edinburgh, over which that distinguished historian presided. Dr. Cooper, President Stiles, and Professor Winthrop of Harvard College, were among those upon whom this honour was conferred in consequence of his recommendation.

On his way back from Scotland, at Preston, in Lancashire, he met his son-in-law, Mr. Richard Bache, who, with his consent, had married his only daughter four years before in Philadelphia. Mr. Bache had just come over from America, and was on a visit to his mother and sisters, who resided at Preston. He accompanied his father-in-law to London, and sailed thence for Philadelphia a few weeks afterwards. Dr. Franklin had never seen him before, but this short acquaintance seems to have made a favourable impression. In writing to his wife, he said he had been much pleased with what he had observed of his character and deportment, as also with the condition and good repute of his relations in England.

Some of Dr. Franklin's happiest days were passed in the family of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, a man renowned for his virtues, his abilities, attainments, and steady adherence to the principles of political and civil liberty. He was one of the very small number on the Bench of Bishops in the House of Lords who opposed, from the beginning, the course pursued by the ministry in the American controversy. His writings on this subject were applauded by all parties as models of style and argument, and by the friends of liberty for their candour and independent spirit. In the course of this year Franklin paid two visits to the "good Bishop," as he was accustomed to call him, at Twyford, in Hampshire,

the place of the Bishop's summer residence; and while there he employed his leisure hours in writing the first part of his autobiography. His friendship for this amiable family continued without diminution through life, and was kept bright by an uninterrupted correspondence with the Bishop and his daughters, particularly Miss Georgiana Shipley, a young lady of distinguished accomplishments.

CHAPTER VI

Dr. Franklin meditates a Return to America—On a Committee to protect Purfleet Powder Magazines from Lightning—Lord Dartmouth succeeds Lord Hillsborough—His Character—Franklin's Interview with him—Bold Resolutions passed by People of Boston, Massachusetts—Petition from Massachusetts Assembly—Governor Hutchinson's Letters—Franklin's Motives for sending them to Massachusetts—Proceedings of the Assembly concerning them—Proceedings of the Privy Council on the Assembly's Petition—The Petition rejected—Franklin dismissed from his Place as Postmaster-General.

AT this time he again meditated a return to Pennsylvania. Impatient of the delays attending all kinds of American business, disgusted at the manner in which the American department was administered, and weary of fruitless solicitations, he was inclined to retire from a service which seemed to promise as little benefit to his country as satisfaction to himself. Circumstances induced him, as on a former occasion, to suspend the execution of this design. His friends urged him to wait the result of the session of Parliament, letters and papers came from the American Assemblies requiring his attention, and at length, by the resignation of Lord Hillsborough, the agents were restored to the footing on which they had formerly stood.

In August, 1772, a committee of the Royal Society, under the direction of the Government, examined the powder magazines at Purfleet, for the purpose of suggesting some method of protecting them from lightning. Dr. Franklin had already visited Purfleet, at the request of the Board of Ordnance, and recommended the use of pointed iron rods, according to the method originally proposed by him, which had been practised with success in America for more than twenty years. The committee consisted of Messrs. Cavendish, Watson, Franklin, Wilson, and Robertson, all of whom were distinguished for their acquaintance with electricity. A report was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, and signed by the committee, in which they advised the erecting of pointed rods, with a minute description of the manner of constructing them.

Mr. Wilson was the only dissenting member, who gave it as his opinion that pointed conductors were dangerous, inasmuch as they attracted the lightning, and might thus overcharge the rod and promote the mischief they were intended to prevent. According to his theory, the conductors ought to be blunt at the top. To satisfy himself more fully in this particular, as well as to remove all doubts from the minds of others, Dr. Franklin performed a series of new electrical experiments, by which he demonstrated that pointed rods are preferable to blunt ones. It is true they invite the lightning, yet this is the very thing desired, for the charge is thereby silently and gradually drawn from the clouds, and conveyed without danger to the earth; whereas a conductor blunt at the top may receive a larger quantity of the fluid at once than can be carried away, which will thus cause an explosion. This was the principle upon which his theory of lightning-rods was originally formed,

and it was established more firmly than ever by these new experiments. They were satisfactory to nearly all the men of science, and the conductors at Purfleet were erected in the manner recommended by the committee.

The successor of Lord Hillsborough in the American department was Lord Dartmouth. This appointment gave satisfaction to the colonial agents, and it has even been supposed that Dr. Franklin was instrumental in effecting it. Some time before Lord Hillsborough's resignation it was rumoured that he would probably be removed, as he was known not to be on cordial terms with the ministry; and when Dr. Franklin was asked by a friend at court if he could name another person for the place who would be more acceptable to the Americans, he answered, "Yes, there is Lord Dartmouth; we liked him very well when he was at the head of the Board formerly, and probably should like him again." The colonists generally were pleased with the change. Lord Dartmouth had been on their side in opposing the Stamp Act, and they hoped much from his character, and the dispositions he had shown towards them.

If they were disappointed in this hope, it was perhaps less owing to the fault of this minister than to the policy which had been adopted in regard to America, and which he was obliged to support while he retained his office. In the administration of his own department he at first assumed some degree of independence, and his conduct was more mild and considerate than that of his predecessor; but he soon betrayed a want of consistency and firmness, which, although he was inclined to good measures, led him to join in sustaining the worst. He abolished the rule of not admitting agents to appear before the Board of Trade, whose election had not been

approved by the Governors, and restored to them all their former privileges. He consulted them frequently, and in a temper which at least evinced a desire to become thoroughly acquainted with the grounds of the colonial complaints, whatever may have been his opinion as to the expediency or the manner of removing them.

At his first interview with Lord Dartmouth on business, Dr. Franklin put into his hands a petition from the Assembly of Massachusetts to the King. Hutchinson, the Governor of the province, had lately received his salary from the Crown, contrary to all former usage, and, as the Assembly declared, contrary to the spirit and intent of their charter, and to the constitution under which the government was established. It was a violation of their rights, and an alarming precedent, out of which might spring innumerable abuses subversive of their liberties. It was a prerogative of the Assembly, which had never before been encroached upon or questioned, to tax the people by laws of their own enacting for the support of government; and this was designed not more as a security for the existence of government than as a protection from any undue influence of the Crown over the officers by whom it was administered. The Governor could negative their laws, and, being appointed by the King, the only tie that bound him to their interests was his dependence on them for his means of support. When this tie was broken, by making him exclusively dependent on the Crown for his office and his salary, no motive remained with him for cultivating the good will of the people, and no restraint which would prevent him from exercising his power, whenever he should think proper, in such a manner as to undermine and ultimately break down the pillars of the constitution. The Assembly

of Massachusetts saw, in this dangerous innovation, the ruin of their freedom, if it should be allowed to grow into a practice. They passed several spirited resolves in opposition to it, and petitioned the King for redress.

It was this petition which Dr. Franklin handed to Lord Dartmouth. When they met again to discourse upon the subject, his Lordship advised that it should not be presented for the present ; said he was sure it would give offence ; that it would probably be referred to the judges and lawyers for their opinion, who would report against it ; and that the King might possibly lay it before Parliament, which would bring down the censure of both Houses in the shape of a reprimand by order of his Majesty. This would irritate the people, and add fresh fuel to the heats which had already become so violent as to threaten unhappy consequences. He believed it would be better for both parties if a little time could be left for these heats to cool ; yet, as the petition had been delivered to him officially, he would, if Dr. Franklin insisted, discharge his duty and present it to the King. Prompted by the most friendly feelings towards the province, however, he could not but repeat the wish that it might be delayed till these considerations could be stated to the petitioners and new instructions received.

Dr. Franklin finally concluded to comply with the minister's request, and to wait till he could communicate the substance of the conversation, and obtain further orders.

Not long after the adjournment of the Assembly, by which this petition had been sent to the King, news arrived in Boston that the salaries of the judges, as well as that of the Governor, were to be paid by the

Crown. The inhabitants immediately assembled in town meeting, and passed resolutions strongly remonstrating against the measure, as tending to complete the system of bondage which had been preparing for the colonies ever since the passage of the Stamp Act. These resolutions were clothed in bold and energetic language, and they embraced an enumeration of the late acts of the British Government, which were deemed oppressive and hostile to American liberty. It was voted also that a copy of them should be transmitted to the other towns in the province, with a circular letter recommending that the people should everywhere assemble in town meetings, and express their sentiments in a similar manner.

When the pamphlet containing the votes and resolutions of the town of Boston came to his hands, he had it republished in London, with a Preface written by himself. In this performance he again took occasion to describe the condition of the colonists, and to explain the nature and reasons of their complaints, representing their late transactions as the natural consequences of the unwise policy of the Government, in driving them to extremities by refusing to listen to their petitions and remove their real grievances. The temper and matter of this Preface were such as to gain from the public a fair hearing to the resolutions themselves, which spoke in so high a tone that they would necessarily give great offence to the partisans of the ministry, and in some measure cool the zeal of those in England who wished well to the American cause.

The Massachusetts Assembly convened a short time after the Boston resolutions were passed. They took the same subject and the general state of the province

into consideration. The result was another petition to the King, which was likewise transmitted to Dr. Franklin. He immediately waited on Lord Dartmouth, told him there could be no more delay, and requested him to deliver this petition to his Majesty, and also the one which had been held in suspense. The minister promised to comply with his wishes.

We are now come to the date of a transaction which contributed to reveal the origin of some of the most offensive proceedings of the British Government against the colonies, and which subjected Dr. Franklin to much obloquy and abuse from the supporters of the administration.

In December, 1772, he procured and sent to Mr. Cushing, chairman of the Committee of Correspondence in Massachusetts, certain original letters which had been written by Governor Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, and others, to Mr. Thomas Whately, a member of Parliament, and for a time secretary under one of the ministers. These letters, though not official, related wholly to public affairs, and were intended to affect public measures. They were filled with representations, in regard to the state of things in the colonies, as contrary to the truth as they were insidious in their design. The discontents and commotions were ascribed to a factious spirit among the people, stirred up by a few intriguing leaders; and it was intimated that this spirit would be subdued, and submission to the Acts of Parliament would be attained, by the presence of a military force, and by persevering in the coercive measures already begun. When Dr. Franklin sent over these letters, he stated to Mr. Cushing his motives for doing it, and his opinion of their objects and tendency.

“For my own part, I cannot but acknowledge,” he wrote, “that my resentment against this country, for its arbitrary measures in governing us, conducted by the late minister, has, since my conviction by these papers that those measures were projected, advised, and called for by men of character among ourselves, and whose advice must therefore be attended with all the weight that was proper to mislead, and which could therefore scarce fail of misleading; my own resentment, I say, has by this means been exceedingly abated. *I think they must have the same effect with you*; but I am not, as I have said, at liberty to make the letters public. I can only allow them to be seen by yourself, by the other gentlemen of the Committee of Correspondence, by Messrs. Bowdoin and Pitts of the Council, and Drs. Chauncy, Cooper, and Winthrop, with a few such other gentlemen as you may think fit to show them to. After being some months in your possession, you are requested to return them to me.

“As to the writers, I can easily as well as charitably conceive it possible that men educated in prepossessions of the unbounded authority of Parliament, etc., may think unjustifiable every opposition even to its unconstitutional exactions, and imagine it their duty to suppress, as much as in them lies, such opposition. But when I find them bartering away the liberties of their native country for posts, and negotiating for salaries and pensions extorted from the people; and, conscious of the odium these might be attended with, calling for troops to protect and secure the enjoyment of them; when I see them exciting jealousies in the Crown, and provoking it to work against so great a part of its most faithful subjects; creating enmities between the different countries of which the

empire consists ; occasioning a great expense to the *old* country for suppressing or preventing imaginary rebellions in the *new*, and to the new country for the payment of needless gratifications to useless officers and enemies ; I cannot but doubt their sincerity even in the political principles they profess, and deem them mere time-servers, seeking their own private emolument, through any quantity of public mischief ; betrayers of the interest, not of their native country only, but of the Government they pretend to serve, and of the whole English Empire."

Upon the first appearance of the letters in the Assembly, they voted, by a majority of one hundred and one to five, that the design and tendency of them were to subvert the constitution, and introduce arbitrary power. Their committee upon the matter reported a number of resolutions.

The resolutions were passed the next day by a very large majority, warmly censuring the letters, as having the tendency and design not only to sow the seeds of discord and encourage the oppressive acts of the British Government, but to introduce arbitrary power into the province, and subvert its constitution. A petition to the King was then voted with the same unanimity, praying his Majesty to remove from office Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, who, by their conduct, had rendered themselves obnoxious to the people, and entirely lost their confidence.

When the petition arrived, Lord Dartmouth was at his seat in the country. Dr. Franklin transmitted it to him, and his Lordship, after his return to town, informed him that it had been presented to his Majesty ; but, from the tenor of the minister's conversation, he was led to suspect that it would not be complied with.

Notice was at length given to Dr. Franklin that his Majesty had referred the petition to the Privy Council, and that a meeting would be held in three days to take it into consideration at the Cockpit, where his attendance was required. He accordingly appeared there at the time appointed, January 11th, 1774, with Mr. Bollan, the agent for the Massachusetts Council. The petition was read, and Dr. Franklin was asked what he had to offer in support of it. He replied that Mr. Bollan would speak in behalf of the petitioners, this having been agreed upon between them. Mr. Bollan began to speak, but he was silenced by the Lords of the Council, because he was not the agent for the Assembly. It then appeared that Hutchinson and Oliver had employed Mr. Wedderburn, the King's solicitor, as their counsel, who was then present, and ready to go on with their defence. Authenticated copies of the letters were produced, and some conversation ensued, in which Mr. Wedderburn advanced divers cavils against them, and said it would be necessary to know how the Assembly came by them, through whose hands they had passed, and to whom they were addressed. To this the Lord Chief Justice assented.

When Mr. Wedderburn proceeded to speak further, Dr. Franklin interrupted him, and said he had not understood that counsel was to be employed against the petition. He did not conceive that any point of law or right was involved which required the arguments of lawyers, but he supposed it to be rather "a question of civil and political prudence," in which their Lordships would decide, from the state of facts presented in the papers themselves, whether the complaints of the petitioners were well founded, and whether the Governor

and Lieutenant-Governor had so far rendered themselves obnoxious to the people as to make it for the interest of his Majesty's service to remove them. He then requested that counsel might likewise be heard in behalf of the Assembly. The request was granted, and three weeks were allowed for preparation.

Mr. Dunning and Mr. John Lee, two eminent barristers, were the counsel employed for the Assembly. They concluded to rest the argument on the facts stated in the petition and the Assembly's other papers, showing the discontents of the people and the expediency of removing officers whose conduct had made them so odious that their usefulness was at an end ; and not to touch upon the objectionable parts of the letters, these being of a political nature, the falsehood of which it would be difficult to prove. Nor, indeed, would any proof be satisfactory to judges who deemed these very offences, so much detested by the people, as meritorious acts in support of the arbitrary designs of the Government. If this was not manifest from what had already passed, it was made so by the manner in which the petition was treated, when it came again to be considered by the Council. This extraordinary scene was described by Dr. Franklin a few days after its occurrence.

“Notwithstanding the intimations I had received, I could not believe that the Solicitor-General would be permitted to wander from the question before their Lordships into a new case, the accusation of another person for another matter, not cognisable before them, who could not expect to be there so accused, and therefore could not be prepared for his defence. And yet all this happened, and in all probability was pre-concerted ; for all the courtiers were invited, as to an

entertainment, and there never was such an appearance of privy councillors on any occasion, not less than thirty-five, besides an immense crowd of other auditors.

“The hearing began by reading my letter to Lord Dartmouth, enclosing the petition, then the petition itself, the resolves, and lastly the letters, the Solicitor-General making no objections, nor asking any of the questions he had talked of at the preceding Board. Our counsel then opened the matter, upon their general plan, and acquitted themselves very handsomely; only Mr. Dunning, having a disorder on his lungs, that weakened his voice exceedingly, was not so perfectly heard as one could have wished. The Solicitor-General then went into what he called a history of the province for the last ten years, and bestowed plenty of abuse upon it, mingled with encomium on the Governors. But the favourite part of his discourse was levelled at your agent, who stood there the butt of his invective ribaldry for near an hour, not a single Lord adverting to the impropriety and indecency of treating a public messenger in so ignominious a manner, who was present only as the person delivering your petition, with the consideration of which no part of *his* conduct had any concern. If he had done a wrong, in obtaining and transmitting the letters, that was not the tribunal where he was to be accused and tried. The cause was already before the Chancellor. Not one of their Lordships checked and recalled the orator to the business before them, but, on the contrary, a very few excepted, they seemed to enjoy highly the entertainment, and frequently burst out in loud applauses. This part of his speech was thought so good that they have since printed it, in order to defame me everywhere, and particularly to destroy my reputation

on your side of the water ; but the grosser parts of the abuse are omitted, appearing, I suppose, in their own eyes, too foul to be seen on paper ; so that the speech, compared to what it was, is now perfectly decent. I send you one of the copies. My friends advise me to write an answer, which I purpose immediately.

“ The reply of Mr. Dunning concluded. Being very ill, and much incommoded by standing so long, his voice was so feeble as to be scarce audible. What little I heard was very well said, but appeared to have little effect.

“ Their Lordships’ Report, which I send you, is dated the same day. It contains a severe censure, as you will see, on the petition and the petitioners, and, as I think, a very unfair conclusion from my silence, that the charge of surreptitiously obtaining the letters was a true one ; though the solicitor, as appears in the printed speech, had acquainted them that that matter was before the Chancellor ; and my counsel had stated the impropriety of my answering there to charges then trying in another court. In truth, I came by them honourably, and my intention in sending them was virtuous, if an endeavour to lessen the breach between two States of the same empire be such, by showing that the injuries complained of by one of them did not proceed from the other, but from traitors among themselves.”

After this judicial farce, no one could be surprised at the result. Their Lordships reported, “ that the petition was founded upon resolutions formed upon false and erroneous allegations, and that the same was groundless, vexatious, and scandalous, and calculated only for the seditious purpose of keeping up a spirit of clamour and

discontent in the provinces." The King approved the Report, and the petition was dismissed. And such was the language which the British rulers thought proper to use in replying to the respectful complaints of an ancient and populous province. If the people would bear this, they might well say that their long-cherished freedom had become an empty sound and a mockery. Let history tell how they bore it, and how long.

The next day Dr. Franklin was officially informed of his being dismissed from the place of Deputy Postmaster-General. For this manifestation of the royal displeasure he was prepared, as well by previous intimations as by the proceedings of the Council. It cannot be supposed that he was callous to these indignities, especially as they were intended to overwhelm him with disgrace, and ruin his credit and influence. But he suppressed his resentment, and took no steps either to vindicate himself or to counteract the malicious arts of his enemies, conscious of having done only what his duty required. When the facts came to be known and understood, his conduct was applauded by every friend of liberty and justice in both countries. He gained new credit, instead of losing what he possessed, thus baffling the iniquitous schemes of his adversaries, whom he lived to see entangled in their own toils, and whose disgraceful overthrow it was his fortune to be a principal instrument in effecting.

From this time he kept aloof from the ministers, going no more to their levees, nor seeking any further intercourse with them. He contemplated bringing his affairs to a close in England and returning home; and with this view he put the papers relating to the Massachusetts agency into the hands of Mr. Arthur

Lee, who had been appointed to succeed him whenever he should retire. Mr. Lee went over to the Continent, to be absent several months ; and then Dr. Franklin took upon himself again the business of the agency, thinking it improper to leave the post vacant, till the Assembly should be apprised of the absence of Mr. Lee and of his own wish to withdraw.

CHAPTER VII

Franklin remains in England to await the Result of the Continental Congress—Josiah Quincy, Junior—Death of Franklin's Wife—He receives and presents the Petition of Congress—Rejected by Parliament—Franklin's Efforts for Reconciliation—Visits Lord Chatham—Question of Colonial Independence—Mrs. Howe—Interview with Lord Howe—Lord Chatham supports Congress—Lord Camden—Chatham's Motion in Parliament—Its Rejection—Franklin sails for America.

IN the meantime the news arrived that a Continental Congress was about to convene, and, by the advice of his friends, Dr. Franklin concluded to wait the issue of that event. "My situation here," he observes, "is thought by many to be a little hazardous ; for if, by some accident, the troops and people of New England should come to blows, I should probably be taken up ; the ministerial people affecting everywhere to represent me as the cause of all the misunderstanding ; and I have been frequently cautioned to secure my papers, and by some advised to withdraw. But I venture to stay, in compliance with the wish of others, till the result of the Congress arrives, since they suppose my being here might on that occasion be of use ; and I confide in my innocence, that the worst which can happen to me will be an imprisonment upon suspicion,

though that is a thing I should much desire to avoid, as it may be expensive and vexatious, as well as dangerous to my health."

In this state of uncertainty and suspense he was greatly cheered by the arrival of Josiah Quincy, Junior, from Boston, the son of his old and valued friend, Josiah Quincy, of Braintree. Among the patriots of Massachusetts who had signalled themselves in opposing the arbitrary acts of the British Government, Josiah Quincy, Junior, was second to no one in talents, zeal, and activity. Having taken a conspicuous part in the late transactions, he was enabled to inform Dr. Franklin of all that had been done, and of the character and purposes of the prominent leaders; and it was a source of mutual satisfaction to find a perfect harmony of sentiment between themselves on the great subject which had now become of vital importance to their country. In one of his letters, dated November 27th, Mr. Quincy says, "Dr. Franklin is an American in heart and soul; you may trust him; his ideas are not contracted within the narrow limits of exemption from taxes, but are extended upon the broad scale of total emancipation. He is explicit and bold upon the subject, and his hopes are as sanguine as my own of the triumph of liberty in America." Mr. Quincy was in England four months, and held almost daily intercourse with Dr. Franklin. He also visited Lord North, Lord Dartmouth, and some of the other ministers, at their request, conversed frequently with members of Parliament, and on all occasions defended the rights and conduct of his countrymen with the same freedom and firmness that he would have used among his most intimate friends in Boston.

While Dr. Franklin was making preparations to leave England early in the spring, and looking forward to a happy meeting with his family, from whom he had been separated ten years, he received the afflicting intelligence of the death of his wife. She was attacked with a paralytic stroke, which she survived only five days. For some months she had complained of occasional ill-health, but nothing serious was apprehended by her friends, although she was heard to express a conviction that she should not recover. They had been married forty-four years, and lived together in a state of uninterrupted harmony and happiness.

About the middle of December, 1774, Dr. Franklin received the petition of the first Continental Congress to the King, with a letter from the president of Congress to the several colonial agents in London, requesting them to present the petition. All the agents, except Franklin, Bollan, and Lee, declined acting in the business, alleging that they had no instructions. These three gentlemen, however, carried it to Lord Dartmouth, who, after retaining it one day for perusal, during which a Cabinet Council was held, agreed to deliver it; and in a short time he informed them that his Majesty had been pleased to receive it "very graciously," and would lay it before both Houses of Parliament. This was accordingly done, but without any allusion to it in the King's speech, or any message calling the attention of Parliament to the subject. It was sent down with a mass of letters of intelligence, newspapers, and pamphlets, and laid upon the table undistinguished from the other papers with which it was accompanied. The agents requested to be heard at the bar of the House in support of the petition, but were refused. When it came up for consideration,

it was rejected by an overwhelming majority, after a heated debate, in which the ministerial members spoke contemptuously of the Americans and of their pretended grievances, and insisted on reducing them to obedience at all events, and by force of arms if that were necessary.

For the year past Dr. Franklin had foreseen that if the ministers persevered in their mad projects against the colonies, a rupture between the two countries and a civil war would soon follow ; and he used all the means in his power to induce a change of measures. This was known to gentlemen of influence in the Opposition, who were striving to effect the same end, and who accordingly sought his counsel and co-operation. Lord Chatham was among those who condemned the policy and acts of the administration ; and he was resolved to make a strenuous effort in Parliament to avert the calamity which he saw, as he thought, impending over the nation. In the month of August, 1774, while Dr. Franklin was on a visit to Mr. Sargent, at his seat in Kent, he received an invitation from Lord Chatham to visit him at Hayes, his Lordship's residence, which was not far distant. Lord Stanhope called on Dr. Franklin the next day, and accompanied him to Hayes.

The conversation turned on American affairs. Lord Chatham spoke feelingly of the late laws against Massachusetts ; censured them with severity, and said he had a great esteem for the people of that country, and "hoped they would continue firm, and unite in defending, by all practicable and legal means, their constitutional rights." Dr. Franklin said he was convinced they would do so, and then proceeded to explain the nature and grounds of their complaints, the unconstitutional encroachments of Parliament, and the injustice and impolicy of the

measures which the ministers were rashly enforcing, and which would inevitably alienate the affections of the colonists, and drive them to desperation and open resistance.

His Lordship seemed pleased with his frankness, assented to some of his statements, and raised queries respecting others. He mentioned an opinion prevailing in England that the Americans were aiming to set up an independent State. Dr. Franklin assured him that he had at different times travelled from one end of the continent to the other, conversed with all descriptions of people, and had never heard a hint of this kind from any individual. This declaration referred to the past and to the actual disposition towards the mother country before the late events, and not to the temper which had been excited by the novel aggressions of the British Government; for Dr. Franklin himself, at this very time, as we learn from his conversation with Mr. Quincy, was looking forward to independence, because he was satisfied that the ministry would not relax from their tyrannical measures, and that the people would not endure them. On this ground alone he expected independence, and not from anything that had as yet been done or resolved by the colonists.

Lord Chatham was affable, professed to be much pleased with the visit, and politely told Dr. Franklin that he should be glad to see him whenever his convenience would permit.

Some time after, when he was at a meeting of the Royal Society, Mr. Raper, one of the members, proposed to introduce him to a certain lady, who, he said, wished to play with him at chess. This lady was Mrs. Howe, a sister of Lord Howe. Being fond of chess, and having no reason to decline such an invitation, he accepted

the challenge, not dreaming that anything more was intended than a little recreation. He called on her with his friend, played a few games, and, finding her agreeable and intelligent, agreed to resume the amusement on another day.

He went accordingly, and played as before. The chessboard being laid aside, Mrs. Howe began a conversation, first on a mathematical problem, then on political affairs, and at last she said: "What is to be done with this dispute between Great Britain and the colonies? I hope we are not to have a civil war." "They should kiss and be friends," said Franklin; "what can they do better? Quarrelling can be of service to neither, but it is ruin to both." "I have often said," she replied, "that I wished Government would employ you to settle the dispute for them; I am sure nobody could do it so well. Do you not think that the thing is practicable?" "Undoubtedly, Madam," he rejoined, "if the parties are disposed to reconciliation; for the two countries have really no clashing interests to differ about. It is rather a matter of punctilio, which two or three reasonable people might settle in half an hour. I thank you for the good opinion you are pleased to express of me; but the ministers will never think of employing me in that good work; they choose rather to abuse me." "Ay," said she, "they have behaved shamefully to you; and, indeed, some of them are now ashamed of it themselves." As this conversation was apparently incidental, he drew no inferences from it, but assented again to the lady's request to renew their game of chess on a future occasion.

At a later date he called at Mrs. Howe's house, and

had scarcely entered the room when she said that her brother, Lord Howe, would be glad to make his acquaintance. He could only reply that he should be proud of such an honour. "He is just by," said she; "will you give me leave to send for him?" "By all means, Madam," he answered, "if you think proper." She accordingly despatched a message to her brother, who arrived in a few minutes.

His Lordship began the conversation with some polite compliments, and said his particular motive for desiring an interview at this time was the alarming state of American affairs, and that he hoped to obtain Dr. Franklin's sentiments on the best means of reconciling the differences, being persuaded that no other person could do so much towards healing the breach, which threatened the most mischievous consequences, unless some speedy remedy could be applied.

According to his promise, Franklin had communicated to Lord Chatham the late American papers which he had received; and he went a week afterwards to Hayes, where he was extremely gratified with the manner in which that great man spoke of the proceedings of the Congress. "They had acted," he said, "with so much temper, moderation, and wisdom, that he thought it the most honourable assembly of statesmen since those of the ancient Greeks and Romans in the most virtuous times." He professed a warm regard for the Americans, and hearty wishes for their prosperity, and added that when Parliament assembled he should have something to offer, upon which he should previously want Dr. Franklin's sentiments.

On his way home he passed the night with Lord Camden, at Chislehurst. This nobleman agreed entirely

with Lord Chatham in his opinion of Congress, and of the transactions in America.

Soon afterwards he was informed by Lord Stanhope that Lord Chatham would offer a motion to the House of Lords the following day, and desired his attendance. The next morning, January 20th, he likewise received a message from Lord Chatham, telling him that if he would be in the lobby at two o'clock, he would introduce him. "I attended," says Dr. Franklin, "and met him there accordingly. On my mentioning to him what Lord Stanhope had written to me, he said, 'Certainly; and I shall do it with the more pleasure, as I am sure your being present at this day's debate will be of more service to America than mine;'" and so taking me by the arm was leading me along the passage to the door that enters near the throne, when one of the doorkeepers followed, and acquainted him that, by the order, none were to be carried in at that door but the eldest sons or brothers of peers; on which he limped back with me to the door near the bar, where were standing a number of gentlemen, waiting for the peers who were to introduce them, and some peers waiting for friends they expected to introduce; among whom he delivered me to the doorkeepers, saying aloud, 'This is Dr. Franklin, whom I would have admitted into the House;' when they readily opened the door for me accordingly. As it had not been publicly known that there was any communication between his Lordship and me, this, I found, occasioned some speculation." Lord Chatham moved that the troops should be withdrawn from Boston. This gave rise to a warm debate, in which the motion was ably and eloquently sustained by the mover and Lord Camden, but it was lost by a large majority.

In the course of his remarks Lord Chatham mentioned that this motion was introductory to a general plan for a reconciliation, which he proposed to lay before Parliament. This was the subject in regard to which he had before intimated to Dr. Franklin that he should want his advice and assistance. A week after the debate on the motion, he spent a day with his Lordship, who showed him the outlines of his plan, and asked his opinion and observations upon all its principal points. Lord Chatham next called at his lodgings in town, and passed nearly two hours with him on the same business. The draft of his plan was now completed, and he left a copy of it with Dr. Franklin, requesting him to consider it maturely, and suggest any alterations or additions that might occur to him. He made another visit to Hayes, where the plan was again discussed, and the work was finished.

He did not approve the plan in all its parts, nor believe it would be acceptable to the colonies; and he freely stated his objections. But it was necessary to conform in some degree to the prejudices prevailing in Parliament, or there would be no hope of gaining the attention of that body to any propositions; and Lord Chatham himself did not suppose that, in any event, his plan would be adopted precisely as he should present it. His aim was to open the way to an accommodation, and amendments might be introduced in its progress through the House. Little else was to be expected than that it might serve as the basis of a treaty. And in the meantime, before it passed, the Americans would have an opportunity of knowing what it was, and of making objections and propositions.

This plan was submitted to the House of Lords, in the form of a Bill, on the 1st of February. Lord Stanhope, at

the request of Lord Chatham, accompanied Dr. Franklin to the House, and procured him admittance. The House was very full. Lord Chatham exerted all his powers of eloquence and argument in support of his plan. It was vehemently assailed by the ministers and their adherents; and was defended by the Dukes of Richmond and Manchester, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, Lord Temple, and others. The ministerial influence was so great, however, that it was not even allowed to lie on the table for future consideration, but was rejected by a majority of two to one.

The speech of Lord Sandwich was passionate and abusive. He could not believe, he said, that the Bill proceeded from a British peer; it was more likely the work of some American; and, turning towards Dr. Franklin, who was leaning on the bar, said "he fancied he had in his eye the person who drew it up, one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies this country had ever known." In reply to this illiberal insinuation, Lord Chatham "declared that it was entirely his own; a declaration he thought himself the more obliged to make as many of their Lordships appeared to have so mean an opinion of it; for, if it was so weak or so bad a thing, it was proper in him to take care that no other person should unjustly share in the censure it deserved. That it had been heretofore reckoned his vice not to be apt to take advice; but he made no scruple to declare that, if he were the first minister of this country, and had the care of settling this momentous business, he should not be ashamed of publicly calling to his assistance a person so perfectly acquainted with the whole of American affairs as the gentleman alluded to and so injuriously reflected on; one, he was

pleased to say, whom all Europe held in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom, and ranked with our Boyles and Newtons ; who was an honour, not to the English nation only, but to human nature ! ”

These transactions detained him longer in England than he had expected. He was now ready for his departure, and he received a message from Dr. Fothergill for their mutual friends in Philadelphia. “Tell them,” said he, “that, whatever specious pretences are offered, they are all hollow.” Dr. Fothergill was as much disgusted as disappointed with the ministerial manœuvres, which he had discovered in the course of the late negotiation.

The day before Franklin left London, he wrote as follows to Arthur Lee : “I leave directions with Mrs. Stevenson to deliver to you all the Massachusetts papers, when you please to call for them. I am sorry that the hurry of preparing for my voyage, and the many hindrances I have met with, prevented my meeting with you and Mr. Bollan, and conversing a little more on our affairs, before my departure. I wish to both of you health and happiness, and shall be glad to hear from you by every opportunity. I shall let you know how I find things in America. I may possibly return again in the autumn, but you will, if you think fit, continue henceforth the agent for Massachusetts, an office which I cannot again undertake.” In a letter to a friend on the Continent he likewise mentions it as probable that he should return in the autumn. But he did not then foresee the memorable day at Lexington, which occurred a month afterwards, nor the new scene of action that awaited him on the other side of the Atlantic. He sailed from England on the 21st of March, 1775, and arrived at

Philadelphia on the 5th of May, employing himself during a long voyage in writing an account of his recent attempts to establish peace and harmony between the two countries; but this paper was not published till after his death.

CHAPTER VIII

Franklin chosen a Member of Congress—Proceedings of Congress—Preparations for Military Defence—Franklin's Energetic Labours—His Services in Congress—Goes to the Camp at Cambridge—Chosen a Member of the Pennsylvania Assembly—His Letters to Europe for Committee of Secret Correspondence—His Journey to Canada as a Commissioner from Congress—The Declaration of Independence—His Correspondence with Lord Howe—Interview with him at Staten Island—Appointed a Commissioner to the Court of Versailles—Lends Money to Congress.

THE next day after his arrival Dr. Franklin was unanimously chosen by the Assembly of Pennsylvania a delegate to the second Continental Congress, which was to meet at Philadelphia on the 10th of May. At this time the whole country was thrown into a state of extreme agitation by the news of the conflict at Lexington and Concord, in which the British troops were the aggressors. The yeomanry of New England, as if moved by a simultaneous impulse, seized their arms, and hastened to the scene of action. The indignation of the people was everywhere aroused to the highest pitch, and the cry of war resounded from one end of the continent to the other. A few days after he landed, Dr. Franklin wrote as follows to Dr. Priestley :

“You will have heard, before this reaches you, of a march stolen by the regulars into the country by night,

and of their *expedition* back again. They retreated twenty miles in six hours. The Governor had called the Assembly to propose Lord North's pacific plan, but, before the time of their meeting, began cutting of throats. You know it was said he carried the sword in one hand, and the olive branch in the other; and it seems he chose to give them a taste of the sword first. He is doubling his fortifications at Boston, and hopes to secure his troops till succour arrives. The place indeed is naturally so defensible that I think them in no danger. All America is exasperated by his conduct, and more firmly united than ever. The breach between the two countries is grown wider, and in danger of becoming irreparable."

When the second Congress assembled, the relations between the colonies and Great Britain had assumed a new character. The blood of American freemen had been shed on their own soil by a wanton exercise of military power, and they were regarded as having fallen martyrs in the cause of liberty. This rash act dissolved the charm which had hitherto bound the affections of many a conscientious American to the British Crown, under the long-revered name of loyalty. It was evident to every reflecting man that the hour of trial had come, that a degrading submission, or a triumph of strength, in a hard and unequal struggle, was the only alternative. A large majority of the nation and of Congress were ready to meet the contest by prompt and decided measures of resistance, convinced that any further attempts for a reconciliation would be utterly unavailing. Among the foremost of this number was Franklin. Yet there were some whose fears ran before their hopes; and others whose interests outweighed

their patriotism. Many of the timid were good patriots, but they dreaded the gigantic power of England, which they believed to be irresistible.

After an animated debate, which continued several days, it was declared that hostilities had commenced, on the part of Great Britain, with the design of enforcing "the unconstitutional and oppressive Acts of Parliament"; and it was then resolved, with great unanimity, that the colonies should be immediately put in a state of defence. This was all that the most ardent friends of liberty desired, since it enabled them to organise an army and make preparations for war. Having gained this point, they were the more ready to yield another, for the sake of harmony, to the moderate party, at the head of which was John Dickinson. It was urged by this party that they never had anticipated resistance by force, but had always confided so much in the justice of the British Government as to believe that, when they fairly understood the temper and equitable claims of the colonists, they would come to a reasonable compromise. Another opportunity, it was said, ought to be offered, and to this end they were strenuous for sending a petition to the King.

The party in favour of energetic action represented the inconsistency and futility of this step. To take up arms and then petition was an absurdity. It could do little harm, however, since it would not retard the military operations; and as to the petition itself, there was not the least likelihood that his Majesty would pay any more attention to it than he had paid to the one sent to him the year before, which he treated with contempt. The dignity of Congress would suffer a little, to be sure, by again resorting to a petition, after being thus slighted; yet this was a small sacrifice to make,

if it would produce union and concert in affairs of greater moment. Besides, it was supposed that there were tender consciences in the country, which would be better reconciled to the strong measures of Congress if accompanied by this appeal, as from loyal subjects.

In addition to his duties in Congress, Dr. Franklin had a very laborious service to perform as chairman of the Committee of Safety, appointed by the Assembly of Pennsylvania. This committee consisted of twenty-five members. They were authorised to call the militia into actual service whenever they should judge it necessary, to pay and furnish them with supplies, and to provide for the defence of the province. Bills of credit, to the amount of thirty-five thousand pounds, were issued and put into their hands, to pay the expenses incurred for these objects. This was a highly responsible and important trust. Franklin laboured in it incessantly during eight months, till he was called away upon another service. "My time," says he, "was never more fully employed; in the morning at six, I am at the Committee of Safety, which committee holds till near nine, when I am at Congress, and that sits till after four in the afternoon. Both these bodies proceed with the greatest unanimity." The attention of the committee was especially directed to the protection of the city, by sinking *chevaux-de-frise* in the Delaware, constructing and manning armed boats, and erecting fortifications. These works were executed with surprising despatch, and so effectually that, when the enemy's fleet entered the river, after the battle of the Brandywine, it was retarded by them nearly two months.

For several months the proceedings of Congress turned mostly on military affairs. An army was to be raised,

organised, and provided for. The wisdom, experience, and mental resources of every member were in as much demand as diligence, resolution, zeal, and public spirit. We find Franklin, notwithstanding his advanced age, taking a part in almost every important measure with all the ardour and activity of youth. He was placed at the head of the Commissioners for Indian affairs in the middle department; and few of the younger members served on so many committees requiring energy, industry, and close application. Among these were the committees for devising ways and means to protect the commerce of the colonies, for reporting on the state of trade in America and on Lord North's motion in Parliament, for employing packet ships and disposing of captured vessels, for establishing a war-office, for drawing up a plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign powers, for preparing the device of a national seal, and many others.

A Secret Committee was appointed, of which he was a member. At first it was the province of this committee to import ammunition, cannon, and muskets; but its powers and duties were enlarged so as to include the procuring of all kinds of military supplies, and the distributing of them to the troops, the Continental armed vessels, and privateers, and also the manufacturing of saltpetre and gunpowder. The country was alarmingly deficient in all these articles; and it was necessary to procure them from abroad by contracts with foreign merchants, and to have them shipped as secretly as possible, that they might not be intercepted and captured by the enemy. Remittances were made in tobacco and other produce, either directly or through such channels as would render them available for the payments.

As soon as Congress had determined to raise an

army, and had appointed a Commander-in-chief and the other principal officers, they applied themselves to the business of finance, and emitted two millions of dollars in bills of credit. This was the beginning of the Continental paper-money system. Dr. Franklin entered deeply into the subject, but he did not altogether approve the principle upon which the bills were emitted. He proposed that they should bear interest, but this was rejected. After the first emission, he recommended that the bills already in circulation should be borrowed on interest, instead of issuing a larger quantity. This plan was not followed at the time, but when the bills began to sink in value, it was resorted to, and he then proposed to pay the interest in hard dollars, which would be likely to fix the value of the principal. This was deemed impracticable, although Congress came into the proposal afterwards, but not till it was too late to check the rapid progress of depreciation.

The army at Cambridge, employed in besieging the British forces in Boston, was adopted by Congress as a Continental army before General Washington took the command. This army would cease to exist at the end of the year, by the expiration of the periods for which the soldiers were enlisted. Thus the arduous task of organising and recruiting a new army devolved on the Commander-in-chief. To assist him in this work, Congress deputed three of their body, Dr. Franklin, Thomas Lynch, and Benjamin Harrison, to proceed to the camp, and confer with him on the most efficient mode of continuing and supporting a Continental army. They met at head-quarters on the 18th of October, where they were joined by delegates from each of the New England Governments. The conference lasted

several days, and such a system was matured as was satisfactory to General Washington and as proved effectual in attaining the object.

During his absence the Assembly of Pennsylvania met, and by the returns of the election it appeared that he had been chosen a representative for the city of Philadelphia. He was now a member of three public bodies, which convened daily for business, that is, Congress, the Assembly, and the Committee of Safety; but he usually attended in Congress whenever the times of meeting interfered with each other.

As soon as Congress had put their military affairs in train, they began to think of foreign alliances. On the 29th of November they appointed a *Committee of Secret Correspondence*, for the purpose of establishing and keeping up an intercourse with the friends of the American cause in England, Ireland, and other parts of Europe. Dr. Franklin's long residence abroad, his extensive acquaintance with men of character there, and his knowledge of their political sentiments, naturally qualified him for acting a principal part in this committee. He wrote letters to some of his friends in Europe, on whose discretion and fidelity he could rely, requesting them to watch the current of events, and the tendency of public opinion, in regard to the American controversy; to ascertain, as far as it could be done, the designs of men in power, and to communicate intelligence on these points for the use of Congress. To Mr. Dumas, at the Hague, whom he had known in Holland, he sent particular instructions, investing him, in the name of the committee, with certain powers as a political agent, by which he was authorised and desired to seek opportunities for discovering, through the

ambassadors at that place, the disposition of the European Courts and the probability of their rendering assistance to the Americans. Mr. Dumas accepted this commission and executed it faithfully. He continued in the service of the United States throughout the Revolution, and for some years afterwards.

From the beginning of the contest, many efforts had been made to induce the Canadians to join the other colonies; and it was proposed to them that they should send delegates to Congress. A hope of this union was entertained for a time, but it was finally disappointed. The hostile attitude in which the Canadians and English colonists had been placed towards each other on various occasions, in addition to the inherited national antipathy on both sides, had produced an alienation which could not easily be softened into a fraternal fellowship; and the obstacles were multiplied by religious animosities. In the first year of the war, while the Americans had an army in Canada, there was some show of a party in their favour; but this party was by no means an index of the popular will or feeling, and it soon dwindled away and disappeared.

The military successes which had put nearly the whole of Canada into the possession of the Americans, terminated with the fall of Montgomery under the walls of Quebec. More troops were sent forward in the heart of winter; but when the spring opened, reinforcements arrived from England, threatening disaster and defeat to the American army. At this juncture Congress appointed commissioners to go to Canada, with full powers to regulate the operations of the army, and especially to assist the Canadians in forming a civil government, and to pledge all the support and protection

that could be rendered by the united colonies. Dr. Franklin, Samuel Chase, and Charles Carroll were selected for this mission. Mr. John Carroll, a Catholic clergyman, afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore, was invited to accompany them. He had been educated in France, and it was supposed that this circumstance, added to his religious profession and character, would enable him to exercise a salutary influence with the priests in Canada, who were known to control the people. Among other things a printing-press was to be established, and Mesplet, a French printer, was engaged to undertake this business, with a promise that his expenses should be paid.

The commissioners left Philadelphia about the 20th of March, 1776, but they did not reach Montreal till near the end of April. The badness of the roads at that season of the year, and the obstruction to navigation in Lake Champlain, occasioned by the broken ice, retarded their progress, and made their journey tedious and toilsome. And, after all, the commission produced very little effect. The American army had already begun its retreat from Quebec, pursued by an enemy superior in numbers, well disciplined, and amply supplied. In this state of affairs it was not to be expected that the Canadians would venture upon the hazardous experiment of setting up a new government and joining the colonies, even if they had been previously inclined to take such a step. But, in reality, a few individuals excepted, they never had been thus inclined. Intelligence, a knowledge of their rights, love of freedom, liberal sentiments, and a spirit of enterprise were elements requisite for a political change, which they did not possess.

Dr. Franklin's health was much impaired by the hardships of the journey. He had been exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and in some parts of the route he was obliged to lodge in the woods. He stayed a fortnight at Montreal, and then, in company with Mr. John Carroll, he set out on his way homeward, leaving the other commissioners behind, who remained in Canada till near the time it was evacuated by the American troops. With some difficulty he proceeded to Albany. From that place to New York he was conveyed in a private carriage, with which he had been accommodated by the kindness of General Schuyler. He arrived at Philadelphia early in June.

A subject of the greatest importance was now brought before Congress. For some months past there had been much discussion in the newspapers, in pamphlets, and at public meetings, as well as in private circles, about independence. It was evident that a large majority of the nation was prepared for that measure. At length the Legislature of Virginia instructed their delegates to propose it in Congress. This was done by Richard Henry Lee; and a debate ensued, which elicited the opinions of the prominent members. All agreed that, sooner or later, this ground must be taken; but a few believed that the time had not yet come. Among the doubters was the virtuous, the patriotic, the able, but irresolute John Dickinson. His objections, and those of his party, were met by the fervid zeal and powerful arguments of John Adams, the persuasive eloquence of Lee, and the concurring voice of many others. On this side was Franklin, whose sentiments have been sufficiently indicated in the preceding pages. A committee of five was chosen to prepare a Declaration, consisting of

Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston. The history of this transaction is too well known to need a repetition of it in this place. The Declaration, drafted by Jefferson, was reported as it came from his pen, except a few verbal alterations suggested by Adams and Franklin. It was debated three days, and passed on the 4th of July, when the United States were declared to be, and became in fact, an independent nation.

From the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament it appeared that he contemplated sending out commissioners to America, with power to grant pardon to such persons as they should think fit, and to receive the submission of such as should be disposed to return to their allegiance. In the early part of the session, Lord North brought forward his *Prohibitory Bill*, interdicting all trade and intercourse with the colonies. By an awkward association, he incorporated into this Bill a provision for appointing commissioners to effect the object mentioned in the King's Speech.

In the spring of 1776 the main body of the American army under General Washington was stationed at New York. General Howe arrived there with his army from Halifax in June, and he was soon after joined by his brother, Lord Howe, at the head of a fleet with troops from Europe. The two brothers had been appointed commissioners. Lord Howe immediately sent on shore a despatch, containing a circular letter to the colonial Governors, and a "Declaration," stating the nature of his mission and his powers, and requesting that the declaration should be published. The commissioners were not instructed to negotiate with any particular public body. Pardon was offered to all who should be penitent and

submissive ; to provinces, towns, assemblies, and individuals. This despatch was conveyed to General Washington, by whom it was forwarded to Congress. It occasioned but little debate. The letter and declaration were directed to be published, "that the few," as expressed in the resolve, "who still remain suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of their late King, may now at length be convinced that the valour alone of their country is to save its liberties."

Lord Howe likewise wrote a private and friendly letter to Dr. Franklin, evincing respect for his character, and an earnest desire that all the differences between the two countries might be accommodated in the way now proposed. It was answered by Dr. Franklin in a spirit not less friendly and respectful ; but in regard to the public communications, he said, he was sorry to find them of such a nature, since "it must give his Lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business."

The door to a negotiation being closed, the battle of Long Island was fought, in which General Sullivan was taken prisoner. He was conveyed on board Lord Howe's ship, and discharged on parole. Lord Howe intrusted to him a verbal message for Congress, the purport of which was, that he should be glad to confer with some of the members in their private capacity, and would himself meet them in that capacity at such time and place as they might appoint. Congress accordingly deputed three of their number, Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, to go and learn what propositions he had to offer. The interview took place on the 11th of September, at a house within the British lines on Staten Island, opposite to Amboy, where they were politely received and entertained.

His Lordship began the conversation by informing them that he could not treat with them as a committee of Congress, but that his powers authorised him to confer and consult with any private gentlemen in the colonies on the means of reconciling the differences and restoring peace. The committee replied that it was their business to hear what he had to propose; that he might look upon them in what light he chose; that they were, nevertheless, members of Congress, and, being appointed by that body, they must consider themselves in that character. After the conference was ended, the committee passed over to Amboy in Lord Howe's boat, went back to Congress, and reported that his Lordship had made no explicit proposition for peace, and that, as far as they could discover, his powers did not enable him to do anything more than to grant pardon upon submission. This was the last attempt of the commissioners to effect what Mr. Burke called in Parliament an "armed negotiation;" and it would be allowing too little credit to the understanding of the ministers themselves to suppose that they did not anticipate its failure when they set it on foot.

At this time Congress had under consideration the subject of foreign alliances. The American States being now an independent power, declared to be such by the solemn act of a united people, they might properly assume and maintain this character in relation to other Governments. Aids in money and all kinds of military supplies were wanted. Congress had the benefits of a lucrative commerce to offer in exchange. It was decided to make the first application to the Court of France, and to proffer a commercial treaty, which should be mutually advantageous to the two countries. The hard terms

which England had extorted from the misfortunes of France in the treaty at the close of the last war, as impolitic on the part of the former as they were humiliating to the latter, afforded but a feeble guarantee of a lasting peace. Time and reflection had increased the discontent, which was manifested by loud complaints when the treaty was made. It was believed that France, in this temper, would not view with indifference the contest between England and her colonies, nor forego so good an opportunity of contributing to weaken the power of a rival, against whom she had laid up heavy charges for a future adjustment.

Congress deemed it advisable, at all events, to act upon this presumption. They appointed three commissioners, Dr. Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, "to transact the business of the United States at the Court of France." They were furnished with the draft of a treaty, credentials, and instructions. The members enjoined secrecy on themselves in regard to these proceedings. Silas Deane was already in France, having been sent thither as a commercial and political agent, instructed to procure munitions of war and forward them to the United States, and to ascertain, as far as he could, the views and disposition of the French Court. Arthur Lee was in England. Franklin made immediate preparations for his voyage. He left Philadelphia on the 26th of October, accompanied by two of his grandsons, William Temple Franklin and Benjamin Franklin Bache. They passed the night at Chester, and the next day embarked on board the Continental sloop of war *Reprisal*, carrying sixteen guns, and commanded by Captain Wickes.

As a proof of Franklin's zeal in the cause of his country, and of his confidence in the result, it may be

stated that, before he left Philadelphia, he raised all the money he could command, being between three and four thousand pounds, and placed it as a loan at the disposal of Congress.

CHAPTER IX

Franklin's Voyage to France—Arrives at Nantes—Proceeds to Paris—Resides at Passy—His Reception in France—Interview with Count de Vergennes—Money supplied by France—American Successes against British Troops—Their Effect on French Policy—Further Interview with Count de Vergennes—Treaties of Commerce and Alliance made—American Commissioners introduced to Louis XVI. at Versailles—Enthusiastic Reception of Franklin at Court.

AFTER a boisterous passage of thirty days from the Capes of Delaware, the *Reprisal* came to anchor in Quiberon Bay, near the mouth of the Loire. While crossing the Gulf Stream, Dr. Franklin repeated the experiments which he had made on his last voyage from England, for ascertaining the temperature of the sea. The result was the same as he had then found it. The water was warmer in the Gulf Stream than in other parts of the ocean. The sloop was sometimes chased by British cruisers, and Captain Wickes prepared for action; but he had been instructed to avoid an engagement if possible, and to proceed directly to the coast of France. By good management he escaped his pursuers, and no action occurred during the voyage. Two days before he came in sight of land he took two prizes, brigantines, one belonging to Cork, the other to Hull, laden with cargoes obtained in French ports.

The wind being contrary, Captain Wickes could not

sail up the river to Nantes, the port to which he was bound. After a detention of four days in Quiberon Bay, Dr. Franklin was set on shore with his grandsons at the little town of Auray. Thence he travelled by land to Nantes, a distance of seventy miles, where he arrived on the 7th of December.

His arrival in France was entirely unexpected. The news of his appointment had not preceded him, this having been kept secret in Congress. It was easily conjectured, however, that he would not come so far without being invested with some important public mission, and the friends of America greeted him with cordiality and lively expressions of joy. The event was celebrated by a dinner, at which he was invited to be present, and which was attended by a large number of persons. Fatigued with the voyage and his journey from Auray, he sought repose for a short time at the country seat of M. Gruel, near the town; but in this retreat many visitors called to see him, as well to testify their personal respect as to make inquiries concerning the state of affairs in America. From Nantes he wrote as follows to the President of Congress:

“Our voyage, though not long, was rough, and I feel myself weakened by it; but I now recover strength daily, and in a few days shall be able to undertake the journey to Paris. I have not yet taken any public character, thinking it prudent first to know whether the Court is ready and willing to receive ministers publicly from the Congress; that we may neither embarrass it on the one hand, nor subject ourselves to the hazard of a disgraceful refusal on the other. I have despatched an express to Mr. Deane, with the letters that I had for him from the Committee, and a copy of our commission,

that he may immediately make the proper inquiries, and give me information. In the meantime I find it generally supposed here that I am sent to negotiate ; and that opinion appears to give great pleasure, if I can judge by the extreme civilities I meet with from numbers of the principal people who have done me the honour to visit me."

He stayed eight days at Nantes, and then set off for Paris, and reached that city on the 21st of December. He found Mr. Deane there, and Mr. Lee joined them the next day, so that the commissioners were prepared to enter immediately upon their official duties. Shortly afterwards Dr. Franklin removed to Passy, a pleasant village near Paris, and took lodgings in a commodious house belonging to M. Leray de Chaumont, a zealous friend to the American cause. He remained at that place during the whole of his residence in France.

The intelligence of Franklin's arrival at Paris was immediately published and circulated throughout Europe. His brilliant discoveries in electricity, thirty years before, had made him known as a philosopher wherever science was studied or genius respected. His writings on this subject had already been translated into many languages ; and also his *Poor Richard*, and some other miscellaneous pieces, clothed in a style of surpassing simplicity and precision and abounding in sagacious maxims relating to human affairs and the springs of human action, which are almost without a parallel in any other writer. The history of his recent transactions in England, his bold and uncompromising defence of his country's rights, his examination before Parliament, and the abuse he had received from the ministers, were known everywhere, and had added to the fame of a philosopher and philanthropist

that of a statesman and patriot. A French historian of the first celebrity speaks of him as follows :

“By the effect which Franklin produced in France, one might say that he fulfilled his mission, not with a court, but with a free people. Diplomatic etiquette did not permit him often to hold interviews with the ministers, but he associated with all the distinguished personages who directed public opinion. Men imagined they saw in him a sage of antiquity, come back to give austere lessons and generous examples to the moderns. They personified in him the republic of which he was the representative and the legislator. They regarded his virtues as those of his countrymen, and even judged of their physiognomy by the imposing and serene traits of his own. Happy was he who could gain admittance to see him in the house which he occupied at Passy. This venerable old man, it was said, joined to the demeanour of Phocion the spirit of Socrates. Courtiers were struck with his native dignity, and discovered in him the profound statesman. Young officers, impatient to signalise themselves in another hemisphere, came to interrogate him respecting the military condition of the Americans ; and when he spoke to them with deep concern and a manly frankness of the recent defeats, which had put his country in jeopardy, this only excited in them a more ardent desire to join and assist the republican soldiers.

“After this picture, it would be useless to trace the history of Franklin’s negotiations with the Court of France. His virtues and his renown negotiated for him ; and before the second year of his mission had expired, no one conceived it possible to refuse fleets and an army to the compatriots of Franklin.”

The commissioners were furnished by Congress, in the first place, with the plan of a treaty of commerce which they were to propose to the French Government. They were likewise instructed to procure from that Court, at the expense of the United States, eight line-of-battle ships, well manned and fitted for service; to borrow money; to procure and forward military supplies; and to fit out armed vessels under the flag of the United States, provided the French Court should not disapprove this measure. They were, moreover, authorised to ascertain the views of other European powers, through their ambassadors in France, and to endeavour to obtain from them a recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the United States; and to enter into treaties of amity and commerce with such powers, if opportunities should present themselves. It was expected that remittances would be made to them from time to time, in American produce, to meet their expenses and pecuniary engagements.

The Count de Vergennes was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the French Cabinet, and from first to last the principal mover in what related to the American war. On the 28th of December he admitted the commissioners to an audience at Versailles. He received them with marked civility, and conversed with them freely. They laid before him their commission and the plan of a treaty. He assured them that they might depend on the protection of the Court while they were in France; that due attention would be given to what they had offered; and that all the facilities would be granted to American commerce and navigation in French ports which were compatible with the treaties existing between France and Great Britain. He requested them

to draw up a memoir containing an account of the situation of affairs in the United States. This was presented a few days afterwards, with the part of their instructions relating to ships of war. No direct answer was returned, the French Government not being yet prepared openly to espouse the cause of the Americans, which would necessarily bring on a war with England. By the advice of Count de Vergennes, they had an interview with Count d'Aranda, the Spanish ambassador, who promised to forward copies of their memorials to his Court, which he said would act in concert with that of France.

Notwithstanding this reserve, the Court of France had resolved to assist the Americans. A million of livres had already been secretly advanced to Beaumarchais for this purpose. Munitions of war to a large amount were purchased by him, in part with this money, and in part with such other means as he could command. By an arrangement with Mr. Deane, he shipped these articles to the United States, and Congress was to pay for them by remitting tobacco and other American produce. Before the commissioners arrived, Mr. Deane had procured, on these conditions, thirty thousand fusils, two hundred pieces of brass cannon, thirty mortars, four thousand tents, clothing for thirty thousand men, and two hundred tons of gunpowder. They were shipped in different vessels, the most of which arrived safely in the United States.

The French Government did not grant the ships of war requested by Congress, but the commissioners were informed, through a private channel, that they would receive two millions of livres in quarterly payments, to be expended for the use of the United States. At first

it was intimated to them that this money was a loan from generous individuals, who wished well to the Americans in their struggle for freedom, and that it was not expected to be repaid till after the peace. In fact, however, it was drawn from the King's treasury, and the payments of half a million quarterly were promptly made. The commissioners likewise entered into a contract with the Farmer-General, by which it was agreed to furnish them with five thousand hogsheads of tobacco at a stipulated price. One million of livres was advanced on this contract. Within a few months they were thus put in possession of three millions of livres.

Dr. Franklin had been ten months in France before the Court of Versailles manifested any disposition to engage openly in the American contest. The opinion of the ministers was divided on this subject. Count de Vergennes and Count Maurepas, the two principal ministers, were decidedly in favour of a war with England, and of bringing it on by uniting with the Americans. Some of the others, among whom was Turgot while he was in the Cabinet, disapproved this policy, and the King himself came into it with reluctance. Moreover, the events of the campaign of 1776 afforded little encouragement to such a step. The evacuation of Canada by the American troops, the defeat on Long Island, the loss of Fort Washington, the retreat of Washington's army through New Jersey, and the flight of Congress from Philadelphia to Baltimore, were looked upon in Europe as a prelude to a speedy termination of the struggle. This was not a time to expect alliances. The ability of the Americans to maintain the war for any length of time, as well as their union, spirit, and determination, was regarded as extremely problematical.

The French ministry feared that, embarrassed if not discouraged by their difficulties, they would, sooner or later, yield to the force of old habits, and seek, or at least accept, a reconciliation with the mother country. This was the main reason, added to the obstacles thrown in the way by those who opposed a war on grounds of policy, why they did not at an earlier day enter into an alliance with the United States. Had this measure been premature, and, after an alliance was formed, had the Americans returned to their allegiance to the British King, the French would have found themselves in an awkward position, with a war on their hands against England, and the censure of the world upon them for having recognised the independence and taken up the cause of insurgent colonists, who had neither the will, the resolution, nor the internal force to support the character they had assumed.

But the tide of affairs soon began to turn in another direction. In the campaign of 1777 the losses of the preceding year were more than retrieved. The capture of Burgoyne's army, and the good conduct of the forces under General Washington in Pennsylvania, gave sufficient evidence that the Americans were in earnest, and that they wanted neither physical strength nor firmness of purpose. On the 4th of December an express arrived in Paris from the United States, bringing the news of the capture of Burgoyne and the battle of Germantown. The commissioners immediately communicated this intelligence to the French Court. Two days afterwards, M. Gérard, the secretary of the King's Council, called on Dr. Franklin at Passy, and said he had come, by order of Count de Vergennes and Count Maurepas, to congratulate the commissioners on the

success of their countrymen, and to assure them that it gave great pleasure at Versailles. After some conversation, he advised them to renew their proposition for a treaty.

A memorial was accordingly prepared by Dr. Franklin, signed by the commissioners, and presented to Count de Vergennes; and on the 12th, by the appointment of that minister, a meeting took place at Versailles between Count de Vergennes and M. Gérard on one part, and the American commissioners on the other, for the purpose of discussing the preliminaries of a treaty. Count de Vergennes complimented them on the prosperous state of their affairs, and spoke with particular commendation of the movements of Washington's army in the face of a superior force. He then asked them what they had to propose. Franklin referred him to the draft of a treaty which they had brought from Congress, and said, if there were objections to any part of it, they were ready to consider them. Count de Vergennes mentioned some objections, which were examined, but these related to points of secondary importance, without touching the fundamental articles. The minister remarked that the relations between France and Spain were of such a nature as to render it necessary to consult his Catholic Majesty before a treaty could be concluded, and to give him an opportunity to join in it, if he should think proper; and that a courier would be immediately despatched to Spain, who would be absent three weeks.

Before this time expired M. Gérard called again on the commissioners, and told them that the King, by the advice of his Council, had determined to acknowledge the independence of the United States,

and to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with them; that it was the desire and intention of his Majesty to form such a treaty as would be durable, and this could be done only by establishing it on principles of exact reciprocity, so that its continuance should be for the interest of both parties; that no advantage would be taken of the present situation of the United States to obtain terms which they would not willingly agree to under any other circumstances; and that it was his fixed determination to support their independence by all the means in his power. This would probably lead to a war with England, yet the King would not ask, or expect, any compensation for the expense or damage he might sustain on that account. The only condition required by him would be, that the United States should not give up their independence in any treaty of peace they might make with England, nor return to their subjection to the British Government.

It was at length ascertained that the King of Spain was not disposed to take any part in the business. The negotiators then proceeded without more delay, and their work was soon completed. In its essential articles the treaty was the same as the one that had been proposed by Congress.

When this was done, the French minister produced the draft of another treaty, called a Treaty of Alliance. The objects of this treaty were in some respects of much greater importance than those of the former. It was to be eventual in its operation, and to take effect only in case of a rupture between France and England; and it was designed to explain the duties of the two contracting parties in prosecuting the war, and to bind them to certain conditions.

The first stipulation was that, while the American war continued, both parties should make it a common cause, and aid each other as good friends and allies. To maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty, and independence of the United States was declared to be the essential and direct end of the alliance. It was agreed that, if the Americans should gain possession of any of the British territories in the northern parts of the continent, not included within the limits of the Thirteen States, such territories should belong to the United States. If the French King should conquer any of the British Islands in or near the Gulf of Mexico, they were to be retained by him. The contracting parties also agreed that neither of them should conclude a truce or peace with Great Britain without the consent of the other first obtained ; and they mutually engaged not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States should be assured by the treaty or treaties which should terminate the war. The United States guaranteed to the King of France all the possessions he then held in America, as well as those he should acquire by the treaty of peace ; and the King guaranteed to the United States their liberty, sovereignty, and independence, and all their possessions, and such acquisitions as they should gain by conquest from the dominions of Great Britain in America.

In both these treaties it was the aim of the parties to adjust every point, as nearly as it could be done, upon principles of exact equality and reciprocity. The commercial treaty granted reciprocal privileges of trade ; and each party was at liberty to grant the same privileges to any other nation. By the treaty of alliance the United States secured the very great advantage of the

whole power of France on their side, till their independence should be confirmed by a treaty of peace. The equivalent expected by France for this use of her means, and for the losses and expenses she might incur in the war, was the separating of the colonies from the mother country, thereby striking a heavy blow upon Great Britain ; and also a due share of the profits of the American trade, the whole of which had hitherto been poured into the lap of England, increasing her wealth and enlarging her power. She made no provision for obtaining acquisitions on the American continent, either by conquest or cession, not even Canada and the Islands in the St. Lawrence, which had been taken from her by the English in the last war. On the contrary, she disavowed, in the most positive terms, all intention of seeking such conquest or accepting such cession ; and it may be added that her conduct during the war and at the peace was in perfect accordance with this declaration.

The two treaties were signed at Paris on the 6th of February, 1778. They were sent to America by a special messenger, and were immediately ratified by Congress. The event diffused joy throughout the country. Washington set apart a day for the rejoicings of the army on the occasion at Valley Forge. All saw, or believed they saw, that, whatever might be the hazards of the war, independence in the end was certain. France was too powerful a nation to be conquered, and she had promised her support to the last. Her interest and safety were deeply involved in the contest, and her honour was pledged. In the enthusiasm of the moment, every heart was filled with gratitude to the French King, and every tongue spoke his praise. His generosity in agreeing to treaties so favourable in their conditions and

so equitable in their principles was lauded to the skies ; and we behold the spectacle of two millions of republicans becoming all at once the cordial friends and warm admirers of a monarch who sat on a throne erected by acts, sustained by a policy, and surrounded by institutions, which all true republicans regarded as so many encroachments upon the natural and inalienable rights of mankind. In this instance, however, they had no just occasion afterwards to regret that their confidence had been misplaced or their gratitude improperly bestowed. Every promise was fulfilled and every pledge was redeemed.

On the 20th of March the American commissioners were introduced to the King at Versailles, and they took their place at Court as the representatives of an independent power. A French historian, describing this ceremony, says of Franklin : " He was accompanied and followed by a great number of Americans and individuals from various countries, whom curiosity had drawn together. His age, his venerable aspect, the simplicity of his dress, everything fortunate and remarkable in the life of this American, contributed to excite public attention. The clapping of hands and other expressions of joy indicated that warmth of enthusiasm which the French are more susceptible of than any other people, and the charm of which is enhanced to the object of it by their politeness and agreeable manners. After this audience he crossed the court on his way to the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The multitude waited for him in the passage, and greeted him with their acclamations. He met with a similar reception wherever he appeared in Paris."

From that time both Franklin and the other American commissioners attended the Court at Versailles on the

same footing as the ambassadors of the European powers. Madame Campan says that, on these occasions, Franklin appeared in the dress of an American farmer. "His straight, unpowdered hair, his round hat, his brown cloth coat, formed a singular contrast with the laced and embroidered coats, and powdered and perfumed heads, of the courtiers of Versailles." The rules of diplomatic etiquette did not permit the ambassadors of those sovereigns who had not recognised the independence of the United States to extend any official civilities to the ministers of the new republic. In private, however, they sought the acquaintance and society of Franklin, and among them were some of his most esteemed and intimate friends.

CHAPTER X

War between France and England—John Adams sent as United States Minister to France—Secret Advances to Franklin for Reconciliation—His Personal Friends in Paris—Interview with Voltaire—Franklin appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to French Court—Interview with Mr. (Sir) William Jones—Franklin orders American Cruisers not to molest Captain Cook—Protects Moravian Missionaries in Labrador—Paul Jones—The Marquis de Lafayette.

THE French ambassador in London, as instructed by his Court, informed the British ministry that a treaty of amity and commerce had been concluded between France and the United States. This was considered tantamount to a declaration of war, and Lord Stormont was directed to withdraw from Paris. Anticipating this event, the Court of Versailles had already begun to prepare for hostilities. A squadron was fitted out at Toulon, under the command of Count d'Estaing, which sailed from

that port for America about the middle of April. M. Gérard and Mr. Deane were passengers on board the admiral's ship. The former went out as minister to the United States ; the latter had been recalled, in consequence of the agreements he had entered into with French officers for their serving in the American army, by which Congress had been much embarrassed. His successor was Mr. John Adams, who arrived in Paris just at the time of Mr. Deane's departure.

The British ministers were now convinced that the contest was likely to be of longer duration and more serious than they had apprehended. There was little doubt that Spain would soon follow the example of France. A reconciliation with the Americans, therefore, on such terms as would comport with the dignity of Parliament and the interests of the Crown was a thing most ardently to be desired. After warm debates in Parliament, it was resolved to despatch commissioners to treat with Congress, invested with such powers as, it was fondly hoped, would insure their success.

In the meantime other measures were put in operation to effect the same end through the instrumentality of secret agents. Their advances were chiefly made to Dr. Franklin. Even before the treaties were signed, an emissary of this description appeared in Paris, who endeavoured to obtain from him propositions which he might carry back to England. This was Mr. Hutton, secretary to the Society of Moravians ; an old friend, for whom he had great esteem ; a grave man, advanced in years, respected for his virtues, and possessing the confidence of persons in power. Franklin replied that neither he nor his colleagues had any authority to propose terms, although they could listen to such as should

be made, and could treat of peace whenever proposals should be made. Mr. Hutton returned to London, and immediately wrote to him, renewing his request for some hints or suggestions upon which he might proceed, and adding that he believed everything satisfactory to the Americans, short of independence, might be obtained.

Mr. Hutton was followed by Mr. William Pulteney, a member of Parliament, who assumed in Paris the name of Williams, and who was understood to have come from Lord North, although not invested with any official character. He held a long conversation with Dr. Franklin, and presented to him a paper containing the outlines of a treaty. Franklin told him at once that every plan of reconciliation implying a voluntary return of the United States to a dependence on Great Britain was now become impossible.

Having now been in France eighteen months, Dr. Franklin had attracted around him a large number of personal friends. Among these were Turgot, Buffon, D'Alembert, Condorcet, La Rochefoucauld, Vicq d'Azyr, Cabanis, Le Roy, Morellet, Raynal, Mably, and many others, who were conspicuous in the political, scientific, and literary circles of the great metropolis of France. He was often present at the meetings of the Academy, where he was honoured with every mark of consideration and respect. When Voltaire came to Paris for the last time, to be idolised and to die, he expressed a desire to see the American philosopher. An interview took place. Voltaire accosted him in English, and pursued the conversation in that language. Madame Denis interrupted him by saying that Dr. Franklin understood French, and that the rest of the company wished to know the subject of their discourse. "Excuse me, my

dear," he replied, "I have the vanity to show that I am not unacquainted with the language of a Franklin."

The business of the commissioners continued nearly the same as it had been before the treaty of alliance. There was more to be done in maritime affairs, because American vessels were then freely admitted into the French ports. Cases of capture and of the sale of prizes were referred to them for their decision. With the loans obtained from the French Government, and comparatively small remittances from America, they were enabled to refit public vessels, purchase military supplies for the army and navy of the United States, contribute to the relief of American prisoners in England, and pay the drafts of Congress. In all these transactions Dr. Franklin found an able, zealous, and active coadjutor in Mr. Adams.

Both Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams had represented to Congress the inexpediency of employing three commissioners in a service the duties of which might be discharged with equal facility and less expense by one. In conformity with this suggestion, Dr. Franklin was appointed minister plenipotentiary to the Court of France on the 14th of September. The commission was dissolved, and Mr. Adams returned to America. Mr. Lee stayed some time longer, holding nominally a commission to Spain, but never going to that Court.

The British ministry were still intent on some scheme of reconciliation. In May, 1779, Mr. William Jones, afterwards Sir William Jones, visited Paris. Dr. Franklin had been acquainted with him in England as a member of the Royal Society and an intimate friend of the Shipley family. Without openly avowing himself an authorised agent, he contrived to insinuate

ideas which may be presumed to have had their origin in a higher source. He put into Dr. Franklin's hands an ingenious paper, which he called a *Fragment of Polybius*, purporting to have been taken from a treatise by that historian on the Athenian Government. It relates to a war in which Athens was engaged with the Grecian Islands, then in alliance with Caria. A close parallel is drawn between this pretended Grecian war and the actual war between England, France, and the United States. It ends with the plan of a treaty proposed by the Athenians, which, by merely changing the names of the parties, is intended to apply to the existing situation of the belligerent powers. The performance is elaborated with skill, and as a composition it shows the hand of a master. The terms are somewhat more favourable to the Americans than any that had been before suggested, but the idea of independence is not admitted.

Dr. Franklin was ever ready to promote whatever could be useful to mankind. When Captain Cook's vessel was about to return from a voyage of discovery, he wrote a circular letter to the commanders of American cruisers, in his character of minister plenipotentiary, requesting them, in case they should meet with that vessel, not to capture it, nor suffer it to be detained or plundered of anything on board, but to "treat the captain and his people with civility and kindness, affording them, as common friends of mankind, all the assistance in their power." This act of magnanimity was properly estimated by the British Government. After Cook's *Voyage* was published, a copy of the work was sent to him by the Board of Admiralty, with a letter from Lord Howe, stating that it was forwarded with the approbation of the King. One of the gold medals,

struck by the Royal Society in honour of Captain Cook, was likewise presented to him.

Acts of a similar kind were repeated in other instances. There was a settlement of Moravian missionaries on the coast of Labrador, to which the Society in London annually despatched a vessel laden with supplies. Dr. Franklin, at the request of Mr. Hutton, granted a passport to this vessel, which was renewed every year during the war. He afforded the same protection to a vessel which sailed from Dublin with provisions and clothing for sufferers in the West Indies, contributed by charitable persons in that city.

When Paul Jones came to France, after his cruise in the *Ranger*, and his fortunate action with the *Drake*, a British sloop of war, the French ministry planned a descent upon the coast of England by a naval armament combined with land forces. The Marquis de Lafayette, who had recently returned from America, where he had won laurels by his bravery and good conduct in two campaigns, was to be at the head of the expedition. Paul Jones was to command the squadron, under the American flag, and he received his instructions from Dr. Franklin. The plan was changed, just as it was on the point of being executed, in consequence of larger designs of the French Cabinet; but Jones sailed with his little fleet some time afterwards, met the enemy, and gained a brilliant victory in the well-known and desperate engagement between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*. The task of settling the affairs of his cruise, of reconciling the difficulties between him and Captain Landais, who was the second in command, and of deciding on the conflicting claims for prize-money, devolved on Franklin.

CHAPTER XI

A French Army sent to the United States—Lafayette—Northern Powers of Europe combine in Defence of Neutrals—Franklin's Opinion of Privateering—French Loans to the United States—Franklin's Letter to the President on his own Proposal to retire—Congress declines his Resignation—Negotiations for Peace—Debates in Parliament—Changes of Ministry—Treaty of Peace signed—Offence given to France—Franklin's Financial Contract with Count de Vergennes—He negotiates a Treaty with Sweden—Treaties signed at Versailles—Franklin's Views on the Event—Further Negotiations in Europe—Jefferson succeeds Franklin as Minister to France—Franklin's return Home.

IT had been a question much agitated both in France and America, since the treaty of alliance, whether it was advisable to send French troops to co-operate with the armies of the United States. The prudence of such an experiment was thought extremely doubtful. While fighting the battles of the mother country in former wars, the Americans had often been brought into conflict with the French on the frontiers. It was feared that prejudices had been contracted and habits formed which would prevent the troops of the two nations from acting together in harmony, even if the people themselves could be reconciled to the presence of a French army. All aids from France, it was said, would be the most effectually rendered in money and by a naval force. Such was likewise the view taken by the French Cabinet, and they acted upon this plan for two years. But many persons in the United States thought differently. They saw no reason, in the common principles of human nature, why a people should sacrifice their interests, and put their freedom in jeopardy, by giving themselves up to an inherited prejudice.

A conviction of the justness of this sentiment was deeply wrought into the mind of Lafayette. He had been a year and a half in the country, and, from the manner in which he and other French officers were treated by all classes of people, he was satisfied that there would be no hazard in bringing an army of Frenchmen to co-operate with American soldiers. He conversed frequently with General Washington on the subject, and, although the opinion of the latter is nowhere explicitly recorded, it is certain that Lafayette returned to France fully convinced that such a measure would meet his approbation. He applied to the ministers accordingly, who hesitated for some time, influenced by the same motives of prudence which had hitherto guided their counsels. But Lafayette persevered, and his zeal and the force of his arguments at last prevailed. In the early part of the year 1780 preparations were made for sending an army under Count de Rochambeau to America, with a fleet commanded by the Chevalier de Ternay.

In all these transactions he was assisted by the advice and cordial support of Dr. Franklin. They also procured large supplies of arms, equipments, and clothing for the American army. As the bearer of the good news, Lafayette sailed for the United States, authorised to concert measures with Washington and Congress for the reception and future employment of the French troops.

The northern powers of Europe, at the instance of Russia, had recently come into an arrangement respecting neutrals which Dr. Franklin so highly approved that he issued orders to the American cruisers in conformity with it, even before he ascertained the views of Congress.

By the practice of nations in time of war, it had been a rule to seize the property of an enemy wherever found at sea ; and neutral vessels having such property on board were captured under this rule, the cargo being confiscated as a prize to the captors, and the vessel being restored to the owners. This rule was reversed by the combined powers, and the law was established that goods belonging to an enemy on board a neutral vessel, except such as were contraband, should not be subject to capture, or, in other words, that *free ships should make free goods*. A law so clearly founded in justice and humanity could not but receive his hearty concurrence. In his opinion, the application of the law ought to be extended still further, so as to mitigate the evils of war as much as possible by leaving individuals to pursue their occupations unmolested.

“ I approve much of the principles of the confederacy of the neutral powers,” said he, “ and am not only for respecting the ships as the house of a friend, though containing the goods of an enemy, but I even wish, for the sake of humanity, that the law of nations may be further improved, by determining that, even in time of war, all those kinds of people who are employed in procuring subsistence for the species, or in exchanging the necessaries or conveniences of life, which are for the common benefit of mankind, such as husbandmen on their lands, fishermen in their barques, and traders in unarmed vessels, shall be permitted to prosecute their several innocent and useful employments without interruption or molestation, and nothing taken from them, even when wanted by an enemy, but on paying a fair price for the same.”

Privateering he called “ robbing ” and “ a remnant of

the ancient piracy." In an able paper on this practice, he shows its inhumanity, and condemns it as violating the code of morality, which ought to be sacredly observed by every civilised nation. "It behoves merchants to consider well of the justice of a war," he remarks, "before they voluntarily engage a gang of ruffians to attack their fellow-merchants of a neighbouring nation, to plunder them of their property, and perhaps ruin them and their families, if they yield it; or to wound, maim, or murder them, if they endeavour to defend it. Yet these things are done by Christian merchants, whether a war be just or unjust; and it can hardly be just on both sides. They are done by English and American merchants, who, nevertheless, complain of private theft, and hang by dozens the thieves they have taught by their own example." He proposed that, in treaties between nations, an article should be introduced, by which the contracting parties should bind themselves not to grant commissions to private armed vessels; and he was instrumental in forming such a treaty between Prussia and the United States. In fact, he was an enemy to war in all its forms and disguises. It was a maxim with him, that *there never was a good war, or a bad peace.*

The loans from the French Government had amounted to about three millions of livres annually. For the year 1781 Dr. Franklin obtained a loan of four millions, besides a subsidy of six millions, which the minister told him was intended as a free gift to the United States. After these sums were granted, Colonel John Laurens arrived in France, commissioned by Congress to represent the extreme wants of the army, and to solicit further aids both in money and military supplies.

Dr. Franklin joined heartily with Colonel Laurens in urging this application, and it met with some success. More direct aids could not be furnished ; but, to facilitate a loan on American account in Holland, the King of France agreed to guarantee the payment of the interest of such a loan not exceeding ten millions of livres.

At this time Dr. Franklin proposed to retire from the public service, and requested that some other person might be appointed to supply his place. His reasons are given in the following extract from a letter to the President of Congress :

“ I must now beg leave to say something relating to myself ; a subject with which I have not often troubled the Congress. I have passed my seventy-fifth year, and I find that the long and severe fit of the gout which I had the last winter has shaken me exceedingly, and I am yet far from having recovered the bodily strength I before enjoyed. I do not know that my mental faculties are impaired: perhaps I shall be the last to discover that ; but I am sensible of great diminution in my activity, a quality I think particularly necessary in your minister for this Court. I am afraid, therefore, that your affairs may some time or other suffer by my deficiency. I find, also, that the business is too heavy for me and too confining. The constant attendance at home, which is necessary for receiving and accepting your bills of exchange (a matter foreign to my ministerial functions), to answer letters, and perform other parts of my employment, prevents my taking the air and exercise which my annual journeys formerly used to afford me, and which contributed much to the preservation of my health. There are many other little personal attentions

which the infirmities of age render necessary to an old man's comfort, even in some degree to the continuance of his existence, and with which business often interferes.

“I have been engaged in public affairs, and enjoyed public confidence, in some shape or other, during the long term of fifty years, and honour sufficient to satisfy any reasonable ambition ; and I have no other left but that of repose, which I hope the Congress will grant me, by sending some person to supply my place. At the same time, I beg they may be assured that it is not any the least doubt of their success in the glorious cause, nor any disgust received in their service, that induces me to decline it, but purely and simply the reasons above mentioned. And, as I cannot at present undergo the fatigues of a sea voyage (the last having been almost too much for me), and would not again expose myself to the hazard of capture and imprisonment in this time of war, I purpose to remain here at least till the peace—perhaps it may be for the remainder of my life ; and if any knowledge or experience I have acquired here may be thought of use to my successor, I shall freely communicate it, and assist him with any influence I may be supposed to have, or counsel that may be desired of me.”

Congress declined accepting his resignation, and, nearly at the same time, enlarging their commission for negotiating a treaty of peace, by joining with Mr. Adams four other commissioners, they appointed Dr. Franklin to be one of the number. This new mark of confidence, especially after he had asked, as a favour, to be relieved from his public charge, was a sufficient rebuke to his enemies, and left them little cause to be satisfied with the success of their schemes. He

acquiesced in the decision of Congress. "It was my desire," said he, "to quit public business, fearing it might suffer in my hands through the infirmities incident to my time of life; but, as they are pleased to think I may still be useful, I submit to their judgment, and shall do my best."

Early in the year 1782 the subject of peace began to occupy the attention of the British Parliament. The capture of Lord Cornwallis's army at Yorktown, the inability of the ministers to supply the place of these troops for another campaign, the fact that Holland had recently joined the belligerents against England, the enormous expenses of the war—all these things had contributed to open the eyes of the people, and to raise a general clamour for peace. The tone of the King's speech to Parliament, which convened soon after the intelligence of Cornwallis's defeat reached England, was somewhat more subdued than it had been before; yet such was the force of habit in wording the royal speeches, that even now, when the Americans had nobly sustained themselves as an independent nation for more than five years, captured two British armies, and taken away the last hope from their enemies of conquering them, the King could not refrain from talking of his *rebellious and deluded subjects*, although he did not, as on former occasions, boast of his prowess and of the ample means of subjugation which he had at command.

It was soon discovered in Parliament that the public sentiment had communicated itself to that body, and that the overwhelming majority which had sustained the ministers through the war was greatly reduced, if not annihilated. The matter was brought to a trial by a motion of General Conway, that an address should be

presented to his Majesty praying that the war in America might cease, and that measures should be taken for restoring tranquillity and a reconciliation. The motion gave rise to a debate, which was animated on both sides, and it was finally lost by a majority of one only in favour of the ministers and for continuing the war.

This vote was the signal for a dissolution of the ministry. Lord North resigned, and there was a total change of ministry and measures. The new administration was formed in March. The Marquis of Rockingham was Prime Minister ; the Earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox, the two principal Secretaries of State. This ministry came into power, as Mr. Fox more than once declared in Parliament, with the express understanding that the fundamental principle of their measures was to be "the granting of unequivocal and unconditional independence to America." For some time they seemed to act on this principle. The two secretaries corresponded directly with Dr. Franklin on the subject of peace, and they sent Mr. Richard Oswald over to Paris early in April, with authority to consult him on the mode of beginning and pursuing a negotiation. Mr. Thomas Grenville was likewise sent to confer with Count de Vergennes in reference to the preliminaries for a general peace between all the powers at war. Nothing more could be done till Parliament should pass an Act enabling the King to enter into a formal negotiation.

News soon arrived of the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the dissolution of the British Cabinet, and the formation of a new one. This happened in July, the Rockingham administration having existed only two months and a half. The Earl of Shelburne was raised to the station of Prime Minister ; Mr. Fox retired, and the

principal Secretaries of State were Earl Grantham and Mr. Townshend.

Dr. Franklin's suggestions comprised two classes of articles, the first of which he represented as *necessary*, and the second as *advisable* for England to offer, if she desired a complete reconciliation and a lasting peace.

The articles *necessary* to be granted were: First, independence, full and complete in every sense, to the Thirteen States; and all troops to be withdrawn from there. Secondly, a settlement of the boundaries of *their* colonies and the loyal colonies. Thirdly, a confinement of the boundaries of Canada—at least, to what they were before the last Act of Parliament, in 1774, if not to a still more contracted state, on an ancient footing. Fourthly, a freedom of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland and elsewhere, as well for fish as whales.

The whole business was at length concluded, and the original demands of the American commissioners, in every essential point, were allowed and confirmed. The treaty was signed at Paris by both parties in due form, on the 30th November, 1782. It was approved and ratified by Congress, and received with joy by the people; and the commissioners had the satisfaction, which has rarely fallen to the lot of negotiators, of finding their work applauded by the unanimous voice of a whole nation.

The most remarkable circumstance attending the treaty of peace remains to be noticed. The American envoys not only negotiated it without consulting the Court of France, but signed it without their knowledge, notwithstanding they were pointedly instructed by Congress "to make the most candid and confidential communications upon all subjects to the ministers of our generous ally, the King of France, and to undertake nothing in

the negotiations for peace or truce without their knowledge and concurrence ;” and notwithstanding the pledge in the treaty of alliance, “that neither of the two parties should conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtained.” It is true that the treaty was only provisional, and was not to be ratified until France had likewise concluded a treaty ; but this reservation did not alter the nature of the act. When the American treaty was signed, it was not known to the commissioners what progress had been made by the French in their negotiation, or whether it was likely to be completed or the war to continue. There was also a separate article, which was not intended to be communicated to the French at all, concerning the southern boundary of the United States, in case West Florida should be given up to the British in their treaty with Spain.

It was not strange that Count de Vergennes should complain of this procedure, and express himself with some degree of indignation when it was told to him, without any previous notice of such an intent, that the treaty had been signed. The commissioners, as a body, offered no explanation. This task was laid upon Dr. Franklin, who executed it as well as he could, and with such success as to soften the displeasure of the French Court.

Whilst the treaty was in the course of negotiation, Count de Vergennes and Dr. Franklin entered into a contract, on the 16th of July, fixing the time and manner of paying the loans which the United States had received from France. The amount of these loans was then eighteen millions of livres, exclusive of three millions granted before the treaty of alliance and the

subsidy of six millions heretofore mentioned. These nine millions were considered in the nature of a free gift, and were not brought into the account. By the terms upon which the eighteen millions had been lent, the whole sum was to be paid on the 1st of January, 1788, with interest at 5 per cent. As it would be inconvenient, if not impracticable, for the United States to refund the whole at that time, the King of France agreed that it might be done by twelve annual payments of a million and a half of livres each, and that these payments should not commence till three years after the peace. All the interest which had accrued, or which should accrue previously to the date of the treaty of peace, amounting to about two millions of livres, was relinquished, and it was never to be demanded. This arrangement was generous on the part of the King, and highly advantageous to the United States. The contract was ratified by Congress.

Some months before the treaty of peace was signed, Count de Creutz, the Swedish ambassador in Paris, called on Dr. Franklin, and said that his sovereign desired to conclude a treaty with Congress, whenever a minister should present himself for that purpose invested with the usual powers. Sweden was thus the first European government which voluntarily proffered its friendship to the United States, and the first after that of France which proposed to treat before their independence was acknowledged by Great Britain. Dr. Franklin gave notice of this proposal to Congress, and he was furnished with a special commission to negotiate the treaty. It was finished within a few months, and signed by him and Count de Creutz at Paris.

It was expected that the treaties between England,

France, and Spain, and the one between England and the United States, would be signed at the same time and place. A day was appointed for performing the ceremony at Versailles. But Mr. Hartley declined signing at that place, and said his instructions confined him to Paris. The British Government did not choose to allow even so slight an acknowledgment of the interference of the Court of Versailles in their treaty with the Americans as that of signing it in the presence of the French minister. Count de Vergennes offered no objection to this mode of proceeding, but he was resolved not to put his hand to the treaty of peace till he was assured that the Americans had finished their work to their own satisfaction. At his request, therefore, the American envoys signed early in the morning with Mr. Hartley, and Dr. Franklin sent an express to Versailles communicating the intelligence to Count de Vergennes, who then signed the definitive treaty with the British ambassador.

A short time afterwards a commission arrived from Congress empowering Adams, Franklin, and Jay to conclude a commercial treaty with Great Britain. Communications passed between them and the British ambassador in Paris on the subject. But nothing was effected under this commission, and it became more and more evident that the British Cabinet had no serious design of forming such a treaty.

The definitive treaty was finally ratified by the two Governments, and the drama of the Revolution was closed. The sentiments expressed by Dr. Franklin on this occasion, in a letter to his friend Charles Thomson, are worthy to be held in perpetual remembrance by his countrymen.

“Thus the great and hazardous enterprise we have been engaged in is, God be praised, happily completed ; an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of peace, well improved, will restore and increase our strength ; but our future safety will depend on our union and our virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world that we are a nation to be depended on for fidelity in treaties ; if we appear negligent in paying our debts and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us, our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success. Let us, therefore, beware of being lulled into a dangerous security, and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury ; of being weakened by internal contentions and divisions ; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honourably those of the public ; of neglect in military exercises and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munitions of war, to be ready on occasion ; for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies and diffidence to friends ; and the expenses required to prevent a war are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.”

Mr. Jay having returned to the United States, his place was supplied by Mr. Jefferson, who was joined with Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin in a new commission for negotiating treaties of amity and commerce with the principal European powers. Mr. Jefferson arrived at Paris early in August. They jointly wrote a circular letter to the foreign ambassadors at the Court of

Versailles, proposing to treat with their respective Governments, according to the terms prescribed by Congress. Prussia, Denmark, Portugal, and Tuscany accepted the proposal, and negotiations were begun with the minister of each; but no treaty was finally completed except with Prussia. The answers from all the ambassadors, however, manifested a friendly disposition on the part of their sovereigns, who offered to the vessels of the United States the same freedom of access to their ports that was allowed to those of other nations.

For several months Dr. Franklin's time was chiefly taken up with these transactions in conjunction with his colleagues. Since the peace, his duties as minister plenipotentiary had become less burdensome. His correspondence was at all times a heavy task. During the war the relatives of the foreign officers who served in America wrote to him continually for information about their friends. Memoirs and projects innumerable were communicated to him on scientific subjects and particularly on politics, government, and finance. People all over Europe, proposing to emigrate to America, applied to him for an account of the country and of the advantages it held out to new settlers, each asking advice suited to his particular case. To diminish the trouble of answering these inquiries, and to diffuse such a knowledge of his country as might be useful to persons who intended to settle there, he wrote a pamphlet entitled *Information to those who would remove to America*, which he caused to be printed and distributed. It was translated into German by Rodolph Valltravers. In some instances he was much annoyed by correspondents who had no claims upon him, and

who wrote to him upon all sorts of subjects. It was published in a newspaper that Dr. Franklin knew a sovereign remedy for the dropsy. This was repeated far and near, and letters came from every quarter, beseeching him to impart so invaluable a secret.

His desire to return home, and to spend the remainder of his days in the bosom of his family, increased upon him so much that he repeatedly and earnestly solicited his recall. Deeming his services of great importance to his country, Congress delayed to comply with his request, and he submitted patiently to their decision. When he first asked permission to retire, he meditated a tour into Italy and Germany. Through his friend Dr. Ingenhousz, physician to their Imperial Majesties, he received flattering compliments from the Emperor and an invitation to visit Vienna. But he now found himself unable, from the infirmities of age and his peculiar maladies, to undergo the fatigues of so long a journey; and his only hope was that he might have strength to bear a voyage across the Atlantic.

At length his request was granted, and Mr. Jefferson was appointed to succeed him as minister plenipotentiary in France. His last official act was the signing of the treaty between Prussia and the United States. He was the more pleased with this act, as the treaty contained his philanthropic article against privateering, and in favour of the freedom of trade and of the protection of private property in time of war. The King of Prussia made no objection to this article. On the contrary, his ambassador, the Baron de Thulemeier, who signed the treaty, felicitated the commissioners on its being introduced. "The twenty-third article is dictated," said he, "by the purest zeal in favour of humanity. Nothing

can be more just than your reflections on the noble disinterestedness of the United States of America. It is to be desired that these sublime sentiments may be adopted by all the maritime powers without exception. The calamities of war will be much softened; and hostilities, often provoked by cupidity and the inordinate love of gain, will be of more rare occurrence." Free ships were likewise to make free goods, and contraband merchandise was exempted from confiscation. He fondly hoped that these benevolent principles would be wrought into the law of nations; but the example has not been followed.

Before the treaty was completed he began to prepare for returning to America. He had resided eight years and a half in France. During that period he had been constantly engaged in public affairs of the greatest importance. As the champion of liberty he was known everywhere, and as a philosopher and sage he was revered throughout Europe. No man had received in larger measure the homage of the wise and great, or more affectionate kindness from numerous personal friends. His departure was anticipated with regret by them all. One after another they took their leave of him. The principal personages of the Court testified their respect and their good wishes. "I have learned with much concern," said Count de Vergennes, "of your retiring and of your approaching departure for America. You cannot doubt but that the regrets which you will leave will be proportionate to the consideration you so justly enjoy. I can assure you, Sir, that the esteem the King entertains for you does not leave you anything to wish, and that his Majesty will learn with real satisfaction that your fellow-citizens have rewarded, in a manner

worthy of you, the important services that you have rendered them. I beg, Sir, that you will preserve for me a share in your remembrance, and never doubt the sincerity of the interest I take in your happiness." The Marquis de Castries, Minister of Marine, wrote to him : "I was not apprised, until within a few hours, of the arrangements you have made for your departure. Had I been informed of it sooner, I should have proposed to the King to order a frigate to convey you to your own country, in such a manner as would mark the consideration which you have acquired by your distinguished services in France, and the particular esteem which his Majesty entertains for you."

His bodily infirmities were such that he could not bear the motion of a carriage. He left Passy on the 12th of July, in the Queen's litter, which had been kindly offered to him for his journey to Havre de Grace. This vehicle was borne by Spanish mules, and he was able to travel in it without pain or fatigue. He slept the first night at St. Germain. Some of his friends accompanied him. On the journey he passed one night at the château of the Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, and another in the house of M. Holker at Rouen; and he received civilities and complimentary visits from many of the inhabitants at different places. The sixth day after leaving Passy he arrived at Havre de Grace.

From that port he passed over in a packet-boat to Southampton. Here he was met by Bishop Shipley and his family, Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, Mr. Alexander, and other friends whom he had known in England. He also found here his son William, whom he had not seen for more than nine years. In the Revolution he had taken the side of the loyalists, and thus estranged

himself from his father. He was now residing in England, where he spent the remainder of his life. Dr. Franklin continued at Southampton four days, till the 27th of July, when he embarked on board the *London Packet*, a Philadelphia vessel, commanded by Captain Truxtun. After a voyage of forty-eight days, without any remarkable incident, he landed at Philadelphia, on the 14th of September. M. Houdon, the artist, whom he and Mr. Jefferson had employed to make a statue of Washington for the State of Virginia, was a passenger on board the same vessel.

He supported the inconveniences of the voyage better than he had expected, and without any apparent injury to his health. When he landed at Market-Street wharf, he was greeted by a large concourse of the inhabitants, who attended him with acclamations to his own door. The joy of the people was likewise testified by the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon.

CHAPTER XII

Franklin's Reception in America—Chosen President of Pennsylvania—His Private Circumstances—His Work in framing Constitution of United States—Religious Opinions—Interesting Interview of Dr. Cutler with Franklin—His Letter to Washington—Attacked by Illness—Death and Funeral—Public Tributes of Respect—Personal Appearance and Character.

As soon as his arrival was known, letters of congratulation were sent to him from all parts of the country. General Washington and Mr. Jay were among the first to welcome him on this occasion. The Assembly of Pennsylvania was then in session, and the day after he landed an address was presented to him by that

body, in which they congratulate him, in the most cordial manner, on his safe return. "We are confident," they observe, "that we speak the sentiments of this whole country, when we say that your services, in the public councils and negotiations, have not only merited the thanks of the present generation, but will be recorded in the pages of history, to your immortal honour. And it is particularly pleasing to us that, while we are sitting as members of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, we have the happiness of welcoming into the State a person who was so greatly instrumental in forming its free constitution." This was followed by similar addresses from the American Philosophical Society and the Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. To all of them he returned brief and appropriate answers.

From some of his letters it would appear that when he left France he looked upon his public life as at an end, and anticipated the enjoyment of entire tranquillity and freedom from care, after he should be again restored to the bosom of his family. In this expectation, however, he was disappointed. He had been at home but a few days when he was elected a member of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania. This was a preliminary step to a higher advancement; for, when the Assembly met, in October, he was chosen President of the State, the office being equivalent to that of Governor in the other States. The choice was made by the joint ballot of the Assembly and Council. Under the first constitution of Pennsylvania, no individual could serve in the Council or hold the office of President more than three successive years, and he was then ineligible for the four years following. Dr. Franklin was

annually chosen President till the end of the constitutional term, and each time by a unanimous vote, except the first, when there was one dissenting voice in seventy-seven. This unanimity is a proof that, notwithstanding his great age and his bodily infirmities, he fulfilled the duties of the station to the complete satisfaction of the electors.

He was apparently at ease in his private circumstances and happy in his domestic relations. He occupied himself for some time in finishing a house, which had been begun many years before, and in which he fitted up a spacious apartment for his library. In writing to a friend, he said: "I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grandchildren, the eldest of whom you have seen, who is now at college in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising, both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be when they grow up and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence." Again, to another correspondent he wrote: "I am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it twenty-four years by foreign employments. It is a very good house, that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grandchildren about my knees, and an affectionate, good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And, after fifty years' public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished." Much of his time was devoted to the society of those around him and of the numerous visitors whom curiosity

and respect prompted to seek his acquaintance. His attachments to the many intimate friends he had left in Europe were likewise preserved by a regular and affectionate correspondence, in which are manifested the same steadiness of feeling and enlarged benevolence, the same playfulness and charm of style, that are conspicuous in the compositions of his earlier years.

He was elected one of the delegates from Pennsylvania to the convention for forming the Constitution of the United States, which met at Philadelphia in May, 1787, and continued in session four months. Although he was now in the eighty-second year of his age, and at the same time discharged the duties of President of the State, yet he attended faithfully to the business of the convention, and entered actively and heartily into the proceedings. Several of his speeches were written out and afterwards published. They are short but well adapted to the occasion, clear, logical, and persuasive. He never pretended to the accomplishments of an orator or debater. He seldom spoke in a deliberative assembly except for some special object, and then briefly and with great simplicity of manner and language.

After the members of the convention had been together four or five weeks, and made very little progress in the important work they had in hand, on account of their unfortunate differences of opinion and disagreements on essential points, Dr. Franklin introduced a motion for daily prayers. "In the beginning of the contest with Britain," said he, "when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard; and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of

a superintending Providence in our favour. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, *that GOD governs in the affairs of men*. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that, 'except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests, our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages. And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, and conquest. I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business; and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service." The motion was not adopted, as "the convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary."

These remarks afford some insight into Dr. Franklin's religious sentiments. A good deal has been said on this subject, and sometimes without a due degree either of knowledge or charity. When Dr. Stiles, President of

Yale College, questioned him about his religious faith, he replied as follows, only five weeks before his death: "I believe in one God, the Creator of the universe; that He governs it by His Providence; that He ought to be worshipped; that the most acceptable service we can render to Him is doing good to His other children; that the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points of all sound religion, and I regard them as you do, in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think His system of morals and His religion, as He left them to us, the best the world ever saw, or is like to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to His divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatise upon, having never studied it." This is the most explicit declaration of his faith which is to be found anywhere in his writings; and although it is not very precise, yet is far from that cold and heartless infidelity which some writers have ascribed to him, and for which charge there is certainly no just foundation.

Whatever may have been the tenor of his opinions on points of faith and doctrine, there are many evidences of his reverence for religion and for the institutions of Christianity. In early life he composed a little book of prayers, which he was in the habit of using in his devotions. At all times he was ready to contribute liberally towards the erection of churches; and, during Whitefield's several visits to Philadelphia, he not only attended his preaching, but was his intimate companion and friend, having him sometimes as a lodger at his

own house. Such was not the society that an irreligious man would be likely to seek. In a letter of advice to his daughter, it was his solemn injunction that she should habitually attend public worship. He wrote a Preface to an abridged edition of the Book of Common Prayer, in which he speaks impressively of the obligation and benefits of worship and other religious observances. When a sceptical writer, who is supposed to have been Thomas Paine, showed him in manuscript a work written against religion, he urged him earnestly not to publish it, but to burn it, objecting to his arguments as fallacious, and to his principles as poisoned with the seeds of vice, without tending to any imaginable good. It should, moreover, be observed that no parts of Dr. Franklin's writings are hostile to religion; but, on the contrary, it is the direct object of some of them to inculcate virtue and piety, which he regarded not more as duties of great moment in the present life than as an essential preparation for the well-being of every individual in a future state of existence.

It is deeply to be regretted that he did not bestow more attention than he seems to have done on the evidences of Christianity, because there can be little doubt that a mind like his, quick to discover truth and always ready to receive it, would have been convinced by a full investigation of the facts and arguments adduced in proof of the Christian revelation, and especially because the example of such a man is likely to have great influence with others. Yet, when one expresses this regret or censures this indifference, it behoves him to exercise more justice and candour than have sometimes been used in representing what he actually believed and taught.

The following description presents an interesting picture of Dr. Franklin's appearance and manner at this period of his life. It is an extract from a journal written by the Reverend Dr. Manasseh Cutler, of Hamilton, Massachusetts, who was distinguished as a scholar and particularly as a botanist. While on a visit to Philadelphia, he called to pay his respects to Dr. Franklin. The extract is dated July 13th, 1787.

"Dr. Franklin lives in Market Street. His house stands up a court, at some distance from the street. We found him in his garden, sitting upon a grassplot, under a very large mulberry tree, with several other gentlemen and two or three ladies. When Mr. Gerry introduced me, he rose from his chair, took me by the hand, expressed his joy at seeing me, welcomed me to the city, and begged me to seat myself close to him. His voice was low, but his countenance open, frank, and pleasing. I delivered to him my letters. After he had read them, he took me again by the hand, and, with the usual compliments, introduced me to the other gentlemen, who are most of them members of the convention.

"Here we entered into a free conversation, and spent our time most agreeably, until it was quite dark. The tea table was spread under the tree, and Mrs. Bache, who is the only daughter of the Doctor, and lives with him, served it out to the company. She had three of her children about her. They seemed to be excessively fond of their grandpapa. The Doctor showed me a curiosity he had just received, and with which he was much pleased. It was a snake with two heads, preserved in a large phial. It was taken near the confluence of the Schuylkill with the Delaware, about four miles from this city. It was about ten inches long, well proportioned, the

heads perfect, and united to the body about one-fourth of an inch below the extremities of the jaws. The snake was of a dark brown, approaching to black, and the back beautifully speckled with white. The belly was rather checkered with a reddish colour and white. The Doctor supposed it to be full-grown, which I think is probable ; and he thinks it must be a *sui generis* of that class of animals. He grounds his opinion of its not being an extraordinary production, but a distinct genus, on the perfect form of the snake, the probability of its being of some age, and there having been found a snake entirely similar (of which the Doctor has a drawing, which he showed us) near Lake Champlain, in the time of the late war. He mentioned the situation of this snake, if it was travelling among bushes, and one head should choose to go on one side of the stem of a bush, and the other head should prefer the other side, and neither of the heads would consent to come back, or give way to the other. He was then going to mention a humorous matter that had that day occurred in the convention, in consequence of his comparing the snake to America ; for he seemed to forget that everything in the convention was to be kept a profound secret. But the secrecy of convention matters was suggested to him, which stopped him, and deprived me of the story he was going to tell.

“After it was dark we went into the house, and he invited me into his library, which is likewise his study. It is a very large chamber, and high-studded. The walls are covered with book-shelves, filled with books ; besides, there are four large alcoves, extending two-thirds the length of the chamber, filled in the same manner. I presume this is the largest and by far the best private

library in America. He showed us a glass machine for exhibiting the circulation of the blood in the arteries and veins of the human body. The circulation is exhibited by the passing of a red fluid from a reservoir into numerous capillary tubes of glass, ramified in every direction, and then returning in similar tubes to the reservoir, which was done with great velocity, without any power to act visibly upon the fluid, and had the appearance of perpetual motion. Another great curiosity was a rolling press for taking the copies of letters or any other writing. A sheet of paper is completely copied in less than two minutes—the copy as fair as the original, and without defacing it in the smallest degree. It is an invention of his own, extremely useful in many situations of life. He also showed us his long, artificial *arm and hand*, for taking down and putting up books on high shelves which are out of reach ; and his great armchair, with rockers, and a large fan placed over it, with which he fans himself, keeps off the flies, etc., while he sits reading, with only a small motion of the foot ; and many other curiosities and inventions, all his own, but of lesser note. Over his mantel he has a prodigious number of medals, busts, and casts in wax, or plaster of Paris, which are the effigies of the most noted characters in Europe.

“ But what the Doctor wished principally to show me was a huge volume on botany, which indeed afforded me the greatest pleasure of any one thing in his library. It was a single volume, but so large, that it was with great difficulty that he was able to raise it from a low shelf and lift it on the table. But, with that senile ambition which is common to old people, he insisted on doing it himself, and would permit no person to

assist him, merely to show us how much strength he had remaining. It contained the whole of Linnæus's *Systema Vegetabilium*, with large cuts of every plant, coloured from nature. It was a feast to me, and the Doctor seemed to enjoy it as well as myself. We spent a couple of hours in examining this volume, while the other gentlemen amused themselves with other matters. The Doctor is not a botanist, but lamented he did not in early life attend to this science. He delights in Natural History, and expressed an earnest wish that I should pursue the plan that I had begun, and hoped this science, so much neglected in America, would be pursued with as much ardour here as it is now in every part of Europe. I wanted, for three months at least, to have devoted myself entirely to this one volume; but, fearing lest I should be tedious to him, I shut up the volume, though he urged me to examine it longer.

“ He seemed extremely fond, through the course of the visit, of dwelling on philosophical subjects, and particularly that of Natural History; while the other gentlemen were swallowed up with politics. This was a favourable circumstance for me; for almost the whole of his conversation was addressed to me, and I was highly delighted with the extensive knowledge he appeared to have of every subject, the brightness of his memory, and clearness and vivacity of all his mental faculties, notwithstanding his age. His manners are perfectly easy, and everything about him seems to diffuse an unrestrained freedom and happiness. He has an incessant vein of humour, accompanied with an uncommon vivacity, which seems as natural and involuntary as his breathing. He urged me to call

on him again, but my short stay would not admit. We took our leave at ten, and I retired to my lodgings."

Dr. Franklin's third and last year's service as President of Pennsylvania expired in October, 1788. After that time he held no public office, although he was often consulted on public measures.

He drew up a *Plan for improving the Condition of the Free Blacks*. His last public act was to sign, as President, a memorial from the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania to Congress; and the last paper which he wrote was on the same subject. Mr. Jackson, a member of Congress from Georgia, had made a speech in favour of negro slavery. An ingenious parody of this speech was composed by Dr. Franklin, in which Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim is represented as speaking, in the Divan of Algiers, against granting the petition of a sect called *Erika*, who prayed for the abolition of piracy and slavery, as being unjust. In this pretended speech of Ibrahim, the same principles were advanced, and the same arguments were used in defence of plundering and enslaving Europeans, that had been urged by Mr. Jackson in justification of negro slavery. It is dated only twenty-four days before the author's decease; and as a specimen of happy conception and sound reasoning it is not inferior to any of his writings.

The state of his health and of his feelings may be inferred from a letter to President Washington, written on the 16th of September, 1789, in which he speaks as follows:

"My malady renders my sitting up to write rather painful to me; but I cannot let; my son-in-law, Mr. Bache, part for New York without congratulating you by him on the recovery of your health, so precious to us

all, and on the growing strength of our new Government under your administration. For my own personal ease, I should have died two years ago ; but, though those years have been spent in excruciating pain, I am pleased that I have lived them, since they have brought me to see our present situation. I am now finishing my eighty-fourth year, and probably with it my career in this life ; but, in whatever state of existence I am placed hereafter, if I retain any memory of what has passed here, I shall with it retain the esteem, respect, and affection with which I have long been, my dear friend, yours most sincerely."

Washington's reply was cordial and affectionate. Between these two distinguished patriots, who served their country in different spheres, but with equal fidelity and devotedness, there was ever a sincere friendship and an entire confidence. When General Washington came to Philadelphia as a member of the national convention for forming the Constitution, the first person he called upon was Dr. Franklin ; and when he passed through that city on his way to New York, where he was to be invested with the office of President of the United States, he paid him the same tribute of respect.

Although his malady and his sufferings continued, yet no material change in his health was observed till the first part of April, 1790, when he was attacked with a fever and a pain in the breast. From that time he was constantly under the care of Dr. John Jones, an eminent physician of Philadelphia, who wrote the following account of his illness and death :

"The stone, with which he had been afflicted for several years, had, for the last twelve months of his life, confined him chiefly to his bed ; and during the

extremely painful paroxysms he was obliged to take large doses of laudanum to mitigate his tortures. Still, in the intervals of pain, he not only amused himself by reading and conversing cheerfully with his family and a few friends who visited him, but was often employed in doing business of a public as well as of a private nature with various persons who waited upon him for that purpose ; and in every instance displayed not only the readiness and disposition to do good which were the distinguishing characteristics of his life, but the fullest and clearest possession of his uncommon abilities. He also not unfrequently indulged in those *jeux d'esprit* and entertaining anecdotes which were the delight of all who heard them.

“About sixteen days before his death he was seized with a feverish disposition, without any particular symptoms attending it till the third or fourth day, when he complained of a pain in his left breast, which increased till it became extremely acute, attended by a cough and laborious breathing. During this state, when the severity of his pains drew forth a groan of complaint, he would observe that he was afraid he did not bear them as he ought ; acknowledging his grateful sense of the many blessings he had received from the Supreme Being, who had raised him, from small and low beginnings, to such high rank and consideration among men ; and made no doubt but that his present afflictions were kindly intended to wean him from a world in which he was no longer fit to act the part assigned him. In this frame of body and mind he continued until five days before his death, when the pain and difficulty of breathing entirely left him, and his family were flattering themselves with the hopes of his recovery ;

but an imposthume which had formed in his lungs suddenly burst, and discharged a quantity of matter, which he continued to throw up while he had power ; but, as that failed, the organs of respiration became gradually oppressed ; a calm, lethargic state succeeded ; and on the 17th instant (April, 1790), about eleven o'clock at night, he quietly expired, closing a long and useful life of eighty-four years and three months."

In a letter from Dr. Rush to Dr. Price, dated at Philadelphia a week after this event, the writer says : "The papers will inform you of the death of our late illustrious friend Dr. Franklin. The evening of his life was marked by the same activity of his moral and intellectual powers which distinguished its meridian. His conversation with his family upon the subject of his dissolution was free and cheerful. A few days before he died, he rose from his bed, and begged that it might be made up for him, so that he *might die in a decent manner*. His daughter told him that she hoped he would recover, and live many years longer. He calmly replied, '*I hope not.*' Upon being advised to change his position in bed, that he might breathe *easy*, he said, '*A dying man can do nothing easy.*' All orders and bodies of people among us have vied with each other in paying tributes of respect to his memory."

The following extracts are from a letter written by Mrs. Mary Hewson to Mr. Viny, one of Dr. Franklin's early friends in England :

"We have lost that valued, that venerable, kind friend whose knowledge enlightened our minds, and whose philanthropy warmed our hearts. But we have the consolation to think that, if a life well spent in acts of universal benevolence to mankind, a grateful

acknowledgment of Divine favour, a patient submission under severe chastisement, and an humble trust in Almighty mercy, can insure the happiness of a future state, our present loss is his gain. I was the faithful witness of the closing scene, which he sustained with that calm fortitude which characterised him through life. No repining, no peevish expression, ever escaped him during a confinement of two years, in which, I believe, if every moment of ease could be added together, the sum would not amount to two whole months. When the pain was not too violent to be amused, he employed himself with his books, his pen, or in conversation with his friends; and upon every occasion displayed the clearness of his intellect and the cheerfulness of his temper. Even when the intervals from pain were so short that his words were frequently interrupted, I have known him to hold a discourse in a sublime strain of piety. I say this to you, because I know it will give you pleasure.

“I never shall forget one day that I passed with our friend last summer. I found him in bed in great agony; but when that agony abated a little, I asked if I should read to him. He said, ‘Yes;’ and the first book I met with was Johnson’s ‘Lives of the Poets.’ I read the Life of Watts, who was a favourite author with Dr. Franklin; and, instead of lulling him to sleep, it roused him to a display of the powers of his memory and his reason. He repeated several of Watts’s ‘Lyric Poems,’ and descanted upon their sublimity in a strain worthy of them and of their pious author. It is natural for us to wish that an attention to some ceremonies had accompanied that religion of the heart which I am convinced Dr. Franklin always possessed; but let us

who feel the benefit of them continue to practise them, without thinking lightly of that piety which could support pain without a murmur, and meet death without terror."

The funeral solemnities took place on the 21st of April. It was computed that more than twenty thousand people were assembled. In the procession were the clergy, the Mayor and Corporation of the city, the members of the Executive Council and of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, the Faculty and Students of the College of Philadelphia, the Philosophical Society, and several other societies, followed by a numerous train of citizens. All the bells of the city were muffled and tolled; the flags of the vessels in the harbour were raised half-mast high; and discharges of artillery announced the time when the body was laid in the earth. Franklin was interred by the side of his wife, in the cemetery of Christ's Church. A plain marble slab covers the two graves, according to the direction in his will, with no other inscription than their names and the year of his decease. It yet remains for the city of his adoption, by erecting an appropriate monument, to render the same tribute of respect to his memory which the city of his birth has rendered to that of his father and mother.

When the news of his death reached Congress, then sitting in New York, a resolution was moved by Mr. Madison, and unanimously adopted, that the members should wear the customary badge of mourning for one month, "as a mark of veneration due to the memory of a citizen whose native genius was not more an ornament to human nature than his various exertions of it have been precious to science, to freedom, and to his country." A similar resolution was passed by

the Executive Council of Pennsylvania. The American Philosophical Society appointed one of their number, the Reverend Dr. William Smith, to pronounce a discourse commemorative of his character and his virtues. Nor were such honours confined to his own country. By a decree of the National Assembly of France, introduced by an eloquent speech from Mirabeau, and seconded by Lafayette and La Rochefoucauld, the members of that body wore a badge of mourning for three days, and the President wrote a letter of condolence to the Congress of the United States. A public celebration was ordered by the *Commune* of Paris, which was attended by a large concourse of public officers and citizens, and a eulogy was pronounced by the Abbé Fauchet. Many other testimonies of respect were shown by the different scientific and literary societies in Paris, and eulogies were written by some of their most distinguished members.

Dr. Franklin was well formed and strongly built, in his latter years inclining to corpulency; his stature was five feet nine or ten inches; his eyes were grey, and his complexion light. Affable in his deportment, unobtrusive, easy, and winning in his manners, he rendered himself agreeable to persons of every rank in life. With his intimate friends he conversed freely, but with strangers and in mixed company he was reserved and sometimes taciturn. His great fund of knowledge and experience in human affairs contributed to give a peculiar charm to his conversation, enriched as it was by original reflections, and enlivened by a vein of pleasantry and by anecdotes and ingenious apologues in the happy recollection and use of which he was unsurpassed.

The strong and distinguishing features of his mind were sagacity, quickness of perception, and soundness of judgment. His imagination was lively, without being extravagant. In short, he possessed a perfect mastery over the faculties of his understanding and over his passions. Having this power always at command, and never being turned aside either by vanity or selfishness, he was enabled to pursue his objects with a directness and constancy that rarely failed to insure success. It was as fortunate for the world as it was for his own fame that the benevolence of such a man was limited only by his means and opportunities of doing good, and that, in every sphere of action through a long course of years, his single aim was to promote the happiness of his fellow-men by enlarging their knowledge, improving their condition, teaching them practical lessons of wisdom and prudence, and inculcating the principles of rectitude and the habits of a virtuous life.

CHRONOLOGY

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1598			Thomas Franklin (Franklin's grandfather) born at Ecton, Northamptonshire.
1655			Josiah Franklin (Franklin's father) born.
1667			Abiah Folger (Franklin's mother, his father's second wife) born.
1685	(circa)		Josiah Franklin (a Nonconformist) emigrated to New England.
1706	Jan. 17 (New Style)		BENJAMIN FRANKLIN born at Boston, New England.
1714		8	Goes to Boston grammar-school.
1715		9	Goes to George Brownwell's school.
1716		10	To business with his father in tallow-chandlery and soap-making.
1717		11	James Franklin (his brother) sets up as a printer in Boston.
1718		12	Leaves chandlery business.
1718			His private studies.
1718			Apprenticed to James Franklin as printer.
1718 } 1722 }		12-16	Works as printer; studies hard; learns to write good prose.
1721	Aug. 21	15	His brother starts <i>New England Courant</i> .
1722	(circa)	16	Takes to vegetable diet; learns arithmetic; studies logic, etc.; writes for the newspaper.
1722	(circa)		Censured by Council for alleged libel on the Assembly (in the newspaper).
1723		17	Quarrels with and leaves his brother.
1723	Oct.		Goes to New York.
1723	Oct.		Goes to Philadelphia.
1723	Oct.		Works for Keimer, the printer.
1724	April	18	Returns to Boston.
1724	May		Goes to New York.
1724	Summer		Returns to Philadelphia; works again for Keimer; abandons vegetarianism.
1724	Autumn		Sails for England.
1724	Dec. 24	18	Reaches London.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1725		19	Works for London printers.
1726	July 23	20	Sails from Gravesend for America.
1726	Oct. 11		Reaches Philadelphia; works at Mr. Denham's store.
1726	Autumn		Starts the Junto club.
1727	Feb.	21	Has serious illness.
1727(?)	April		Death of his employer, Denham.
1727	Summer		Works again for Keimer, the printer.
1727	Autumn		Working at Burlington.
1727	Autumn		Sets up at Philadelphia as printer in partnership.
1728		22	Works hard at his trade.
1729	Sept. 25	23	Takes over the <i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i> from Keimer.
1729			Opens a stationer's shop.
1730	July 14	24	Dissolves partnership.
1730	Sept. 1		Marries Miss Read.
1731		25	Starts public subscription library.
1732		26	Ceases to attend public worship.
1733		27	Makes his scheme for moral perfection; studies French, Italian, Spanish.
1733			Starts <i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i> .
1733			Starts branch business in Charleston, South Carolina.
1734		28	Visits Newport and Boston.
1735		29	Attends Presbyterian worship for a time.
1736		30	Loses son, aged four.
1736			Founds new clubs.
1736			Chosen Clerk of Assembly.
1737	Oct.	31	Appointed deputy-postmaster of Philadelphia.
1738		32	Starts Union Fire Company .
1739		33	Forms acquaintance with Whitefield.
1740		34	Starts workmen in branch printing-houses.
1740	May		Publishes sermons, etc., of Whitefield.
1742		36	Invents open fire-stove.
1744		38	Josiah Franklin, his father, dies.
1744			Establishes Philosophical Society .
1744			Starts the Association for public defence.
1744 } 1748 }		38-42	Raises Pennsylvania Regiment; aids in providing battery and cannon; causes proclamation of fast day; gains over some Quakers to defence scheme.
1746		40	Starts electrical experiments.
1748		42	Takes partner into his business.
1749		43	Establishes Pennsylvania Academy.
1749			Continues electrical experiments.
1749			Appointed justice of the peace, common councillor, alderman, and Member of Assembly.
1750		44	Sent as Commissioner to treat with Indians.
1751		45	Aids in founding Pennsylvania Hospital.

A D.	MONTH	AGE	
1751			Improves street-cleansing.
1752		46	His mother dies.
1752	June		Makes his kite experiment.
1753		47	Appointed assistant Postmaster-General for colonies.
1753			Receives Copley Medal and elected Fellow of Royal Society.
1753			Makes journey to New England ; made M.A. of Cambridge College.
1754		48	Sent as commissioner to Indians (the "Six Nations").
1754			Plans union of colonies for defence, etc.
1754	Winter	48	Meets Governor Shirley at Boston.
1755		49	Active in Assembly for coming war with French.
1755			Aids General Braddock's expedition.
1756	Jan.	50	Takes field against Indians ; erects forts.
1756	}	50-51	Has troublesome business with Loudoun and Captain Denny (new Governor).
1757			
1757	Spring	51	Meets Governor Shirley at New York.
1757	May		Sails for England as Agent for Assembly.
1757	July		Lands at Falmouth.
1757	July 27		Arrives in London ; engaged on public business.
1758	Summer	52	Travels in England (Cambridge, Wellingborough, Birmingham, etc.).
1759	Summer	53	Visits Scotland ; meets Hume, Robertson, etc.
1760	June	54	Completes business for the Assembly.
1760	Summer		Travels in England and Wales ; invests public money for Pennsylvania.
1761	Summer	55	Travels in Holland and Flanders.
1761	Sept. 22		Attends Coronation of George III.
1762		56	Receives D.C.L. degree from Oxford and Edinburgh Universities.
1762	Aug.		Sails from Portsmouth for America ; visits Madeira on way.
1762	Nov. 1		Arrives at Philadelphia.
1762	Dec.		Has vote of thanks from Assembly.
1763		57	Travels in northern colonies as Postmaster-General.
1763	Oct.		John Penn arrives as new Governor.
1764	Aug.	58	Receives letter of thanks from Colonel Bouquet.
1764			Drafts Petition to king for change of government.
1764			Elected Speaker of Assembly ; signs instructions to Agent in London to oppose the Stamp Bill.
1764	Autumn		Loses election for Assembly ; appointed Special Agent to Great Britain.

A. D.	MONTH	AGE	
1764	Nov. 7		Leaves Philadelphia with cavalcade of honour.
1764	Nov. 9		Sails from the Delaware for England.
1764	Dec. 9		Lands at Portsmouth.
1764	Dec.		Arrives in London.
1765	March	59	Stamp Act passed; great excitement in colonies.
1766		60	Debates in Parliament on Stamp Act ;
			Franklin examined; Stamp Act repealed.
1766			Declaratory Act passed; Franklin visits Germany.
1767	Sept.	61	He visits Paris; is well received.
1767	Nov.		Revenue Act passed.
1767			Disturbances at Boston (Massachusetts); strong resolutions against trade with Great Britain.
1768		62	Lord Hillsborough in charge of American colonial affairs.
1768	Sept.		British troops arrive at Boston.
1768			Appointed Agent for Georgia.
1769	Jan.	63	American Philosophical Society formed; Franklin chosen president.
1769	June		Aids in providing lightning conductors for St. Paul's Cathedral, London.
1769	July 9		Writes to America encouraging resistance.
1769			Virginia House of Assembly declares that the colony can be legally taxed only by her representatives.
1770	March	64	Fatal riot at Boston; the "Boston Massacre."
1770	April		Revenue Act repealed, except for tea.
1771		65	Makes excursions to north of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; meets many eminent men.
1772	August	66	On Royal Society committee for protecting Purfleet powder-magazines from lightning.
1772			Lord Hillsborough replaced by Lord Dartmouth.
1772			His interviews with Lord Dartmouth; hands to him petition to king from Massachusetts Assembly.
1772			Writes preface to, and publishes in London, strong votes and resolutions passed at Boston; hands new petition (to king) to Lord Dartmouth.
1772	Dec.		Exposes the conduct of Governor Hutchinson (of Massachusetts) and others.
1773	Autumn	67	Hands petition (to king) to Lord Dartmouth for removal of Governor Hutchinson.
1773	Dec.		The tea riot at Boston.
1774	Jan. 11	67	Appears before Privy Council; is insulted by Wedderburn, Solicitor-General; the petition rejected.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1774	Jan. 12		Is dismissed from office as Postmaster-General.
1774	March	68	Port of Boston closed by Act of Parliament.
1774	Sept. 5		First continental congress meets at Philadelphia.
1774 } 1775 }		68-69	Awaits in England the issue of first colonial congress.
1774		68	Death of his wife.
1774			Has interview with Lord Chatham, Lord Howe, and Lord Camden.
1774	Dec.	68	Presents petition of Congress (to king) to Lord Dartmouth; petition rejected by Parliament.
1775	Jan. 20	69	Introduced by Lord Chatham in House of Lords; Lord Chatham's motion for withdrawal of troops from Boston rejected.
1775	Jan. 27		Has another interview with Lord Chatham.
1775	Feb. 1		Again present at Lords' debate; Lord Chatham's Bill for a reconciliation rejected.
1775	March 21		Sails from England for America.
1775	April 19		The conflict at Lexington.
1775	May 5		Arrives at Philadelphia.
1775	May 6		Chosen delegate to Congress.
1775	May 12		Crown Point taken by colonials.
1775			Strongly supports patriotic cause in Congress; appointed Chairman of Committee of Safety by Pennsylvania Assembly, and Chief Commissioner for Indian affairs, and member of secret committee.
1775	June 15		Washington made Commander-in-Chief.
1775	June 17		Battle of Bunker Hill.
1775	Oct.		Visits army at Cambridge (Massachusetts) for reorganising colonial forces.
1775	Oct.		Chosen member for Philadelphia.
1775	Nov. 29		Placed on Committee of Secret Correspondence.
1776	March	70	Sent as Commissioner to Canada.
1776			Boston evacuated by British troops.
1776	April	70	Arrives at Montreal.
1776	June		Returns to Philadelphia.
1776			Supports movement in Congress for independence.
1776	June		British fleet and army arrive at New York.
1776	July 4		Declaration of Independence.
1776			Lord North's Prohibitory Act.
1776	Aug. 27		Washington defeated at Long Island.
1776	Sept. 11		Franklin has interview with Lord Howe.
1776			Debates in Congress on foreign alliances.
1776	Oct. 26		Franklin leaves Philadelphia as Commissioner to France.
1776	Oct. 28		British victory at White Plains.

A.D.	MONTH	AGE	
1776	Nov., Dec.	70	Washington's retreat through New Jersey.
1776	Dec. 21		Franklin arrives in Paris; soon takes up abode at Passy.
1776	Dec. 26		Americans victorious at Trenton.
1776	Dec. 28		Franklin has first interview at Versailles with Comte de Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs.
1777	Jan. 3		Americans victorious at Princeton.
1777		71	French secret aid to United States.
1777	Sept. 11		British victory at Brandywine.
1777	Sept. 25		British capture Philadelphia.
1777	Oct. 4		British victory at Germantown.
1777	Oct. 17		Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga.
1777	Dec. 4		Franklin receives news of the great success at Saratoga.
1777	Dec. 6		Count de Vergennes sends congratulations.
1777	Dec. 12		Has interview with Count de Vergennes at Versailles.
1778	Feb. 6	72	France acknowledges independence of United States.
1778	Feb. 6		Treaties of amity and commerce and of alliance between France and United States signed at Paris.
1778	March 20		Franklin and colleagues introduced to Court at Versailles.
1778	March		British Ambassador withdraws from France; war between France and Great Britain.
1778	April		French squadron sails for America.
1778	May 11		Death of Lord Chatham.
1778	Summer		Overtures to Franklin for reconciliation; he is introduced to Voltaire.
1778	Sept. 14		Is appointed Minister-Plenipotentiary to France.
1779	May	73	Mr. (Sir William) Jones has interview with Franklin for British Ministry.
1779			Spain joins in war against Great Britain.
1780	Summer	74	French fleet and army sent to United States.
1780			"Armed neutrality" of northern European States against Great Britain.
1780			Franklin's efforts on behalf of neutral vessels.
1780	Dec.		Holland added to enemies of Great Britain.
1781		75	Franklin obtains loan and subsidy from France.
1781			He writes to Congress begging to retire; Congress declines his resignation.
1781	Oct. 19		Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia.
1781			Franklin appointed Commissioner to negotiate peace.
1782	Spring	76	Peace mooted in British Parliament; Lord North resigns office.

A. D.	MONTH	AGE	
1782	April		British overtures to Franklin for peace.
1782	Nov. 30		Provisional treaty signed at Paris.
1783	Jan. 20	77	Peace of Versailles signed.
1783 } 1784 }		77-78	Franklin and Jefferson negotiate with European Powers for treaties of amity and commerce.
1785		79	He signs treaty between Prussia and United States (his last official act); is succeeded by Jefferson as Minister-Plenipotentiary to France.
1785	July 12		He leaves Passy for Havre, then crosses to Southampton.
1785	July 27		Embarks for Philadelphia.
1785	Sept. 14		Lands at Philadelphia.
1785	Sept., etc.		Receives addresses of honour; chosen member of Supreme Executive Council and President of Pennsylvania.
1786		80	Enjoys domestic ease.
1787	May to } Sept. }	81	Delegate of Pennsylvania to Convention for framing Constitution of United States.
1787	Sept. 17		Constitution adopted.
1788	Oct.	82	His term of service as President of Pennsylvania expires; he retires from public life.
1789	Sept. 16	83	Writes letter to President Washington.
1790	April	84	Is attacked by illness.
1790	April 17	84½	His death.
1790	April 21		Public funeral.
1790			Honours paid in United States and France.
1827	June 15		Obelisk erected at Boston (in Franklin's honour) over graves of his parents.

APPENDIX

JARED SPARKS

THIS eminent biographer, and editor of Franklin's and other works, was born in 1789 in Connecticut, graduated at Harvard University in 1815, and became tutor there in mathematics and natural philosophy. In 1819 he was settled at Baltimore as a Unitarian minister, and in 1821 he became chaplain to Congress. In 1823 Sparks retired from ministerial life, owing to ill-health, and devoted himself to literary work. His labours included the editorship for seven years of the *North American Review*; the editing, at Boston, in twelve volumes, of the *Writings of George Washington*; the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, also in twelve volumes; and two series, in ten and fifteen volumes, of a *Library of American Biography*. His *Works of Benjamin Franklin* (10 vols.) appeared in 1836-1840, and in 1853 his *Correspondence of the American Revolution*. His literary work, involving enormous research, is marked by clearness of arrangement, accuracy of statement, and simplicity of style. Sparks held, from 1839 to 1849, the post of McLean Professor of History at Harvard, and from 1849 to 1853 he was President of the University. He died in 1866.

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS CONCERNING FRANKLIN

His dealing with public questions.—(1) The quarrel between Great Britain and her American Colonies was largely due to the rejection by the Government of Franklin's plan, in 1754, for a system of united colonial defence against French aggression. The expense needlessly incurred by the home Government gave the pretence for taxing the colonies, and this led to the separation.

(2) During his stay in England from 1757 to 1762 his great ability as a writer on public questions was shown in contributions to the *Annual Register*, then edited by the young Edmund Burke, and in a pamphlet entitled the *Interests of Great Britain considered with regard to her Colonies and the Acquisitions of Canada and Guadeloupe*. There is good authority for believing that this publication had great influence in inducing the Ministry to retain possession of Canada in the terms of peace. The writer also therein predicted the greatness of the community which became the United States.

(3) In the session of Parliament which opened in December, 1765,

Franklin made a great impression during his examination before a committee of the House of Commons on the effects of the Stamp Act. Burke described the scene as reminding him of a master examined by a parcel of schoolboys. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1767, states that "the questions in general were put with great subtlety and judgment, and were answered with such deep and familiar knowledge of the subject, such precision and perspicuity, such temper and yet such spirit, as to do the greatest honour to Dr. Franklin, and justify the general opinion of his character and abilities."

(4) Franklin had a large share in framing the Constitution of the United States. The most original feature—that which gave the States equal representation in the Upper House or Senate, and in the Lower House representation according to population—was his device.

A letter to his wife.—Franklin celebrated the repeal of the Stamp Act, mainly due to himself, in a characteristic letter to his wife. "As the Stamp Act is at length repealed, I am willing you should have a new gown. . . . Had the trade between the two countries totally ceased, it was a comfort to me to recollect that I had once been clothed, from head to foot, in woollen and linen of my wife's manufacture; that I never was prouder of my dress in my life, and that she and her daughter might do it again if it was necessary. I told the Parliament that it was my opinion, before the old clothes of the Americans were worn out, they might have new ones of their own making. I have sent you a fine piece of Pompadour satin, 14 yards, cost 11s. a yard, a silk *négligée* and petticoat of brocaded lutestring for my dear Sally [his daughter]; with two dozen gloves, four bottles of lavender-water, and two little reels."

His ready wit.—(1) When his colleague Hancock, one of the committee of five which drew up the Declaration of Independence, said, "We must be unanimous; there must be no pulling different ways; we must all hang together," Franklin replied, "Yes, we must hang together, or we will be pretty sure to hang separately."

(2) During his stay in Paris he wrote a paper for the Royal Society on the subject of balloons, a matter then, under the auspices of the Montgolfiers, attracting much attention in France. When some one inquired as to the use of the new invention, Franklin asked, "What is the use of a new-born baby?"

His popularity in France.—During his eight years' stay in France he enjoyed a large share of public esteem. When he arrived, he was already one of the most famous men in the world. He was a member of every important learned society in Europe; he was one of the managers of the Royal Society, and one of eight foreign members of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris. Three editions of his scientific works had already appeared in that city, and a new edition had recently come out in London. The number

of portraits, busts, prints, and medallions of him that were in circulation in France before he left the country, was such that in writing to his daughter he said, "These things have made your father's face as well known as the moon, so that he durst not do anything that would oblige him to run away, as his phiz would discover him wherever he should venture to show it." Streets in numerous cities, and several societies, were named after him; the French Academy paid him its highest honours, and his presence conferred great distinction upon any salon.

His scientific work.—It was in 1746 that Franklin began those fruitful researches in electricity which ranked him among great natural philosophers. To him was due a clearer exposition of the theory of positive and negative electricity; by his famous experiment with a boy's kite, described below, he proved the identity of lightning and electricity; and he was the practical inventor of the protection of buildings by lightning-conductors. Among Franklin's many discoveries may be specially noted the course of storms over the continent of North America, marking an epoch in meteorological science; the course and chief characteristics of the Gulf Stream, its high temperature, and the consequent uses of the thermometer in navigation; and the various powers of different colours in the absorption of solar heat.

The kite experiment.—The idea of a similarity between electricity and lightning had occurred to many persons before Franklin, but it was he alone who showed the true method of verifying this conjecture and of establishing the perfect identity of the two powers. In a paper dated November 7th, 1749, he mentions all the known points of resemblance between lightning and electricity. He remarks that it is no wonder that the effects of the one should be so much greater than those of the other; for if two gun-barrels electrified will strike at two inches' distance, and make a loud report, at how great a distance will ten thousand acres of electrified cloud strike, and give its fire, and how loud must be that crack! He then notices the crooked and waving course both of the lightning and, in some cases, of the electric sparks; the tendency of lightning, as of electricity, to take the readiest and best conductor; the facts that lightning, as well as electricity, dissolves metals, burns some bodies, rends others, strikes people blind, destroys animal life, reverses the poles of the magnet, etc. The paper concludes with the words: "The electric fluid is attracted by points. We do not know whether this property be in lightning; but, since they agree in all the particulars in which we can already compare them, it is not improbable that they agree likewise in this. Let the experiment be made."

Full of this idea, he failed for some time to find what he thought a favourable opportunity of trying its truth. A spire was about to be erected in Philadelphia, which he thought would afford him

facilities for the experiment. His attention, however, was one day drawn by a kite which a boy was flying, and it suddenly occurred to him that here was a method, preferable to any other, of tapping the clouds. Accordingly, he took a large silk handkerchief, and, stretching it over two cross-sticks, formed in this manner his simple apparatus for drawing down the lightning from the clouds. Soon afterwards, seeing a thunderstorm approach, he took a walk into a field near the city in which there was a shed. His purpose was communicated to no one but his son, whom he took with him for aid in raising the kite. This was in June, 1752.

The kite being raised, Franklin fastened a key to the lower end of the hempen string, and then, insulating it by attaching it to a post with a length of silk, he placed himself under the shed, and awaited the result. For some time no signs of electricity appeared. A cloud, apparently charged with lightning, had even passed overhead without producing any effect. At length, just as the experimenter was beginning to lose hope, he observed some loose threads of the hempen string rise and stand erect, exactly as if they had been repelled from each other by being charged with electricity. He at once presented his knuckle to the key, and, to his delight, drew from it the electrical spark. As the rain increased, the cord became a better conductor, and the key gave out its electricity copiously. Had the hemp been thoroughly wet, the bold experimenter might have paid for his discovery with his life.

Franklin afterwards brought down the lightning into his house by means of an insulated iron rod, and performed with it, at his leisure, all the experiments that could be performed with electricity. His active and practical mind, not satisfied until discovery was turned to some useful end, soon devised the lightning-rod for the preservation of buildings.

His independent character.—Franklin was never dependent on the Government for his livelihood, although more than half of his life was spent in the public service. The profits of his newspaper, his shrewdness, and his frugality enabled him to live in ample comfort, according to the standard of his day and country, through his long life, and to leave behind him a fortune of about £30,000.

Franklin as a writer, speaker, and example of life.—In spite of the almost constant activity of his pen, Franklin's longest literary production was his autobiography, containing less than three hundred octavo pages. It is one of the most widely read books in the language, and has been translated into almost every civilised tongue. All his writings are marked by humour, classic simplicity, and grace, good sense, good taste, and constant interest for the reader. Though he was no orator, his brief speeches were always clear, judicious, felicitous, and influential. He possessed in the highest degree the gift of making an anecdote embody an argument.

Franklin's great service to mankind probably lies in the

dignity which he imparted to manual labour by his noble life and example. Men and women of the lowest condition by birth may find encouragement and comfort in some portion of his career. In his diary for 1784 he lays down (recording an interview with the young Lord Fitzmaurice), that a public speaker who would have his advice followed should "take such a course of action in the conduct of life as would impress the people with an opinion of his integrity as well as of his understanding; that, this opinion once established, all the difficulties, delays, and oppositions usually occasioned by doubts and suspicions were prevented; and such a man, though a very imperfect speaker, would almost always carry his points against the most flourishing orator who had not the character of sincerity." On the same occasion Franklin expressed his sense of the importance of a good private character in public affairs, by saying that "the advantage of having it, and the disadvantage of not having it, were so great, that he believed that, if George the Third had had a bad private character, and John Wilkes a good one, the latter might have turned the former out of his kingdom."

Sir Humphrey Davy has described, with an acute discrimination, the predominant characteristics of Franklin's philosophical writings. "A singular felicity of induction guided all his researches, and by very small means he established very grand truths. The style and manner of his publication on Electricity are almost as worthy of admiration as the doctrine it contains. He has endeavoured to remove all mystery and obscurity from the subject. He has written equally for the uninitiated and for the philosopher; and he has rendered his details amusing as well as perspicuous, elegant as well as simple. Science appears in his language in a dress wonderfully decorous, the best adapted to display her native loveliness. He has in no instance exhibited that false dignity by which philosophy is kept aloof from common application; and he has sought rather to make her a useful inmate and servant in the common habitations of man, than to preserve her merely as an object of admiration in temples and palaces."

Franklin's fame in the United States.—Franklin's fame, since his death, as in life, has gone on increasing. No American ever received such varied and extensive homage from his countrymen. In 1879 there was no State in the Union, and few counties, that had not a town called "Franklin," Ohio alone having nineteen. Scarcely a town in the States was without a "Franklin" "Street" or "Square" or "Hotel," or "Bank," or "Insurance Company." His bust or portrait is everywhere, and nearly every large city has some sort of a monument of the man styled by his biographer John Bigelow, a distinguished American journalist and diplomatist, "the most eminent journalist, philosopher, diplomatist, and statesman of his time."

NOTES

P. 1. The first part of the Autobiography, constituting the first five chapters of this edition, was written in the form of a letter to his son, William Franklin, then Governor of New Jersey. It was begun while the author was on a visit to the family of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, at Twyford, in the year 1771.—J. S.

P. 3. *Origin of Franklin's name.*—Perhaps from the time when the name of Franklin, which before was the name of an order of people, was assumed by them for a *surname*, when others took surnames all over the kingdom.

As a proof that Franklin was anciently the common name of an order or rank in England, see Judge Fortescue, *De laudibus Legum Anglie*, written about the year 1412, in which is the following passage, to show that good juries might easily be formed in any part of England.

“Moreover, the same country is so filled and replenished with landed menne, that therein so small a Thorpe cannot be found wherein dwelleth not a knight, an esquire, or such a householder, as is there commonly called a *Franklin*, enriched with great possessions; and also other freeholders, and many yeomen able for their livelihoods to make a jury in form aforementioned.”—*Old Translation.*

Chaucer, too, calls his Country Gentleman a *Franklin*, and, after describing his good housekeeping, thus characterizes him :

“This worthy Franklin bore a purse of silk,
Fixed to his girdle, white as morning milk.
Knight of the Shire, first Justice at th' Assize,
To help the poor, the doubtful to advise.
In ail employments, generous, just, he proved ;
Renowned for courtesy, by all beloved.”

Again—

———“A spacious court they see,
Both plain and pleasant to be walked in,
Where them does meet a Franklin fair and free.”

SPENSER'S *Faery Queene.*

P. 5. *Benjamin Franklin's MS. volumes of poetry.*—These two volumes have been preserved, and are now before me. They belong to Mrs. Emmons, of Boston, great-grand-daughter of Benjamin Franklin, their author, uncle of the autobiographer.—J. S.

P. 5. *Samuel Franklin.*—This grandson of Benjamin Franklin followed the trade of his father, which was that of a cutler. On the father's sign, suspended over the shop door, was painted a crown, with his name, "Samuel Franklin, from London." It had also some of the implements of his trade. This sign was retained by Samuel Franklin the younger. At the beginning of the Revolution, the "Sons of Liberty" took offence at this crown, and demanded the removal of the sign; but they finally contented themselves with daubing a coat of paint over the crown, leaving "Samuel Franklin, from London," and the implements of cutlery. Time gradually wore off the paint from the crown, so as to make it faintly visible; and Mather Byles, who was as noted for his loyalty as for his puns, used to lament to Mrs. Franklin that she should live at the sign of the *half-crown*.—J. S.

P. 6. *Date of Benjamin Franklin's birth.*—He was born January 6th, 1706, Old Style, being Sunday, and the same as January 17th, New Style, which his biographers have usually mentioned as the day of his birth. By the records of the Old South Church in Boston, to which his father and mother belonged, it appears that he was baptized the same day. In the old public Register of Births, still preserved in the Mayor's office in Boston, his birth is recorded under the date of January 6th, 1706. At this time his father occupied a house in Milk Street, opposite to the Old South Church, but he removed shortly afterwards to a house at the corner of Hanover and Union Streets, where it is believed he resided the remainder of his life, and where the son passed his early years.—J. S.

P. 7. *From Sherbon Town.*—In the island of Nantucket.

P. 7. *Peter Folger's verses.*—The poem, if such it may be called, of which these are the closing lines, extends through fourteen pages of a duodecimo pamphlet, entitled, "*A Looking-Glass for the Times: or, the former spirit of New England revived in this generation*;" by PETER FOLGER." It is dated at the end, "April 23rd, 1676." The lines which immediately precede those quoted by Dr. Franklin, and which are necessary to complete the sentiment intended to be conveyed by the author, are the following:—

" I am for peace and not for war,
And that is the reason why
I write more plain than some men do,
That use to daub and lie.

But I shall cease, and set my name
 To what I here insert,
 Because to be a libeller," etc.—J. S.

P. II. *The epitaph of Josiah and Abiah Franklin.*—The marble stone on which this inscription was engraved having become decayed, and the inscription itself defaced by time, a more durable monument has been erected over the graves of the father and mother of Franklin. The suggestion was first made at a meeting of the building committee of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, in the autumn of 1826, and it met with universal approbation. A committee of management was organized, and an amount of money adequate to the object was soon contributed by the voluntary subscriptions of a large number of the citizens of Boston. The corner-stone was laid on the 15th of June, 1827, and an address appropriate to the occasion was pronounced by General Henry A. S. Dearborn.

The monument is an obelisk of granite, twenty-one feet high, which rests on a square base, measuring seven feet on each side, and two feet in height. The obelisk is composed of five massive blocks of granite placed one above another. On one side is the name of Franklin in large bronze letters, and a little below is a tablet of bronze, thirty-two inches long and sixteen wide, sunk into the stone. On this tablet is engraved Dr. Franklin's original inscription, as quoted in the text, and beneath it are the following lines :—

“The marble tablet,
 Bearing the above inscription,
 Having been dilapidated by the ravages of time,
 A number of citizens,
 Entertaining the most profound veneration
 For the memory of the illustrious
 Benjamin Franklin,
 And desirous of reminding succeeding generations,
 That he was born in Boston, A.D. MDCCVI,
 Erected this
 Obelisk
 Over the grave of his parents.
 MDCCCXXVII.”

A silver plate was deposited under the corner-stone, with an inscription commemorative of the occasion ; a part of which is as follows : “ This Monument was erected over the Remains of the Parents of Benjamin Franklin by the Citizens of Boston, from Respect to the Private Character and Public Services of this illustrious Patriot and Philosopher, and for the many Tokens of his affectionate Attachment to his native Town.”—J. S.

P. 21 *Early American newspapers.*—This was written from recollection, and it is not surprising that, after the lapse of fifty years, the author's memory should have failed him in regard to a fact of small importance. The *New England Courant* was the fourth newspaper that appeared in America. The first number of the *Boston News-Letter* was published April 24th, 1704. This was the first newspaper in America. The *Boston Gazette* commenced December 21st, 1719; the *American Weekly Mercury*, at Philadelphia, December 22nd, 1719; the *New England Courant*, August 21st, 1721. Dr. Franklin's error of memory probably originated in the circumstance of his brother having been the printer of the *Boston Gazette*, when it was first established. This was the second newspaper published in America.—J. S.

P. 23. *The New England Courant.*—The earlier numbers of the *New England Courant* were principally filled with original articles, in the form of essays, letters, and short paragraphs, written with considerable ability and wit, and touching with great freedom the vices and follies of the time. The weapon of satire was used with an unsparing hand. Neither the government nor the clergy escaped. Much caution was practised, however, in regard to individuals, and names were seldom introduced. There are some severe and humorous criticisms on the poets of the day, which may be classed with the best specimens of this kind of composition in the modern reviews. The humour sometimes degenerates into coarseness, and the phraseology is often harsh; but, bating these faults, the paper contains nothing which in later times would have been deemed reprehensible. James Franklin, the editor and printer, was imprisoned on the general charge of having published passages "boldly reflecting on his Majesty's government and on the administration in this province, the ministry, churches, and college; and that tend to fill the readers' minds with vanity, to the dishonour of God and the disservice of good men." He was sentenced by a vote of the Assembly, without any specification of these offensive passages, or any trial before a court of justice.

This was probably the first transaction, in the American Colonies, relating to the freedom of the press; and it is not less remarkable for the assumption of power on the part of the legislature, than for their disregard of the first principles and established forms of law.

No change took place in the character of the paper, and six months afterwards, January, 1723, he was again arraigned upon a similar charge. The resentment of the ruling powers, stimulated by the clergy, had been gaining heat during the whole time, and now pushed them to more arbitrary measures. They condescended, however, to specify a particular article, as affording the ground of their proceedings. This was an essay on *Hypocrisy*, in which

hypocrites of various descriptions were roughly handled, but no individual or class of men was mentioned. The most objectionable paragraphs in this essay are the following :—

“Religion is indeed the principal thing, but too much of it is worse than none at all. The world abounds with knaves and villains ; but, of all knaves, the religious knave is the worst, and villanies acted under the cloak of religion the most execrable. Moral honesty, though it will not itself carry a man to heaven, yet I am sure there is no going thither without it.”

“But are there such men as these in thee, O New England? Heaven forbid there should be any ; but, alas ! it is to be feared the number is not small. ‘Give me an honest man,’ say some, ‘for all a religious man ;’ a distinction which, I confess, I never heard of before. The whole country suffers for the villanies of a few such wolves in sheep’s clothing, and we are all represented as a pack of knaves and hypocrites for their sakes.”—J. S.

P. 47. *James Ralph*.—Ralph obtained much celebrity as a political and historical writer. He also wrote poetry and plays, but with less success. He published “Night,” a poem ; and another poem called “Sawney.” In this latter he abused Swift, Pope, and Gay. In revenge, Pope introduced his name into the “Dunciad.”

“Silence, ye wolves, while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes *Night* hideous ; answer him, ye owls.”

He wrote a much-approved work, entitled *Use and Abuse of Parliaments* ; and also a *History of England during the Reign of William the Third*, in two folio volumes. Alluding to this work, Fox pronounces the author “a historian of great acuteness, as well as diligence, but who falls sometimes into the common error of judging by the event.” Ralph produced also many political pamphlets, and was employed by the ministry at different times to promote their aims with his pen. For these services he was pensioned.—J. S.

P. 63. *Franklin’s Journal*.—This plan does not exist in the manuscript Journal found among Dr. Franklin’s papers ; which appears, by a note thereon, to be a “copy made at Reading, in Pennsylvania, October 2nd, 1787.”—W. T. F.

P. 71. *Franklin’s pamphlet on Deism*.—Dr. Franklin, in a letter to Benjamin Vaughan, dated November 9th, 1779, gives a further account of this pamphlet in these words :—

“It was addressed to Mr. J. R., that is, James Ralph, then a youth of about my age, and my intimate friend ; afterwards a political writer and historian. The purport of it was to prove the doctrine of fate, from the supposed attributes of God ; in some such manner as this. That in erecting and governing the world, as He

was infinitely wise, He knew what would be best ; infinitely good, He must be disposed, and infinitely powerful, He must be able to execute it. Consequently *all is right*.

“ There were only a hundred copies printed, of which I gave a few to friends ; and afterwards disliking the piece, as conceiving it might have an ill tendency, I burnt the rest, except one copy, the margin of which was filled with manuscript notes by Lyons, author of the *Infallibility of Human Judgment*, who was at that time another of my acquaintance in London. I was not nineteen years of age when it was written. In 1730, I wrote a piece on the other side of the question, which began with laying for its foundation this fact ; ‘ *That almost all men in all ages and countries have at times made use of PRAYER.*’ Thence I reasoned that, if all things are ordained, prayer must among the rest be ordained. But, as prayer can procure no change in things that are ordained, praying must then be useless, and an absurdity. God would therefore not ordain praying, if everything else was ordained. But praying exists, therefore all other things are not ordained, etc. This pamphlet was never printed, and the manuscript has been long lost. The great uncertainty I found in metaphysical reasonings disgusted me, and I quitted that kind of reading and study for others more satisfactory.”—W. T. F.

P. 72. *Franklin's version of the Lord's Prayer.*—See *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*, published in his works.

Among Franklin's papers I have found a curious manuscript in his handwriting, which contains a new version of the Lord's Prayer. The condition and appearance of the manuscript prove it to have been an early performance, but its precise date is not known. The form in which it is written is here preserved.—J. S.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OLD VERSION	NEW VERSION BY B. FRANKLIN
1. Our Father which art in heaven,	1. Heavenly Father,
2. Hallowed be Thy name.	2. May all revere Thee,
3. Thy kingdom come,	3. And become Thy dutiful children and faithful subjects.
4. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.	4. May thy laws be obeyed on earth, as perfectly as they are in heaven.
5. Give us this day our daily bread.	5. Provide for us this day, as Thou hast hitherto daily done.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 6. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. | 6. Forgive us our trespasses, and enable us to forgive those who offend us. |
| 7. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. | 7. Keep us out of temptation, and deliver us from evil. |

REASONS FOR THE CHANGE OF EXPRESSION

OLD VERSION.—*Our Father which art in Heaven.*

NEW VERSION.—*Heavenly Father* is more concise, equally expressive, and better modern English.

OLD VERSION.—*Hallowed be Thy name.* This seems to relate to an observance among the Jews not to pronounce the proper or peculiar name of God, they deeming it a prophanation so to do. We have in our language no *proper name* for God; the word *God* being a common, or general name, expressing all chief objects of worship, true or false. The word *hallowed* is almost obsolete. People now have but an imperfect conception of the meaning of the petition. It is therefore proposed to change the expression into

NEW VERSION.—*May all revere Thee.*

OLD VERSION.—*Thy kingdom come.* This petition seems suited to the then condition of the Jewish nation. Originally their state was a theocracy; God was their king. Dissatisfied with that kind of government, they desired a visible, earthly king, in the manner of the nations around them. They had such kings accordingly; but their happiness was not increased by the change, and they had reason to wish and pray for a return of the theocracy, or government of God. Christians in these times have other ideas, when they speak of the kingdom of God, such as are perhaps more adequately expressed by the

NEW VERSION.—*Become Thy dutiful children and faithful subjects.*

OLD VERSION.—*Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;* more explicitly,

NEW VERSION.—*May Thy laws be obeyed on earth, as perfectly as they are in heaven.*

OLD VERSION.—*Give us this day our daily bread.*—Give us what is *ours* seems to put in a claim of right, and to contain too little of the grateful acknowledgment and sense of dependence that become creatures, who live on the daily bounty of their Creator. Therefore it is changed to

NEW VERSION.—*Provide for us this day, as Thou hast hitherto daily done.*

OLD VERSION.—*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* (Matthew.) *Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive*

every one that is indebted to us. (Luke.) Offerings were due to God on many occasions by the Jewish law, which, when people could not pay, or had forgotten, as debtors are apt to do, it was proper to pray that those debts might be forgiven. Our Liturgy uses neither the *debtors* of Matthew, nor the *indebted* of Luke, but instead of them speaks of *those that trespass against us*. Perhaps the considering it as a Christian duty to forgive debtors was by the compilers thought an inconvenient idea in a trading nation. There seems, however, something presumptuous in this mode of expression, which has the air of proposing ourselves as an example of goodness fit for God to imitate. *We hope You will at least be as good as we are*; You see we forgive one another, and therefore we pray that You would forgive us. Some have considered it in another sense. *Forgive us as we forgive others*. That is, if we do not forgive others, we pray that Thou wouldst not forgive us. But this, being a kind of conditional *imprecation* against ourselves, seems improper in such a prayer; and therefore it may be better to say humbly and modestly,

NEW VERSION.—*Forgive us our trespasses, and enable us likewise to forgive those who offend us*. This, instead of assuming that we have already in and of ourselves the grace of forgiveness, acknowledges our dependence on God, the Fountain of Mercy, for any share we may have of it, praying that He would communicate it to us.

OLD VERSION.—*And lead us not into temptation*. The Jews had a notion that God sometimes tempted, or directed, or permitted, the tempting of people. Thus it was said, He tempted Pharaoh, directed Satan to tempt Job, and a false Prophet to tempt Ahab. Under this persuasion, it was natural for them to pray that He would not put them to such severe trials. We now suppose that temptation, so far as it is supernatural, comes from the Devil only; and this petition continued conveys a suspicion, which, in our present conceptions, seems unworthy of God: therefore it might be altered to

NEW VERSION.—*Keep us out of temptation*.

P. 78. *Keimer's newspaper*.—It was called the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Franklin and Meredith began the paper with No. 40, September 25th, 1729.

A characteristic anecdote has been related of Franklin, illustrative of his independence as an editor. Soon after the establishment of his newspaper, he found occasion to remark with some degree of freedom on the public conduct of one or two persons of high standing in Philadelphia. This course was disapproved by some of his patrons, who sought an opportunity to convey to him their views of the subject, and what they represented

to be the opinion of his friends. He listened patiently, and replied by requesting that they would favour him with their company at supper, and bring with them the other gentlemen who had expressed dissatisfaction. The time arrived, and the guests assembled. He received them cordially, and listened again to their friendly reproofs of his editorial conduct. At length supper was announced; but, when the guests had seated themselves around the table, they were surprised to see nothing before them but two puddings, made of coarse meal, called *sawdust puddings* in the common phrase, and a stone pitcher filled with water. He helped them all, and then applied himself to his own plate, partaking freely of the repast, and urging his friends to do the same. They taxed their politeness to the utmost, but all in vain; their appetites refused obedience to the will. Perceiving their difficulty, Franklin at last arose and said, "*My friends, any one who can subsist upon sawdust pudding and water, as I can, needs no man's patronage.*"—J. S.

P. 78. *The dispute between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly.*—These remarks are in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for October 2nd, 1729, and are as follows:—

"His Excellency, Governor Burnet, died unexpectedly about two days after the date of this reply to his last message; and it was thought the dispute would have ended with him, or at least have lain dormant till the arrival of a new Governor from England, who possibly might, or might not, be inclined to enter too vigorously into the measures of his predecessor. But our last advices by the post acquaint us that his Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, on whom the government immediately devolves upon the death or absence of the Commander-in-Chief, has vigorously renewed the struggle on his own account, of which the particulars will be seen in our next.

"Perhaps some of our readers may not fully understand the original ground of this warm contest between the Governor and Assembly. It seems *that* people have for these hundred years past enjoyed the privilege of rewarding the Governor for the time being, according to *their sense* of his merit and services; and few or none of their Governors have complained, or had cause to complain, of a scanty allowance. When the late Governor Burnet brought with him instructions to demand a *settled salary* of one thousand pounds sterling per annum, on him and all his successors, and the Assembly were required to fix it immediately, he insisted on it strenuously to the last, and they as constantly refused it. It appears by their votes and proceedings, that they thought it an imposition, contrary to their own charter, and to *Magna Charta*; and they judged that there should be a mutual dependence between the *Governor* and

governed; and that to make the Governor independent would be dangerous and destructive to their liberties, and the ready way to establish tyranny. They thought, likewise, that the province was not the less dependent on the Crown of Great Britain, by the Governor's depending immediately on them and his own good conduct for an ample support; because all acts and laws, which he might be induced to pass, must nevertheless be constantly sent home for approbation in order to continue in force. Many other reasons were given, and arguments used, in the course of the controversy, needless to particularize here, because all the material papers relating to it have been already given in our public news.

“Much deserved praise has the deceased Governor received for his steady integrity in adhering to his instructions, notwithstanding the great difficulty and opposition he met with, and the strong temptations offered from time to time to induce him to give up the point. And yet, perhaps, something is due to the Assembly (as the love and zeal of that country for the present establishment is too well known to suffer any suspicion of want of loyalty), who continue thus resolutely to abide by what *they think* their right, and that of the people they represent; maugré all the arts and menaces of a Governor famed for his cunning and politics, backed with instructions from home, and powerfully aided by the great advantage such an officer always has of engaging the principal men of a place in his party, by conferring where he pleases so many posts of profit and honour. Their happy mother country will perhaps observe with pleasure, that though her gallant cocks and matchless dogs abate their natural fire and intrepidity, when transported to a foreign clime (as this nation is), yet her SONS in the remotest part of the earth, and even to the third and fourth descent, still retain that ardent spirit of liberty, and that undaunted courage, which have in every age so gloriously distinguished BRITONS and ENGLISHMEN from the rest of mankind.”—W. T. F.

P. 79. *Mr. Vernon*.—Many years afterwards he had an opportunity of discharging more completely this debt of gratitude. While he was minister plenipotentiary from the United States at the court of France, he rendered very important services to a young man, a descendant of Mr. Vernon, who passed some time in that country.—J. S.

P. 81. *The dissolution of partnership between Franklin and Meredith*.—The dissolution of the partnership was a year later, as appears by the following agreement, transcribed from the original in Franklin's handwriting.—J. S.

“Be it remembered, that Hugh Meredith and Benjamin Franklin have this day separated as partners, and will henceforth act each on

his own account ; and that the said Hugh Meredith, for a valuable consideration by him received from the said Benjamin Franklin, hath relinquished, and doth hereby relinquish, to the said Franklin, all claim, right, or property to or in the printing materials and stock heretofore jointly possessed by them in partnership ; and to all debts due to them as partners, in the course of their business ; which are all from henceforth the sole property of the said Benjamin Franklin. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, this 14th day of July, 1730.

“HUGH MEREDITH.”

P. 82. *Franklin's ingenuity*.—“It is little known, or set down to the commendation of Franklin, that, when he was young in business, and stood in need of sundry articles in the line of his profession as a printer, he had the ingenuity to make them for himself. In this way he founded letters of lead, engraved various printing ornaments, cut wood-cuts, made printer's ink, engraved copperplate vignettes, and made his plate-press.”—WATSON'S *Annals of Philadelphia*, p. 513.

Mr. Watson relates another anecdote. He says that the “yellow willow tree,” now so common throughout the country, was first introduced into America by Franklin. A wicker basket made of willow, in which some foreign article had been imported, he saw sprouting in a ditch, and directed some of the twigs to be planted. They took root, and from these shoots are supposed to have sprung all the yellow willows which have grown on this side of the Atlantic.”

P. 88. *Delay in and resumption of the Autobiography*.—Down to this period the Memoir was written in the year 1771, and the task was then laid aside for several years. In the meantime, the manuscript was shown to several of the author's friends, who pressed him to complete what he had begun. He accordingly yielded to their solicitations, and, to the part with which this chapter commences, he prefixed the following introductory remarks, and also the two letters to which he alludes.

“*Continuation of the Account of my Life, begun at Passy, near Paris, 1784.*

“It is some time since I received the above letters, but I have been too busy till now to think of complying with the request they contain. It might, too, be much better done if I were at home among my papers, which would aid my memory, and help to ascertain dates ; but my return being uncertain, and having just now a little leisure, I will endeavour to recollect and write what I can ; if I live to get home, it may there be corrected and improved.

“Not having any copy here of what is already written, I know not whether any account is given of the means I used to establish the Philadelphia public library ; which from a small beginning is now become so considerable. Though I remember to have come down to near the time of that transaction (1730). I will therefore

begin here with an account of it, which may be struck out if found to have been already given."

The letters referred to were from his friends, Benjamin Vaughan and Abel James. They may be found in the *Correspondence*, Vol. IX., p. 478, under the date of January 31st, 1783.—J. S.

P. 90. *Founding of the Philadelphia Library.*—It appears by a statement in Mr. Smith's *Notes for a History of the Library Company of Philadelphia*, that the above "instrument" was dated July 1st, 1731. The charter of incorporation was obtained from the Proprietaries of Pennsylvania in 1742. Franklin's name stands at the head of the list of the persons who applied for the charter, and to whom it was granted. The library has grown to be one of the largest in America. The spacious and handsome edifice in which it is contained was erected but a short time before Dr. Franklin's death. It is stated in the minutes of the Library Company, as quoted by Mr. Smith, "that, upon the suggestion of Dr. Franklin, a large stone was prepared, and laid at the south-east corner of the building, with the following inscription, composed by the Doctor, except so far as relates to himself, which the Committee have taken the liberty of adding to it.

' Be it remembered,
 In honour of the Philadelphia Youth,
 (Then chiefly artificers,)
 That in MDCCXXXI,
 They cheerfully
 At the Instance of Benjamin Franklin, :
 One of their Number,
 Instituted the Philadelphia Library,
 Which, though small at first,
 Is become highly valuable, and extensively useful,
 And which the Walls of this Edifice
 Are now destined to contain and preserve ;
 The first Stone of whose Foundation
 Was here placed
 The 31st of August, MDCCLXXXIX.' "

The marble statue of Dr. Franklin, which occupies a niche in front of the building, was executed in Italy, and presented to the Library Company by Mr. William Bingham—J. S.

P. 106. *Continuation of the narrative.*—The preceding chapter was written at Passy. In a memorandum which he made, when he again resumed the narrative four years afterwards, he says, "I am now about to write at home (Philadelphia), August, 1788, but cannot have the help expected from my papers, many of them being lost in the war. I have, however, found the following." He then proceeds as in the text.—J. S.

P. 109. *Poor Richard's Almanac*.—Considering the remarkable success of this Almanac, and the great celebrity it has attained, particularly the summary of maxims selected from it and published separately under the title of *The Way to Wealth*, the reader may be curious to see the advertisement of the first number, including the table of contents. It was printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on the 19th of December, 1732, as follows:—

“Just published, for 1733, An Almanac, containing the Lunations, Eclipses, Planets' Motions and Aspects, Weather, Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, High Water, etc.; besides many pleasant and witty Verses, Jest, and Sayings; Author's Motive of Writing; Prediction of the Death of his Friend, Mr. Titan Leeds; Moon no Cuckold; Bachelor's Folly; Parson's Wine and Baker's Pudding; Short Visits; Kings and Bears; New Fashions; Game for Kisses; Katherine's Love; Different Sentiments; Signs of a Tempest; Death of a Fisherman; Conjugal Debate; Men and Melons; The Prodigal; Breakfast in Bed; Oyster Lawsuit, etc. By Richard Saunders, Philomat. Printed and Sold by B. Franklin.”

Such was the eagerness with which this Almanac was sought that three editions were printed before the end of January, and, although he enlarged his first editions for the subsequent years, yet two editions were frequently required to supply the demand. In the Almanac for 1739 he makes the following apology for its miscellaneous character:—

“Besides the usual things expected in an Almanac, I hope the professed teachers of mankind will excuse my scattering here and there some instructive hints in matters of morality and religion. And be not thou disturbed, O grave and sober reader, if, among the many serious sentences in my book thou findest me trifling now and then and talking idly. In all the dishes I have hitherto cooked for thee there is solid meat enough for thy money. There are scraps from the table of wisdom that will, if well digested, yield strong nourishment for the mind. But squeamish stomachs cannot eat without pickles, which, it is true, are good for nothing else, but they provoke an appetite. The vain youth that reads my Almanac for the sake of an idle joke, will perhaps meet with a serious reflection that he may ever after be the better for.”

It is believed that a complete series of *Poor Richard's Almanac* is not now in existence. After much research I have not been able to find more than one-third of the numbers that were published.—J. S.

P. 110. *The Dialogue, etc.*—The *Dialogue* was printed in the year 1730; and the other piece in 1735.—J. S.

P. 111. *Franklin on Freedom*.—In 1737 he published a piece in his paper on the Freedom of Speech and of the Press. Again, late in life, he wrote a pointed satirical piece on this subject.—J. S.

P. 113. *Certain Pamphlets.*—None of these pamphlets has been found. Several anonymous tracts on this subject are advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, in the months of July, September, and October, 1735, some of which are probably the same that are here mentioned as having been written by Franklin.—J. S.

P. 130. *The Proprietaries and the Association.*—It appears that the Proprietaries were not pleased with this scheme of associating for the defence of the province. They deemed it an illegal act, and an exercise of too much power, to unite in this manner without the previous sanction of the government; and they feared it would prove a dangerous precedent, by encouraging the people to form combinations for making new claims to civil privileges, and new encroachments on the prerogatives of the Proprietaries.

As cannon were afterwards sent from England, it is probable that the Proprietaries became reconciled to the Association, when they were more fully informed of its objects.

“The new large cannon that lately arrived from England, purchased by the managers of the lottery, being mounted on the great battery, on Monday last, the associators of this city met under arms and marched thither; where they were saluted with one and twenty guns, and named the battery, **THE ASSOCIATION.**”—*Pennsylvania Gazette, September 1st, 1748.*—J. S.

P. 141. *The Free School.*—A free school was likewise attached to the academy, as appears by the following advertisement in Franklin's *Gazette* of September 19th, 1751.

“Notice is hereby given, that on Monday, the 16th of this instant September, a *free school* will be opened, under the care and direction of the Trustees of the Academy, at the New Building, for the instruction of poor children *gratis* in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Those who are desirous of having their children admitted, may apply to any of the Trustees.”

Again, October 26th, 1752. “The charity school, opened by the Trustees in the Academy, now teaches reading, writing, and arithmetic to a hundred poor children, most of whom, though from eight to thirteen years of age, had never been sent to any school before; nor did it seem likely many of them would ever have been sent to any school, if it had not been for this institution.”—J. S.

P. 146. *Founding of the Hospital.*—The principal facts respecting the origin and establishment of the Hospital are contained in a quarto pamphlet, entitled “*Some Account of the Pennsylvania Hospital from its first Rise to the Beginning of the Fifth Month, called May, 1754. Philadelphia; printed by B. Franklin and D. Hall.* The *Bill* alluded to in the text makes a part of this pamphlet; and also two papers previously published in the

Pennsylvania Gazette, showing the benefits of such an institution, and urging contributions to the fund from motives of benevolence and charity. The names of the original contributors are likewise printed in this pamphlet, and among them is that of Franklin. The preliminary arrangements were completed, and the first managers were elected, on the 1st of July, 1751.—J. S.

P. 170. *Franklin on Braddock's defeat*.—There are some errors in this account of Braddock's defeat. A full description of that event may be seen in *Washington's Writings*, Vol. II., p. 468.—J. S.

P. 188. *Franklin and the Royal Society*.—Dr. Franklin gives a further account of his election, in a letter to his son, Governor Franklin, from which the following is an extract:—

“London, 19 December, 1767.

“We have had an ugly affair at the Royal Society lately. One Dacosta, a Jew, who, as our clerk, was intrusted with collecting our moneys, has been so unfaithful as to embezzle near thirteen hundred pounds in four years. Being one of the Council this year, as well as the last, I have been employed all the last week in attending the inquiry into, and unravelling, his accounts, in order to come at a full knowledge of his frauds. His securities are bound in one thousand pounds to the Society, which they will pay, but we shall probably lose the rest. He had this year received twenty-six admission payments of twenty-five guineas each, which he did not bring to account.

“While attending to this affair, I had an opportunity of looking over the old council-books and journals of the Society, and, having a curiosity to see how I came in, of which I had never been informed, I looked back for the minutes relating to it. You must know, it is not usual to admit persons that have not requested to be admitted; and a recommendatory certificate in favour of the candidate, signed by at least three of the members, is by our rule to be presented to the Society, expressing that he is desirous of that honour, and is so and so qualified. As I never had asked, or expected the honour, I was, as I said before, curious to see how the business was managed. I found that the certificate, worded very advantageously for me, was signed by Lord Macclesfield, then President, Lord Parker, and Lord Willoughby; that the election was by an unanimous vote; and, the honour being voluntarily conferred by the Society, unsolicited by me, it was thought wrong to demand or receive the usual fees or composition; so that my name was entered on the list with a vote of council, *that I was not to pay anything*. And accordingly nothing has ever been demanded of me. Those who are admitted in the common way, pay five guineas admission fees, and two guineas

and a half yearly contributions, or twenty-five guineas down, in lieu of it. In my case a substantial favour accompanied the honour."—W. T. F.

P. 200. *Franklin's letter to his wife on landing in England.*—In a letter from Dr. Franklin to his wife, dated at Falmouth, the 17th of July, 1757, after giving her a similar account of his voyage, escape, and landing, he adds: "The bell ringing for church, we went thither immediately, and, with hearts full of gratitude, returned sincere thanks to God for the mercies we had received. Were I a Roman Catholic, perhaps I should on this occasion vow to build a chapel to some saint; but as I am not, if I were to vow at all, it should be to build a *lighthouse*."—W. T. F.

P. 214. *Franklin and the City of Edinburgh.*—While he was at Edinburgh, the freedom of the city was presented to him. The following is an extract from the record, dated the 5th of September, 1759: "Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia is hereby admitted a burges and guild-brother of this city, as a mark of the affectionate respect which the Magistrates and Council have for a gentleman whose amiable character, greatly distinguished for usefulness to the society which he belongs to, and love to all mankind, had long ago reached them across the Atlantic Ocean." On the 2nd of October the same compliment was paid to him by the magistrates of St. Andrew's.—J. S.

P. 241. *Franklin and the King of Denmark.*—Whilst the King of Denmark was on a visit to London, he sought the acquaintance of Dr. Franklin, who was one of the sixteen invited guests at a dinner, when the King dined in public, on the 1st of October, 1768. The company consisted mostly of foreign ambassadors and officers of distinction. The other English gentlemen who were present besides Dr. Franklin were Lord Moreton, Admiral Rodney, General Hervey, Mr. Dunning, and Dr. Maty.—J. S.

P. 241. *Franklin and the learned societies.*—Dr. Franklin was a member of nearly all the principal scientific and literary societies in America and Europe. By the diplomas and other evidences among his papers, it appears that he was one of the earliest members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at Boston; a member of the Royal Societies of London and Göttingen; of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris, to which place he was nominated by the King. Eight foreign members only belonged to the Society at that time. He was chosen in 1772, and succeeded the celebrated Van Swieten of Vienna. He was likewise a member of the Philosophical Societies of Rotterdam, Edinburgh, and Manchester; the Academy of Sciences, Belles Lettres, and Arts at Lyons; the Academy of Sciences and Arts at Padua; the Royal Academy of

History in Madrid ; the Patriotic Society of Milan ; the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg ; the Medical Society of London ; the Royal Medical Society of Paris ; and others, of which an exact list has not been obtained.—J. S.

P. 261. *American estimation of Franklin.*—The following extract from a letter written by Dr. Rush to Arthur Lee, will show the estimation in which Dr. Franklin was at this time held by his countrymen. “There is a general union among the colonies,” says Dr. Rush, “which no artifices of a ministry will be able to break. Dr. Franklin is a very popular character in every part of America. He will be received, and carried in triumph to his house, when he arrives amongst us. It is to be hoped he will not consent to hold any more offices under government. No step but this can prevent his being handed down to posterity among the first and greatest characters in the world.”—*Philadelphia, May 4th, 1774.*—J. S.

P. 262. *Franklin's former views on independence.*—He relates the following anecdote: “In the course of conversation Dr. Franklin said that more than sixteen years ago, long before any dispute with America, the present Lord Camden, then Mr. Pratt, said to him, ‘For all what you Americans say of your loyalty, and all that, I know you will one day throw off your dependence on this country ; and, notwithstanding your boasted affection for it, you will set up for independence.’ Dr. Franklin said that he answered him, ‘No such idea was ever entertained by the Americans, nor will any such ever enter their heads, unless you grossly abuse them.’ ‘Very true,’ replied Mr. Pratt, ‘that is one of the main causes I see will happen, and will produce the event.’”—*Journal, December 14th.*—J. S.

P. 263. *Mrs. Franklin's death.*—Mrs. Franklin died at Philadelphia, December 19th, 1774, and was buried in the cemetery of Christ's Church, on the side next to Arch Street.—J. S.

P. 265. *Franklin's later view on Independence.*—The above declaration, respecting the time when the Americans first conceived the idea of independence, is confirmed by the testimony of Washington, John Adams, Jay, Jefferson, Madison, and others who acted a conspicuous part in the Revolution. These all affirm that, before the commencement of hostilities, they aimed only at a redress of grievances and a restoration to their former rights.—See Sparks' Edition of *Washington's Writings*, Vol. II., p. 496.—J. S.

P. 288. *Poor Richard's Almanac.*—There are three separate translations of *Poor Richard* in the French language ; one by Dubourg, another by Quétant, and a third by Castéra. Many editions have been printed, and some of them in a beautiful style

of typography. It has also been translated into modern Greek ; and a new translation has been recently made from the French into Spanish by Mangino, and published, with a selection from Franklin's miscellaneous writings, in the same language.—J. S.

P. 289. *The French portraits of Franklin.*—*Histoire de France*, par CHARLES LACRETELLE, Tom. V., p. 92.—The same historian adds that portraits of Franklin were everywhere to be seen, with the sublime inscription, which was first applied to him by Turgot ;

"Eripuit celo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

—J. S.

P. 320. *The treaty with Prussia.*—Washington spoke of this treaty in terms of high commendation. In a letter to Count de Rochambeau he said : "The treaty of amity which has lately taken place between the King of Prussia and the United States marks a new era in negotiation. It is the most liberal treaty which has ever been entered into between independent powers. It is perfectly original in many of its articles ; and, should its principles be considered hereafter as the basis of connexion between nations, it will operate more fully to produce a general pacification, than any measure hitherto attempted amongst mankind."—*July 31st, 1786.*—J. S.

P. 336. *Franklin's former illness.*—Dr. Jones added the following particulars : "In the year 1735, Dr. Franklin had a severe pleurisy, which terminated in an abscess of his lungs ; and he was then almost suffocated by the quantity and suddenness of the discharge. A second attack, of a similar nature, happened some years after, from which he soon recovered ; and he did not appear to suffer any inconvenience in his respiration from these diseases."—J. S.

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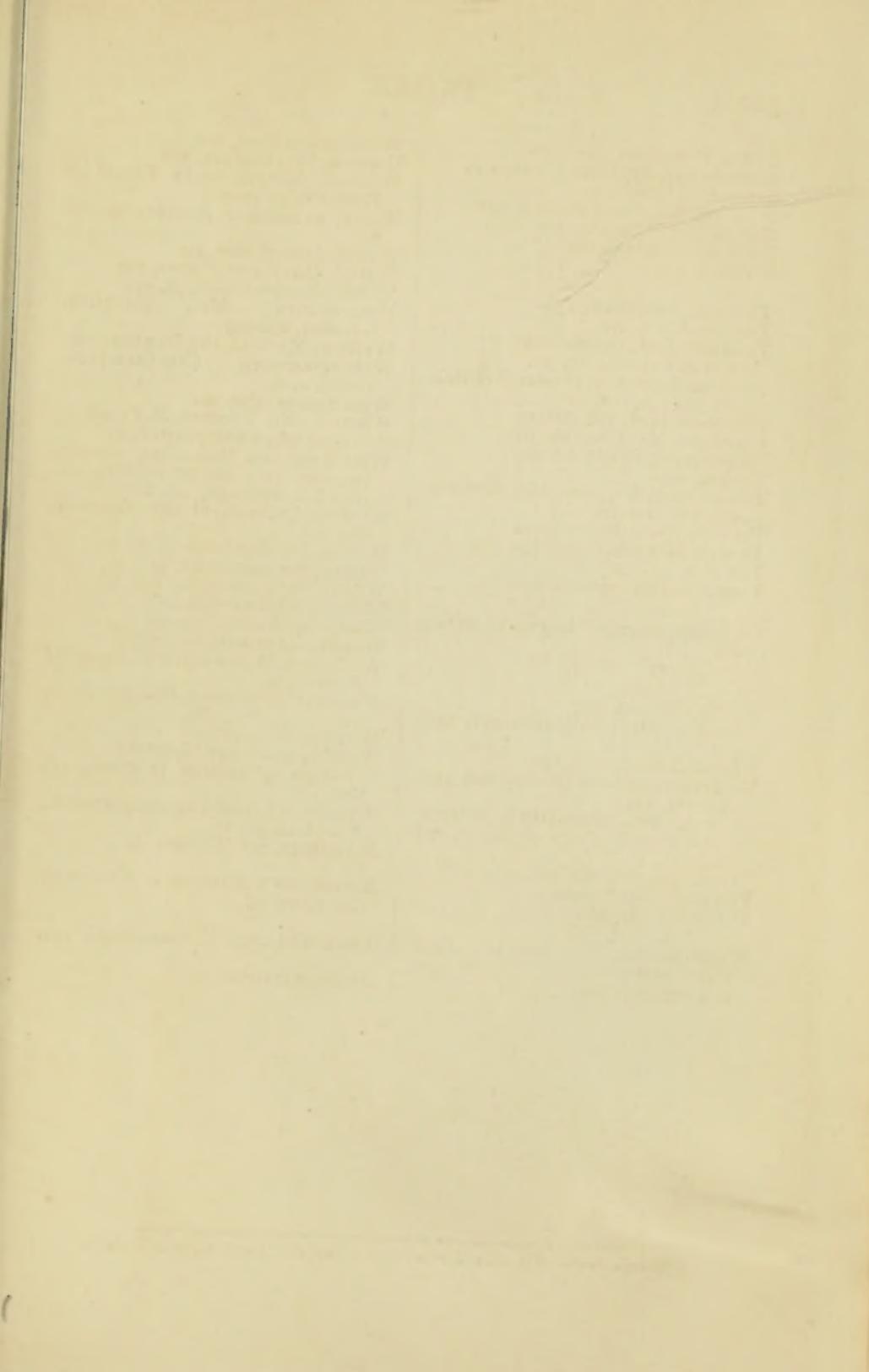
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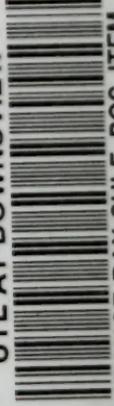


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