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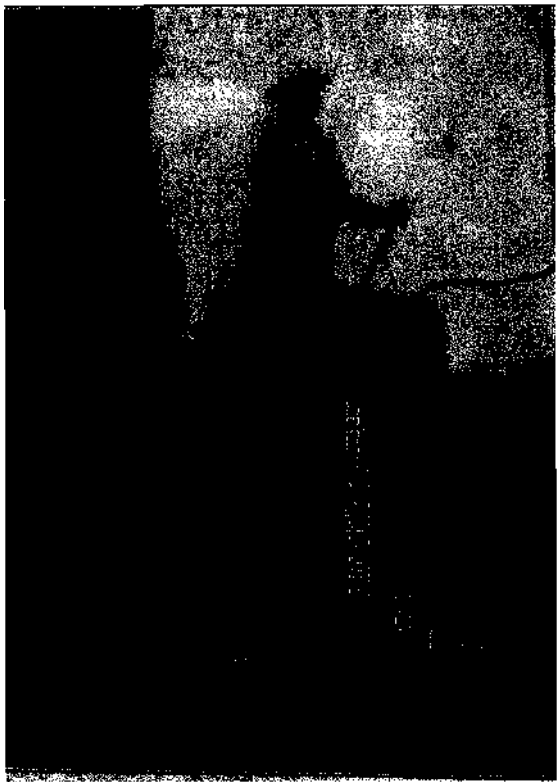
TRUE STORIES OF GREAT AMERICANS

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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TORONTO



FRANKLIN THE YOUTH

This statue, by R. Tait McKenzie, was unveiled in June, 1914, and slums the youthful Franklin on his long tramp through New Jersey. The statue stands in the grounds of the University of Pennsylvania, c which Benjamin Franklin was one of the founders. (See page 23.)

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BY

E. LAWRENCE DUDLEY

AUTHOR OF

"THE ISLE OF WHISPERS," "THE GHOST SHIP"

ETC.

" Then came a man endowed with every art
To serve his country; to allay its fears;
His name, beloved by every loyal heart,
Beams like a beacon down the flood of years."

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T H E author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Paul Leicester Ford's "The Many-sided Franklin," to Sydney George Fisher's "The True Benjamin Franklin," to Franklin's admirable Autobiography, and to James Parton's excellent "Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin," for much of the material contained in this book.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

CHAPTER I

FRANKLIN THE BOY

MORE than two hundred years ago there was born in Boston a baby who was destined to become the foremost man of his time. He became famous not only as a statesman but as a scientist as well, for that baby was our own Benjamin Franklin. He was born on Sunday, January 17, 1706, and was baptized in the famous old church — the Old South Church — just across the street from his birthplace. He was carried there by his father through deep snow, and was named Benjamin after his father's brother, who was then living in England. Later the brother came to this country and became the favorite uncle of his little namesake.

Benjamin's father, Josiah, was the youngest of four brothers, and had been born and bred in England, in the little village of Ecton, about sixty miles from London. It is a curious fact

that only a few miles away was situated the Manor of Sulgrave, the estate of the Washington family, from whom our George Washington was descended. But these latter were gentlefolk, while the Franklins were of the farmer and small tradesman class. And until 1755, when Benjamin Franklin, then a man of forty-nine, first met George Washington in the camp of General Braddock *in* this country, it is not likely that the two families had ever held any communication with each other.

For centuries the eldest son of the Franklin family had inherited the thirty-acre farm and the small stone dwelling-house and forge lying on the outskirts of Ecton, and there had plied the family trade of blacksmith, while the other sons were apprenticed out to other occupations. Josiah, being the youngest son, learned the trade of dyer, and for a time lived in Banbury, in England. About 1685, however, he decided to emigrate to this country, and with his wife and three small children undertook the long and tedious voyage to Boston.

The city was then about fifty years old, and had between five and six thousand inhabitants. Most of the townsfolk belonged to the stern Puritan type and lived simple lives with but few comforts and pleasures. There was always a

certain amount of bustle and movement along the water front, where the foreign ships unloaded their cargoes, and where the news of the world, often montris old, could be gathered from the sailors. But in the narrow, twisting streets which ran up into the town, everything was sedate and quiet; and beyond the limits of the city there was an almost unbroken wilderness. Tribes of Indians still lived in the surrounding country, coming into town to barter skins for beads and knives and bright-colored cloth; and in times of famine even wild animals, driven in by hunger, prowled the streets in search of food.

Here Franklin's father established himself. But finding that there was little chance to succeed in his trade of dyer, he soon turned to the more thriving business of tallow chandler and soap boiler. In those days it was the custom for tradesmen to mark their places of business by some special object; and to show where he sold his soap and candles Josiah fixed upon the sign of the Blue Ball.. The identical ball, about the size of a cocoanut, and bearing the name of Josiah Franklin in faded letters, hung at the corner of Union and Hanover streets for over one hundred and fifty years, and was to be seen as late as the time of the Civil War. It was to a house-on this

corner that Josiah moved from his home on I Street a short time after Benjamin was born.

Benjamin's mother was Josiah Franklin's second wife, and the daughter of one of the early settlers of the island of Nantucket. Her maiden name Abiah Folger. Benjamin himself was the thirteenth child in a family of seventeen, and the tenth and youngest son. Indeed, he tells us with so much pride that he was "the youngest son of the youngest son" for five generations, and states that it was nothing uncommon to have twelve or fourteen at his father's table every day.

Of his earliest years there is little or no record. One incident, however, although there is some doubt as to whether it really happened, has become so famous that it is worthy of mention. He related it himself years afterward in the form of a fable.

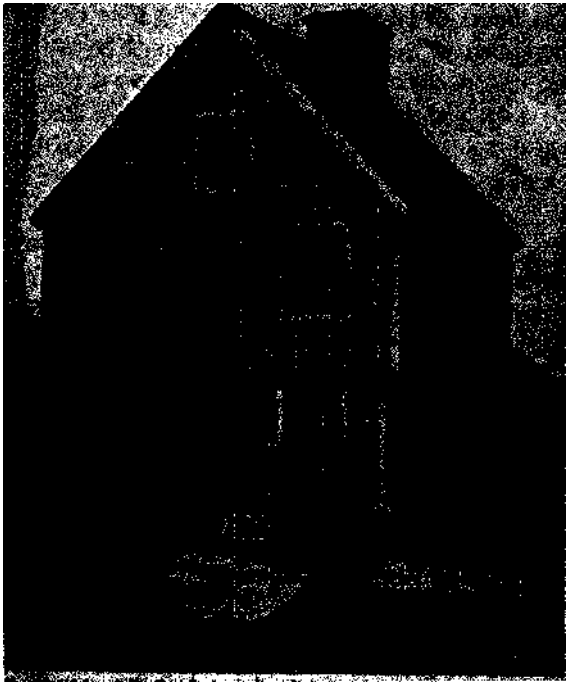
On a holiday, he tells us, his friends filled his pockets with coppers, and he went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children. Being charmed by the sound of a whistle which he heard another boy blowing, he bought one at the shop, giving all his money for it. Much pleased with his purchase, he went whistling all over the house, to the delight of himself, but to the great annoyance of his family. Finally his brothers and sisters

and cousins, learning the price he had paid for the whistle, told him that he had given four times as much as it was worth, and reminded him of all the good things he might have bought with the money, laughing at him so much that he cried with vexation. This event, he tells us, was afterward of use to him, for he remembered the lesson always; so that often, when he was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, he would say to himself, "Don't give too much for the whistle."

At the age of eight he was placed in the Boston Grammar School, his father at that time intending to make a minister of him; but before the year had come to a close his father had decided that the expense of educating him for the Church would be too great for his small means; and though Benjamin had risen to the head of his class and stood in line for speedy promotion, he was taken from the Grammar School and sent to a school kept by Mr. George Brownwell, noted for his skill in teaching writing and arithmetic. Here Benjamin remained for a year and learned to write a good hand, but failed entirely in arithmetic. At the end of that time, when only ten years old, he was taken out of school by his father to help him in his business, and for two years he cut candlewicks, rilled candle molds, attended shop, and ran errands. *

He disliked his work and no doubt welcomed his rare hours of leisure, when he could take part in the sports of his comrades. Like most boys who live on the coast, Benjamin soon became skilled in the management of boats, and was the acknowledged leader *in* all feats of swimming. In this latter sport he showed his talent for invention by making two oval palettes, each about ten inches long and six broad, with a hole for the thumb, similar to the palettes used by painters. When swimming he pushed the edges of these palettes forward and struck the water with their flat surfaces as he drew them back. He tells us that he swam faster by means of these palettes, but that they tired his wrists.

Another experiment, however, proved more successful. Let him describe it in his own words: "I amused myself one day with flying a paper kite; and approaching the bank of a pond which was near a mile broad, I tied the string to a stake, and the kite ascended to a very considerable height above the pond, while I was swimming. In a little time, being desirous of amusing myself with my kite, and enjoy at the same time the pleasure of swimming, I returned, and loosing from the stake the string with the little stick which was fastened to it, went again into the water, where I found that,



Beproducedfrom " The True Benjamin Franklin "
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THE HOUSE ON MILK STREET, BOSTON, IN WHICH FRANKLIN
WAS BORN, JANUARY 17TH, 1706.

(This house was torn down many years ago.)

lying on my back and holding the stick in my hands, I was drawn along the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner. Having then engaged another boy to carry my clothes around the pond to a place which I pointed out to him on the other side, I began to cross the pond with my kite, which carried me quite over without the least fatigue, and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. I was only obliged occasionally to halt a little in my course and resist its progress, when it appeared that by following it too quick I lowered the kite too much; by doing which occasionally I made it rise again."

By this time Boston had grown considerably. Hardly a week passed without the arrival of some vessel from Europe. We can easily imagine how Benjamin, together with other town boys, would haunt the Long Wharf, watch the great ships come to anchor in the harbor, and listen to the tales of shipwreck and piracy which the newly landed sailors might tell. For those were days when the seas were infested with pirates, and it was a dangerous undertaking to make a voyage.

Whether it was his love of adventure, or his dislike for the tallow chandler's trade, or both, at this time he developed a strong desire to go to sea.

How much the unexpected return of an older brother, who had sailed away nine years before

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

and had been given up for lost, had to do toward strengthening this wish, we do not know. It is not hard to imagine the breathless interest with which young Benjamin listened to his brother's thrilling adventures in India and the Far East. Little wonder he longed to go to sea.

But Benjamin's father objected to his going to sea, and in this stand he was probably aided by his brother Benjamin, the "Uncle Benjamin" after whom the boy had been named. This uncle had come to America in 1715, and was then living in the same house with his namesake. He was a quiet, studious man, with a fondness for writing verses. It was from him that young Benjamin acquired much of his early knowledge and his love for books and reading. The elder man had invented a system of shorthand, by means of which he took down sermons while they were being preached in church. This system he taught the boy; but, as Benjamin tells us later, he was never able to master it. It must have been a good deal of a task to take down the long sermons then preached.

Uncle Benjamin's "poetry books" are still in existence, and in them are several poems addressed to his nephew. The earliest was written when the boy was only four or five years of age, and is

said to have been inspired by a report that Benjamin had shown an inclination for warlike affairs. It runs as follows:

"Believe me, Ben, it is a dangerous trade,
The sword has many marred as well as made;
By it do many fall, not many rise —
Makes many poor, few rich, and fewer wise;
Fills towns with ruin, fields with blood; beside
'Tis sloth's maintainer, and the shield of pride.
Fair cities; rich to-day in plenty flow,
War fills with want to-morrow, and with woe."

When young Benjamin had served his father two years, the latter, probably still fearing that his son might slip off and ship on some vessel, decided to apprentice him to a more agreeable trade, and together they visited the various workshops of the town. Benjamin tells us that he watched the workmen with interest, and ever after it was a pleasure to him to see a good mechanic handle his tools. None of the trades, however, seems to have attracted him strongly. Finally it was decided that he should go for a few days into the shop of his cousin Samuel, the son of his Uncle Benjamin, who was a cutler, and see whether this business was to his liking.

Evidently it was not distasteful to him; but before he could become his cousin's apprentice,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

there was a large premium to be paid. This premium was a sum of money which every apprentice wishing to be taught a trade had to pay to the master who taught him. In the cutlery business it amounted to almost one hundred dollars. His cousin refused to take "Benjamin for less; and the latter, being unable to raise such an amount, was finally forced to return to his old occupation of candle-making.

It was then, for the first time, apparently, that the idea of making a printer out of him occurred to his father. James Franklin, an older brother of the boy, had learned the trade in London, and had lately returned to Boston where he had set up a printing-shop of his own. It was to this brother that Benjamin, then twelve years old, was finally apprenticed.

In those days when a boy was apprenticed he had to sign a paper which bound him to his master while he learned his master's trade, and in which he promised to serve his master faithfully, keep his master's secrets, and do his lawful commands. This paper was called an indenture. In the one which Benjamin signed he bound himself to his brother until he was twenty-one—a period of nine years. How he ran away long before this period had expired will appear later. But now it

FRANKLIN THE BOY

is enough to remember that Benjamin Franklin was at last beginning to learn the business with which his name has been so closely connected, and through which he was to gain at least a part of his great fame.

CHAPTER II

FRANKLIN THE APPRENTICE

IN the year 1718 a printing-house was a very different thing from what it is to-day. There were no typesetting machines, no great presses, no clatter and roar of machinery. The work was done entirely by hand, in small shops of two or three rooms. The master and the apprentice stood side by side at the cases setting the type, and when a page was finished they printed it on a small hand-press, not much larger than the ordinary letterpress of to-day. The work was slow, the hours long, and the things that were printed were usually dull and tiresome. The few story-books then in existence were published in England; and the printers of this country had to depend on sermons and other such serious writings as the authors of the colonies could produce.

During the first years of his apprenticeship this was the sort of thing that Benjamin helped to set up and print in his brother's shop "in Queen Street near the Prison, over against Mr. Mills's Schools."

FRANKLIN THE APPRENTICE

As an occupation, it certainly was dull enough, but it was more to his liking than the tallow chandler's trade, and in a short time he had made great progress in learning the business.

His spare hours, which came only after the shop had closed at night and before it opened again in the morning, he reserved for study and reading. In those days there were no public libraries, while good books were expensive and few in number. One of his earliest and most prized possessions was John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and this, it is said, he afterward sold in order to buy a collection of historical works in forty little volumes. Whether he sold these in turn to buy other volumes is not known.

Once established in his brother's business, he made friends with the apprentices in the nine or ten booksellers' shops then in Boston, and through them he was able to borrow volumes from their masters' shelves. Often he sat up in his room the greater part of the night reading when the book, borrowed in the evening, had to be returned early the next morning so that it might not be missed.

Inspired, perhaps, by his Uncle Benjamin's example, there was a short time in his thirteenth year when he took to writing verses. It was the custom then, as it continued to be for years after-

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

ward, to describe passing events *in a*, sort of doggerel poetry. These compositions were sold in the shops and on the streets, and some of them became very popular. Only two of Benjamin's were printed, both of them by his brother. One, "The Lighthouse Tragedy," described a shipwreck which had occurred not long before; it narrated at great length the drowning of the captain of the ill-fated vessel and his two daughters. The other, a sailor's song, gave a thrilling account of a battle with pirates, in which Blackbeard, the most famous pirate of that day, had been defeated and taken prisoner. These ballads, which Benjamin himself took out on the streets to sell, made quite a success. His brother wished him to continue writing them, but his father ridiculed them and discouraged him by telling him that verse-makers were generally beggars. "So," says Benjamin, very wisely, "I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one."

He persisted, however, in his efforts to perfect himself in writing prose, and for the next few years, with the aid of an English grammar and an odd volume of Addison's "Spectator," he worked faithfully at his self-appointed task.

His lack of spare time was always a hindrance, but in his sixteenth year he hit upon a scheme whereby he gained the greater part of the noon

hour for study. A man named Tryon had written a book recommending people to do without meat and live entirely on a vegetable diet. This volume fell into Benjamin's hands, and he decided to follow its ideas. As his brother's apprentice, it was James Franklin's duty to board and lodge Benjamin, whose refusal to eat meat, and whose demand for other sorts of food, caused some inconvenience. Finally Benjamin told his brother that if he would give him half the money paid for his board he would, board himself. James gladly consented. Benjamin found that, with care, he could save half of the stipulated allowance, which gave him additional money for buying the coveted books. But there was still another advantage, for now he could take his simple dinner with him in the morning; and by eating it at the printing-shop, while the others went home, he could have nearly the whole hour to himself.

It was about this time that James Franklin decided to start a fortnightly newspaper. In 1719 he had been given the job of printing the *Boston Gazette*, a paper owned by the postmaster of Boston, and the third newspaper ever issued in America. **But** the contract lasted only a little while; and James, who had bought the type and supplies necessary to turn out the paper, suddenly found

himself left in the lurch. In August, 1721, therefore, in spite of the protests of his friends, who thought the undertaking too risky, he published the first number of the *New England Courant*.

From the first the paper appears to have prospered. James gathered around him a group of clever young men who contributed articles and witty comments on current events. It was the custom of these men to meet at the printing-house and discuss the next issue. Hearing their talk and the praise with which their contributions were received, Benjamin himself was led to try his hand at writing something for the paper.

Fearing that his brother would not print any contribution by him, he wrote it in the form of a letter, disguising his handwriting; and on a certain night, after every one had left, he slipped it quietly under the door of the printing-house. The next day, as he worked in the shop, he could hear the little band of contributors discussing his article and wondering who the author, "Mrs. Silence Dogood," might be. It is not hard to imagine his pride when the article appeared in the next issue of the *Courant*; and when, in the same issue, he saw a notice to the effect that, "As the favour of Mrs. Dogood's Correspondence is acknowledged by the Publisher of this Paper, lest any of her Let-

ters should miscarry, he desires they may be deliver'd at his Printing-Office, or at the Blue Balls in Union Street, and no questions will be ask'd of the Bearer."

In the first letter "Mrs. Dogood" announced that "she" intended once a fortnight to present the readers of the *Contant* with a short "Epistle," and this promise was carried out to the number of fourteen articles. At the end of that time Benjamin' small store of subjects had run out, and he finally confessed his secret to his brother. These letters are his first contribution to journalism.

Not long after, however, James Franklin and his paper became involved with the authorities. About this time vaccination for smallpox had been introduced in England, and shortly after the colonies had learned of this means of prevention. The ministers of Boston, and especially the famous Cotton Mather, had welcomed the idea and adopted it. The writers for the *Courant*, who from the beginning had poked fun at the ministers, at once attacked the new discovery. The ministers replied, and for months the wordy war waged between them. Finally, in June, 1722, after the appearance of an article in the *Courant*, which criticized the government of the colony, the-Authorities intervened and threw James Franklin into

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prison. He remained in jail a month, and was only released when he had apologized humbly.

During the time of his brother's imprisonment Benjamin managed the printing-shop and conducted the *Courant*. But neither he nor the little knot of contributors appear to have been frightened by the government's attitude, for the paper continued to assail the government and the ministers with greater bitterness than before..

Six months later, however, in January, 1723, the authorities again stepped in; and this time they forbade James to print or publish the *Courant* or any other pamphlet or paper of like nature until it had first been examined by the Secretary of the Province.

It may easily be imagined what dismay this news caused in the little printing-shop. It was at last decided that the paper should be issued in Benjamin's name instead of in that of his brother. Furthermore, in order to avoid the charge that he was continuing to print the *Courant* under the name of his apprentice, James canceled the boy's indentures and returned them to him, causing him, however, to sign new indentures which were to be kept secret.

The first issue of the *Courant* bearing Benjamin Franklin's name as publisher appeared in Febru-

FRANKLIN THE APPRENTICE

ary, 1723 ; and until some time in the late summer or early autumn of that year, when Benjamin, then only seventeen years old, quarreled with his brother and left him forever, he continued to publish the paper.

For a long time there had been serious differences between the two brothers. James was harsh and overbearing; Benjamin, a youth of spirit, naturally resented it. Bitter disputes occurred. It was after one of these quarrels, more violent than usual, that Benjamin, a lad of seventeen, hot with anger at James's insults, took advantage of his canceled indentures and left his brother's service.

To revenge himself, James went to the other printing-shops in Boston and gave such a poor account of his brother that later, when Benjamin applied to the masters for work, they all refused to employ him.

With the doors of his trade shut against him, Benjamin decided to try his fortunes elsewhere. He secured a berth on a vessel bound for New York, selling some of his precious books to pay the passage money; and some time in August or September, 1723, with all his belongings packed in a single chest, he set sail from Boston. .

CHAPTER III

FRANKLIN THE RUNAWAY

THE voyage from Boston to New York was made safely in three days. Only one incident connected with it has come down to us. While the vessel was becalmed for a short time off Block Island the sailors amused themselves by fishing for cod. Benjamin, who still clung to his vegetable diet, looked on disapprovingly. He regarded the taking of life for the sake of obtaining food as something akin to murder. Later, however, when the fish were being cooked and he smelt their appetizing odor, he was very much tempted to break his rule and eat his share. For a while he struggled against the temptation. Then it suddenly occurred to him that when the fish had been opened he had seen smaller fish in their stomachs. If they ate one another, he thought to himself, why should I not eat them? Satisfied by his argument, he joined the others of the company at dinner and made a hearty meal — which included fish!

New York was then smaller than Boston, It

FRANKLIN THE RUNAWAY

was a compact little town, with gabled roofs, cobblestone sidewalks, and narrow crooked lanes for streets. Its inhabitants were still chiefly Dutch; and to such an extent had they carried their love for cleanliness that some unknown wit, in speaking of the pavements, declared that the stones which formed them were swept so thoroughly that they stood up sharp and prominent, to the great inconvenience of those who were not accustomed to them. The Philadelphian in New York, he wrote, walked the streets with painful caution, as though his feet were lamed with the gout; while the New Yorker shuffled along the smooth pavements of Philadelphia "like a parrot on a mahogany table."

At the time of Benjamin's arrival in New York there was not a single bookstore in the city, and only one printing-office. The owner of this shop, William Bradford, had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but had left Philadelphia after a quarrel with the authorities. Benjamin applied to him for work, but Bradford had nothing to offer. He told the boy, however, that his son Andrew, **in** Philadelphia, had lately lost his apprentice, and miglit employ him. A little discouraged, but still undaunted, Benjamin took the old-man's **suggestion and** immediately embarked on a ves-

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sel bound for Amboy, in the province of New Jersey.

It was a crazy old boat with rotten sails, manned by only one boatman. As they crosseti New York Bay a squall struck them, tearing their sail to pieces and driving them over toward the Long Island shore. In the midst of the storm a drunken Dutchman, the only other passenger, fell overboard. Benjamin caught him by his hair and managed to drag him on board again. A little sobered by his ducking, the Dutchman pulled a book out of his pocket and handed it to Benjamin, asking the latter to dry it for him. It proved to be Benjamin's old favorite, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," printed in Dutch.

The boat, now beyond the control of the boatman, continued to sweep on toward the shore. The surf was too high for them to land, and finally they were forced to cast anchor. Some people appeared on the beach and called to them, but the thunder of the waves was too loud for them to be heard. Seeing canoes on the shore, Benjamin and the boatman made signs for the people to come out and fetch them; but the people **either** did not understand or did not care to risk **their** lives in such a gale and finally went away.

This ended all hope of getting ashore that **night**.

FRANKLIN THE RUNAWAY

Benjamin and the boatman, creeping into the tiny cabin, lay down beside the drunken Dutchman and got what sleep they could, while the spray, breaking over the boat, leaked through the planking and soaked them to the skin.

In the morning the wind had gone down, and before sunset they were able to reach Amboy. They had been thirty hours on the water without food.

That evening Benjamin found himself rather feverish. He had heard somewhere that cold water was an excellent remedy for fever, and so drank several glasses before he went to bed. In the morning the fever had entirely disappeared, and he started out bravely on his long walk of fifty miles across New Jersey.

He headed toward Burlington, a little town on the Delaware River, where he hoped to get a boat to take him to Philadelphia; but it rained so hard all day that he stopped at a little inn at noon, and remained there for the night.

Now, for the first time, he began to wish he had not left home. His clothes, poor enough when he started from Boston, had become shabby and worn from the rain and exposure. He had very little money, and no immediate prospect of earning any more. He was going to a city where he was an absolute stranger. To dishearten him still more,

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he found from the questions asked him by the people at the inn that he was suspected of being a runaway servant.

Afraid of being arrested, he left the inn the next morning as early as he could, and walked all day, arriving at another inn, about ten miles from Burlington, that evening. Here he spent the night, and reached Burlington the following forenoon.

It was Saturday; and he discovered to his disappointment that the regular boat had already left for Philadelphia, and that there would be no other until Tuesday. Not knowing what to do, he went to the house of an old woman from whom he had bought a piece of gingerbread, and asked her advice. She invited him to stay with her; and when he accepted gladly she gave him a dinner of "ox-cheek," for which she would not take a penny.

He believed that he would have to remain in Burlington for several days. Instead, that very evening, as he walked along the bank of the river, a boat appeared, bound for Philadelphia. There were already several passengers aboard, and Benjamin joined them.

As there was no wind, they were forced to row. About midnight, Philadelphia not having yet been sighted, some of the passengers insisted that they must have passed the city in the darkness. Fancy

FRANKLIN THE RUNAWAY

passing Philadelphia without knowing it! Yet this would have been quite possible in that day, since Philadelphia was then a small settlement and all its lights were put out early. At any rate, the men refused to row any further; and as none of the company — neither crew nor passengers — knew where they were, it was decided to wait until daylight. They turned into a creek, and landing near an old fence, tore down the rails and made a fire of them, for it was October and the night was chilly.

At the first streak of dawn one of the company recognized the place as the mouth of Cooper's Creek, and as soon as they put out into the river again they spied Philadelphia a few miles away. An hour's row brought them to the city, where they landed at Market Street Wharf between eight and nine o'clock on Sunday morning.

Benjamin went ashore immediately. He was in his working clothes and dirty from his journey. His pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings. He knew no one in the town, nor where to find a lodging. He was fatigued from traveling, rowing, and the want of rest. He was very hungry as well, and his whole stock of money consisted of a Dutch dollar and about a shilling in coppers.

The latter he gave to the crew of the boat for his passage, — perhaps for the privilege of rowing! — and then walked up the street, gazing about him. Near the market-house, he met a boy with bread. Learning from the boy where the bread came from, he went to a baker's shop on Second Street and purchased three great puffy rolls. With one of these under each arm, and eating the third, he continued up Market Street as far as Fourth Street. On the way he passed the house of Mr. Read, whose young daughter, Deborah, was standing in the doorway. She smiled at his awkward appearance, little dreaming that in later years she was to be his wife!

Reaching Fourth Street, then on the outskirts of the city, he turned south to Chestnut Street, and returned to the river front, still eating his roll.

He paused near the wharf where he had landed, and took a drink of water from the river. Then, having satisfied his hunger, he gave his remaining two rolls to a woman and her child who had come down the river with him, and who were waiting at the wharf to continue their journey.

It was then perhaps ten o'clock, and turning again up Market Street, he found that it was now filled with neatly dressed people, all going in the same direction. Benjamin joined them, and soon

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arrived at the principal meetinghouse of the Quakers, situated at the corner of Second and Market streets. Following the throng into the building he found a seat, and after looking around a while, and hearing nothing said, fell fast asleep in his corner. On and on he slept until some one gently woke him and told him that the meeting was over.

It was now noon, and high time for him to seek a lodging. He again walked down toward the river, and meeting a young Quaker whose face he liked, he asked to be directed to an inn. The young man pointed out "The Three Mariners" tavern.

"There," he said, "is one place that entertains strangers, but if thee will walk with me I will show thee a better."

He then led Benjamin along the wharves to an inn called "The Crooked Billet." Here Benjamin obtained food and lodging. After dinner he lay down without undressing, and slept until he was called for supper; and after supper he went to bed again and again slept soundly. Thus ended his first day, and a sleepy one, in Philadelphia, the city which was to be his home for the remainder of his long life.

CHAPTER IV

FRANKLIN THE JOURNEYMAN

EARLY the next morning Benjamin repaired to Andrew Bradford's shop, where, to his surprise, he found old Mr. Bradford, whom he had met in New York and who had arrived in Philadelphia more quickly than Benjamin, for he had traveled on horseback. But here again disappointment awaited him, for Andrew had no employment to give him. After a short talk the elder Mr. Bradford offered to introduce him to one Samuel Keimer who had lately opened a small printing-shop in the city and might be in want of assistance.

They proceeded at once to Keimer's office, where they discovered the latter busily engaged in composing an elegy on a young man of some prominence in the town who had lately died. He bore the curious name of Aquila Rose. Keimer's manner of composing his verses was to set them up in type just as they came into his head, without first writing them down on paper. There was only one case of type; and the elegy was so

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long it was likely to require all of it. There was no written version to be set in type, so Keimer could have no help in setting it up. Benjamin tried to put the press — of which Keimer appeared to know nothing — into some sort of working order, and then, promising to come back and print the elegy as soon as it was set up, returned to Andrew Bradford's shop, where he obtained temporary lodging. A few days later Keimer sent for him. Here are the opening lines of this curious old poem:

AN ELEGY

On the much lamented death of the ingenious
and well-beloved

AQUILA ROSE

Clerk to the Honourable Assembly at Philadelphia, who died
the twenty-fourth of the fourth month.

1723.

Aged 28.

What mournful accents thus accost mine ear,
What doleful echoes hourly thus appear!
What sighs from melting hearts proclaim aloud
The solemn mourning of this numerous crowd.
In sable characters the news is read,
Our Rose is withered, and our Eagle's fled,
In that our dear Aquila Rose is dead. . . .

There are a hundred or more lines in which the poet describes at great length the birth, education,

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emigration, courtship, accomplishments, and ultimate happy destiny of the departed Aquila.

Meanwhile some extra work had been thrown in Keimer's way, and when the elegy was printed he took Benjamin into his regular employment. Benjamin found him poorly equipped for his trade. Keimer was something of a scholar and could set type with a fair degree of facility, but he knew nothing of presswork; so Benjamin, who had received a good training in this branch of the business, took the printing under his special charge.

He still lodged with Andrew Bradford; but Keimer, displeased at the thought of his assistant living under the roof of a rival printer, sought other quarters for him, and finally procured him a room in Mr. Read's house near Fourth and Market streets. Mr. Read's daughter, Deborah, was the young girl who had smiled at Benjamin as he had passed by on his first walk through the city on that memorable Sunday morning. But his chest, which he had sent around from New York by sea, had now arrived, and he was able to appear before her in more presentable clothes.

Through Mr. Read, Mr. Bradford, and his employer, Benjamin soon began to make acquaintances, especially among the young people of the town, and he spent many pleasant evenings in

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their company. His chief friends were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, three youths employed as clerks, all of them great readers and fond of discussing literature. They all had tried their hands at writing, and one of them, Ralph, had ambitions of becoming a poet.

At one of their gatherings it was arranged that each should write a poem and submit it for criticism at their next meeting. A day or two before the day of the meeting Ralph called on Benjamin privately and, showing him his production, asked his opinion of it. Benjamin praised it, and told Ralph that he had been too busy to write anything himself. Ralph then suggested that Benjamin take the poem and pass it off as his own.

"Osborne," he said, "will never 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 will pretend not to have had time and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it."

Benjamin, always fond of a joke, assented to the proposition, and copied out the poem so that it would appear in his own handwriting.

At the meeting Watson's and Osborne's performances were read and criticized. Ralph applauded the latter's poem especially, and con

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fessed regretfully that he had been unable to prepare anything. Benjamin was then called on. He was — apparently — very bashful and asked to be excused, but they would accept no excuses. He must read his production. He did. And Watson and Osborne, joining in its praise, gave up the contest.

Ralph alone attempted some criticisms, but Osborne told him frankly that he was as poor a critic as he was a poet! At their next meeting Ralph confessed the trick which had been played, and Osborne in turn became the laughingstock.

Meanwhile an incident occurred which was to have a far-reaching effect on Benjamin's fortunes. Robert Holmes, his brother-in-law, was master of a vessel which traded between Boston and Delaware. Arriving at Newcastle, some forty miles below Philadelphia, he learned that Benjamin was in the latter city and wrote him, telling him of his family's anxiety at his absence, and assuring him of their good will if he would return. Benjamin answered his letter by thanking him for his advice, and stating his reasons for quitting Boston in such a way as to convince Holmes that he was in the right and his friends in Boston were in the wrong.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province

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of Pennsylvania, was then staying at Newcastle, and Holmes showed him Benjamin's letter. The governor was greatly pleased at the way it was written, and much surprised when he learned Benjamin's age. He told Holmes that Benjamin should be encouraged and that he would do all in his power to aid him.

A few days later, while Keimer and Benjamin were working near the window of the printing-shop, they spied Sir William and another gentleman—who afterward turned out to be Colonel French of Newcastle—cross the street and knock at the door. Keimer, thinking it was a visit to him, ran immediately and let them in. The governor, however, asked for Benjamin, and on being introduced to him, paid him many compliments and invited him to a near-by tavern where he and Colonel French were going to have a glass of Madeira. Benjamin was astounded, while Keimer stared at the governor with eyes popping out of his head. Benjamin accepted the invitation, however; and over the wine Sir William proposed his setting up for himself in Philadelphia. Both the governor and Colonel French assured him that he should have their support and influence in procuring the printing of both provinces. Benjamin explained that he had no capital and doubted whether his

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father would assist him. But the governor promised to give him a letter to Josiah Franklin, in which he would recommend the latter to advance him the required amount. It was finally concluded that Benjamin should go to Boston on the first vessel that sailed. Meantime the whole matter was to be kept a secret, and he was to continue to work for Keimer as usual.

Some time passed, however, before he could get passage, and it was early in May, 1724, before he landed in Boston. He had been absent more than seven months, and his family received him with open arms.

When Benjamin presented his letter from Sir William, his father did not take kindly to the suggestions contained in it, and finally, after some weeks, decided not to grant the governor's requests. To Josiah's mind, Benjamin was still too young to be intrusted with the management of a business so important and for which the preparation must be so expensive. He did, however, promise Benjamin that he would aid him later, and see that he was properly established when he was twenty-one.

Benjamin returned to Philadelphia and reported his lack of success to the governor. The latter declared that Benjamin's father was too prudent.

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"Since he will not set you up," he continued, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England and I will send forthem. 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 said with such apparent cordiality that Benjamin could find no reason for doubting Sir William's good intentions, and immediately set about preparing a list of things necessary for the stocking of a small printing-house. It would cost about five hundred dollars. Sir William approved it and suggested to Benjamin that he himself go to England to purchase the supplies. "And while there," he said, "you may make acquaintances and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery way."

Benjamin agreed that the trip might be of great value to him.

"Then," said Sir William, "get yourself ready to go with Annis."

Annis was the captain of the *London-Hope*, the annual ship running between London and Philadelphia; and as some months must pass before she sailed, Benjamin returned to his work in Keimer's shop.

In the meantime Keimer had conceived the

notion of formulating a new religion, and he tried to persuade Benjamin to join it. Keimer was to preach the doctrines, and Benjamin, whose powers of argument Keimer had already tested, was to confute all opponents. Two of the essentials of the religion were to wear one's beard at full length and to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath. Benjamin disliked them both, but agreed to them, providing Keimer would adopt *his* new doctrine, the doctrine of eating no meat. Although he was a great glutton, Keimer consented, and for three months they lived on a vegetable diet. Then Keimer declared he could stand it no longer. He invited Benjamin and some friends to a dinner of roast pig. The pig, however, was cooked ahead of time, and Keimer, unable to resist the temptation, ate the whole of it before his guests arrived! This, so far as Benjamin was concerned, ended his connection with the new "religion."

The time for the departure of the *London-Hope* arrived, and Benjamin called at the governor's house to take his leave, and to receive the letters of introduction and the money which Sir William had promised him. He was told that the governor was busy and could not see him. He called a second time, and a second time he received the same answer. Finally, when the ship was on the

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point of sailing, the governor's secretary informed him that Sir William had business in Newcastle, where the *London-Hope* was to stop, and would there deliver to him the letters and funds sufficient for his trip.

Benjamin, doubting nothing, sailed with the ship to Newcastle, and proceeded at once to the governor's lodgings. Once more he was told that Sir William could not see him, and that the letters and money would be sent to him on board. Benjamin returned to the ship, a little puzzled at the governor's attitude, but still trustful.

A few hours later Colonel French came aboard with the governor's dispatches and delivered them to the captain. Benjamin, supposing that his own letters were among them, asked the captain's permission to sort them out from the rest. The captain refused, saying that they were all together in one bag and that he had no time to hunt them up; but promising Benjamin that he would be allowed to pick them out before they reached England. Benjamin was satisfied, and they proceeded on their voyage.

They had a rough but otherwise uneventful passage. When they arrived in the English Channel the captain gave Benjamin his promised opportunity to examine the dispatch-bag for the

governor's letters; but, to his surprise and dismay, Benjamin found none marked with his name or in his care. He picked out several, however, that he thought might be his, especially one directed to Basket, the king's printer, and another addressed to a well-known stationer; so, immediately upon the ship's arrival in London, he waited upon the latter, delivering him the letter as from Governor Keith.

"I don't know Governor Keith," said the stationer; then, opening the letter, "Oh, this is from Riddlesden!" he cried. "I have lately found him a complete rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him." And returning the letter to the astonished and dismayed Benjamin, he swung on his heel and left him to serve a customer.

It was then, for the first time, that Benjamin began to doubt the governor's sincerity. Among the passengers on board the *London-Hope* there had been a Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant of Philadelphia; and Benjamin now sought him out and asked his advice. Mr. Denham told him that in all probability the governor had written no letters at all for him, and had certainly given him no money, since he had no money to give. No one, continued Mr. Denham, who knew Sir William placed any faith in him. He was noted for making promises which were never fulfilled.

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Astounded and thoroughly disheartened at what he had heard, Benjamin discussed the situation with his new friend and confessed that he did not know what to do. Mr. Denham advised him to get employment in some printing-house in London.

"Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America you will be able to set up to greater advantage."

Poor Benjamin, at his wits' end, and with scarcely enough money to pay for his return passage, finally decided to adopt the friendly suggestion.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND

IN the hope of bettering his fortune, Benjamin's friend James Ralph had accompanied him to England. He had spent all his money on his passage, and Benjamin had only about fifty dollars left. They decided that it was cheaper to live together and so took lodgings in a narrow old street called Little Britain, at three shillings and sixpence a week.

It would have been interesting to see the two young strangers as they wandered about the big city of London. No greater contrast could have been found than that between our two young men. Benjamin was slow and hesitating in speech, solemn and often grave in his manner, intent only on making his way in the world and becoming a successful man of business; while Ralph was gay and sprightly, an excellent talker, handsome, and very much at his ease. Of the two he appeared to have the better chance to succeed.

But Benjamin had the advantage of **knowing** a

trade; and within a few days he was able to secure a position in Palmer's printing-house. Ralph sought in vain for employment. His first idea was to join a troupe of actors, but no manager would take him. Then he proposed to a publisher to start a weekly paper something like the "Spectator." The publisher would not listen to him; and finally he tried to *get* odd jobs of copying legal papers for lawyers, but failed even in that. Meanwhile, he borrowed from Benjamin and depended on him to pay his bills.

For some months the two youths lived from hand to mouth. Then Ralph heard of a position as schoolmaster in a country school and decided to take it, leaving his friend without even offering to repay his loans.

While he was at Palmer's printing-house Benjamin wrote a little pamphlet called "A Dissertation on Liberty and Neccessity, Pleasure and Pain." A copy fell into the hands of a surgeon named Lyon, who sought out the young author and made his acquaintance. He took Benjamin to "The Horns," a tavern in Cheapside, and introduced him to Dr. Mandeville, a writer and well-known wit. The latter was the leading spirit in a little club of literary men who assembled at the tavern. Through him **and Lyon, Benjamin** made many friends **and**

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listened with delight to their conversation; and though only twenty years old he took part in their discussions and was treated almost as an equal.

It happened that he had brought with him from America a purse made of asbestos. This curious material was then a great rarity and not many persons in England knew very much about it. Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum and a great collector of curiosities, heard of the purse, and called upon Benjamin to see it. He was so interested in it that he at once paid the lad a good price for it, and took him to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where he entertained him handsomely.

Thus Benjamin, with his wonderful ability to charm and attract, soon found himself well supplied with friends. But in money affairs he was not so successful, and he had been in London almost a year before he began to think of laying a little money aside. He no longer had James Ralph to take care of; and, in the hope of more profitable work, he left Palmer's shop and secured a position in Watts's printing-house. This was a much larger establishment and employed more than fifty workmen.

In those days it was the custom of printers to drink great quantities of beer during their working



Reproduced from Ford's "The Many Sided Franklin" through the courtesy of the Century Company.

PRESS AT WHICH FRANKLIN WORKED IN WATTS'S PRINTING-
OFFICE, LONDON.

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hours. "My companion at the press," says Benjamin, "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." Benjamin considered it a detestable practice, and drank only water himself. At first the workmen laughed at him and called him "the Water-American." But when he proved to them that he was stronger than they were, they began to wonder and could not understand how he could keep his strength without drinking beer. He tried to convince them that there was more nourishment in a pennyworth of bread than in a whole quart of beer, and finally persuaded a number of them to give up the drinking habit.

At Watts's printing-house he made the acquaintance of a young workman named Wygate and won his admiration by teaching him to swim in two lessons. Wygate came from a good family and had been better educated than most printers. It chanced that a party of his friends from the country were then stopping in London. He introduced Benjamin to them and they went on many little excursions together. One day, as they were returning from a trip on the Thames, Benjamin,

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at their request, stripped, and leaping into the river, swam from Chelsea to Blackfriars, a distance of four miles. They were astonished at his skill, especially at some feats which he performed both on and under the water. Wygate, who wished to become as great a master of the sport, grew more attached to him than ever.

It was shortly after this incident that he proposed to Benjamin that they should leave Watts's employment and travel over Europe together, supporting themselves by their trade. Benjamin rather liked the idea; but Mr. Denham, to whom he mentioned it, advised him to return to Philadelphia, and offered him a position as clerk in his store. The salary, two hundred and fifty dollars a year, was less than Benjamin was getting as a printer, but there was greater chance for advancement; so Benjamin, who had grown tired of London and his life there, finally accepted the merchant's offer.

Mr. Denham was already making preparations to return, and the lad entered his employment at once, giving up, forever as he supposed, the trade of printer.

He had said good-by to his friends and was almost ready to sail when Sir William Wyndham, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a very

influential man in London, sent for him. Benjamin knew him only by name. Surprised at the summons, he responded immediately. Sir William told him that he had heard of his skill in swimming and wished to have his two sons taught. He offered to pay Benjamin liberally, but as neither of Sir William's sons had yet arrived in London, and as Benjamin's stay was uncertain, the latter was forced to refuse. It occurred to him, however, that if he were to remain in England and open a swimming-school he might earn a great deal of money; and if the suggestion had been made to him sooner, it is possible that he might never have returned to America.

He and Mr. Denham sailed from Gravesend on July 23, 1726, and landed in Philadelphia on October n, after a voyage of eighty-two days.

Benjamin had spent about eighteen months in London. Most of that time he had worked hard and saved little. He had by no means improved his fortune, but had made some valuable friends, and had acquired a knowledge of men and of the world which was to be of immense advantage to him.

CHAPTER VI

THE JUNTO

ON his arrival in Philadelphia Benjamin found several changes. Sir William Keith was no longer governor, while Keimer had moved his shop into larger quarters, had supplied it with stationery and new type, had a number of workmen under him, and appeared to be very prosperous.

Mr. Denham took a building in Water Street, where he opened his store. Benjamin attended diligently to the business, learned how to keep accounts, and in a short time became an excellent salesman. He enjoyed his new work and he was fond of his employer, who took him to live with him and treated him like a son. The next few months passed very happily. Mr. Denham spoke **of** giving him an interest in the business; there was even talk of making him a partner. The **future** appeared bright indeed, and Benjamin had every reason to believe that his troubles were over, **when** suddenly, in February, 1727, both he and Mr. Denham were taken seriously ill. Benjamin recovered, but his benefactor died; and the lad **once more found himself without** employment.

His account of his own sickness is rather amusing. "My distemper," he says, "was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal, gave up the point in my own mind, and was rather disappointed when I found myself recovering, regretting in some degree, that I must now, sometime or other, have all that disagreeable work to do over again."

It was in connection with this illness that he is supposed to have written his famous epitaph on himself. It runs as follows:

For a time Benjamin tried to find employment as a merchant's clerk. Then Keimer made him an offer to take over the management of his printing-house; and the lad, tempted by the high wages, decided to accept the position. There were five men and a boy in the shop. Although Benjamin soon discovered that Keimer's intention was to have him train these raw hands and then get rid of him, he went on with his work cheerfully, put the printing-house in order, and kept the other workmen to their tasks.

It was not long before he had a chance to show his ingenuity. Keimer ran out of type; and, as it would take a long time to procure fresh fonts from England, Benjamin decided to make them himself. He had never cast type, but he had seen it done in London. After some little difficulty he succeeded in fashioning a mold, using the old type as puncheons and striking the letters off in lead. Thus, in a sense, he became the first type-founder in America.

But his activities did not stop there. Besides his other duties, he made the ink, acted as ware-houseman, and was Keimer's right-hand man and adviser; while on several occasions he even tried his skill at engraving.

In spite of his ability it soon became apparent

that Keimer was only waiting for an opportunity to dispense with his services. He began by treating Benjamin gruffly and rudely, assuming the airs of a master toward him, and finding fault with everything. The lad bore it patiently, thinking that business troubles were partly to blame, though the time came when even he could stand the man's harshness no longer. A trifling incident caused another separation.

One day as Benjamin was working in the shop there was some disturbance outside. He put his head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, who happened to be in the street, called to him to get back to his work and mind his own business. The man spoke angrily and in such a loud voice that he drew the attention of the neighbors, and Benjamin found himself the center of all eyes. He was indignant at being treated so shamefully in public, but Keimer, instead of apologizing, came into the printing-house and continued the quarrel. Benjamin answered him with spirit; and Keimer immediately gave him the three months' notice to quit which had been agreed upon between them. His only wish, he concluded, was that he could get rid of Benjamin sooner. Benjamin told him that his wish was unnecessary, and, taking his hat, walked out of the shop at once.

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In the evening Hugh Meredith, one of Keimer's workmen, came to see him at his lodgings. Meredith was of Welsh parentage and about thirty years of age. He was an honest, sensible fellow, and something of a reader, but a little too fond of drink. Benjamin had cured him of this habit to some extent, and in consequence the man had conceived a great liking for him.

Meredith now proposed that he and Benjamin should go into partnership and set up a shop of their own.

"My time," he said, "will be out with Keimer in the spring. By then we may have our press and type from London." His father, he added, would advance them the necessary funds.

Benjamin agreed to the proposition; and the supplies were ordered from England, Meredith's father promising to pay the bill. Meanwhile Benjamin was to pick up what odd work he could.

For a few days he remained idle. Then, much to his surprise, he received a very civil message from Keimer, asking him to return. It appeared that the Province of New Jersey was about to have some paper money engraved and printed. Keimer, knowing Benjamin's skill as an engraver, wished to secure his services in order to get the work. Meredith persuaded the lad to accept Keimer's

offer; and once more Benjamin went back to his old employer.

Again he displayed his inventiveness by building a copperplate press for the New Jersey work. This was the first copperplate press ever made in America.

When everything was ready, he and Keimer went to Burlington, where the work was to be done, and stayed there three months, printing the paper money. A committee had been appointed to attend to the work and see that no more bills were printed than the law directed; and through these men Benjamin made the acquaintance of some of the principal people of the province. Among his new friends were the Secretary of New Jersey, the Surveyor-General, and several members of the Assembly. They all appeared more interested in him than in Keimer, and invited him to their homes, introduced him to their friends, and showed him many kindnesses. In later years some of them were of great assistance to Benjamin in procuring him work. So, once again, his ability to make friends and to keep them stood him in good stead.

He and Keimer returned to Philadelphia in the spring of 1728; and shortly after the press and type, ordered from England, arrived. Benjamin and

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Meredith made a friendly settlement with Keimer and left him, to set up their own establishment.

It was during this period that Benjamin formed his famous club called the Junto. It was made up of young men of his own age; the membership was limited to twelve; and its object was the mutual improvement of its members. Properly speaking, it was a debating society. It met every Friday evening, at first at a tavern, but later at the home of one of its members, Robert Grace, "a gentleman," Benjamin says, "of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty, a lover of punning and of his friends."

One of the rules of the club was that its existence should be kept a secret. This was to keep undesirable persons from applying for admission. A candidate, when qualifying for the club, was made to stand up, and, laying his hand upon his breast, declare that he had no particular disrespect for any member of the Junto; that he loved mankind in general of whatever profession or religion; that he thought no person ought to be harmed in his body, name, or goods, for his opinions or for his outward form of worship; and that he loved truth for truth's sake, and would try impartially to find and receive it himself and communicate it to others.

Some of the questions which they debated have been preserved and show the wide range of subjects which were discussed. Here are a few of them: "How may the phenomena of vapors be explained?" "Can any particular form of government suit all mankind?" "What is the reason that the tides rise higher in the Bay of Fundy than in the Bay of Delaware?" "What is the reason that men of the greatest knowledge are not the most happy?" "How may the possession of the Lakes be improved to our advantage?" "How may smoky chimneys be best cured?" "Why does the flame of a candle tend upwards in a spire?"

Besides the Friday night gatherings the club met once a month during the pleasant season of the year at "some proper place across the river, for bodily exercise." And at least once every summer the members dined together, cracked jokes, and sang the jovial songs of the day.

In spite of the secrecy which surrounded it, rumors of the club's existence got abroad, and applications for membership began to pour in. Benjamin was opposed to increasing the number of members, but suggested that each member should form a separate club of his own, and thus extend the good influence of the Junto. His suggestion was acted upon; and five or six clubs were formed.

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They were called by such names as the Vine, the Union, and the Band; but how successful they were, and how long they lasted, is unknown.

The Junto itself remained in existence for more than forty years. All his life Franklin showed great fondness for it. In letters written in 1765-66, while he was abroad, he calls it "the good old club," and wishes "to be remembered affectionately to the Junto." But what makes this club of particular importance is the fact that out of it grew the American Philosophical Society, an association which still exists in Philadelphia and numbers among its members learned men from all over the world. As with the Junto, its principal object is the pursuit of knowledge; but, unlike the Junto, its proceedings are not kept secret; for its many publications are valued everywhere for their depth and learning. It is the oldest society of its kind in America, and the most famous. And Benjamin Franklin, the founder and leading spirit of the Junto from which it sprang, had the honor of being its first president.

CHAPTER VII

FRANKLIN THE PRINTER

IN 1728 Pennsylvania was the largest and most thriving colony, in America, and Philadelphia the most important city. There were two causes for this. In the first place William Penn, the founder of the colony, had placed all of the religious sects on an equality and had insisted on absolute religious freedom; and secondly, the people enjoyed peace with the Indians. Emigrants from Europe were quick to realize these advantages, and flocked to Pennsylvania in crowds.

For a long time Philadelphia itself remained what Penn wished it to be — "a green country place." It stretched for about a mile along the Delaware River, and ran back half a mile or so into the country. The houses were either of stone or brick; each house stood apart from its neighbors and each had its own garden and trees. The cows of the inhabitants grazed together on the pasture lands lying on the outskirts of the town. It is said that peaches were so plentiful that the pigs were

fed on them. Surely these were lucky pigs, for Pennsylvania peaches are famous to-day for their size and fine flavor.

The people used the ground floors of their dwelling houses for shops, and lived in the upper stories; a wooden beehive, ship, anchor, crown, or some similar device being hung over the front door as the distinguishing sign of the store. The streets were laid out at right angles to each other; and along the middle of the sidewalks ran a narrow flagging as a pavement, with rows of neatly painted posts stretching on either side.

In this large, shady village — for that was what Philadelphia really was — Franklin and Meredith set up their new printing-shop. The house was on Market Street. They paid a hundred dollars a year rent, and relet the greater part of the building to a glazier named Thomas Godfrey, who lived in the upper stories with his family.

Scarcely had they opened their doors when a friend of Franklin's brought in a young countryman whom he had found on the street looking for a printer. The young firm did his work, for which they were paid five shillings. It was indeed a small sum, but, said Franklin later, "being our first fruits, and coming so seasonably, it gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned."

It was not long, however, before other work was given them, Joseph Breintnal, a member of the Junto, was a man of influence with the Quakers, and through them he procured for the young men the printing*of forty sheets giving the history of their sect. The price to be paid was very low, but it was a matter of pride with Franklin to get the work done quickly, and he set up a sheet a day until the whole forty were finished. To do this he was often obliged to work at night, and sometimes he did not get to bed until nearly midnight, long after the rest of the town was asleep.

Franklin's industry and close attention to his trade were soon noticed and spoken of by the townspeople, and they began to bring him odd jobs of all kinds.

It had long been his desire to publish a newspaper, and now that he was in business for himself he began to make his plans toward founding one. Andrew Bradford's paper, the *Mercury*, was the only news sheet then printed in Philadelphia, and this was so poor that the chance for establishing a rival paper and making a success of it appeared excellent. While Franklin was perfecting his scheme, George Webb, one of Keimer's workmen, applied to him for a position. Franklin told him that he hoped to be able to employ him soon, and

in strict confidence explained to Webb his scheme for the projected paper. Webb revealed the secret to Keimer, who clutched at the idea and decided to issue a paper of his own. He engaged Webb to help him print it, and on December '24, 1728, the first number of the journal appeared. It was called by the pompous name of the *Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette*.

Franklin was naturally indignant at Webb's act, and after Keimer's paper had been tunning a month he hit upon a clever scheme to draw the public's attention from its weekly issues. Remembering his success in Boston with his "Letters of Mrs. Silence Dogood," he began a similar series in Bradford's paper, the *Mercury*, and signed them "Busy-Body." Joseph Breintnai and other members of the Junto helped him in writing them, and they soon began to make a great stir in the city. Keimer took offense at one of them, which he thought referred to himself, and answered it in his paper. Franklin replied in the *Mercury*, and turned the tables so neatly on his old employer that all the advantage was on his side.

Through Franklin's articles the *Mercury's* circulation increased while the number of Keimer's subscribers grew less and less. Finally he had only ninety, and, unable to carry on his paper any

longer, he was only too glad to sell it to Franklin and Meredith for a very small sum. On October 2, 1729, the first number, edited by Franklin, was issued. He changed the style of the paper completely, cut out a lot of dry and uninteresting articles which Keimer had copied from books in order to fill space, substituted in their place news items and matters of general interest, and shortened the long and nonsensical name of the journal to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

The success of the paper was immediate. When only three numbers had appeared the young publishers announced that they had met with sufficient encouragement to induce them to continue the paper and increase their facilities for obtaining news. "We shall from time to time," they stated, "have all the noted Publick Prints from Great Britain, New England, New York, Maryland and Jamaica, besides what News may be collected from private Letters and Informations; and we doubt not of continuing to *give* our Customers all the Satisfaction they expect from a Performance of this Nature."

This announcement shows the difficulty in obtaining news. With no wireless, cable, or telegraph, and with only occasional mails, the editors of papers had a hard time collecting information,

and sometimes foreign news was six months old before it was published in America, it was Franklin's object to get the news and print it as quickly as possible, and he succeeded so well that the *Pennsylvania Gazette* soon became the only real newspaper in this country.

For years Bradford had done the public printing for the colony. In 1729 he printed the "Governor's Address" as usual, but he did it so badly and incorrectly that Franklin struck off an edition of his own, and sent a copy to each of the thirty members of the Assembly. As a result he was given the printing for the Assembly for the coming year; and when, a little later, a new issue of paper money was decided upon, the work of engraving and printing it was also turned over to him.

But in spite of growing business the young firm still remained in debt. It had cost them a thousand dollars to set up their shop. Owing to some misfortunes, Meredith's father had been able to advance only half of this sum. The remainder they owed to the merchant who had imported their supplies for them, and this man, becoming impatient at their delay in paying him, finally started suit.

It was at this juncture that help appeared from an unexpected quarter. William Coleman and

Robert Grace, two members of the Junto, came to Franklin separately and offered to advance him sufficient money to enable him to take over the whole business and buy Meredith out. Franklin told them that he could not propose a separation as long as Meredith wished to continue his partner. But it happened that Meredith himself had begun to realize that he was a failure in the printing trade, and suggested to Franklin that they dissolve the firm. Franklin accepted the proposal, borrowed five hundred dollars from each of his two friends, paid off Meredith's father and the merchant who had sued them, and, his own master at last, went on with the business alone.

Meanwhile Franklin had quite lost his heart to a charming young widow, a Mrs. Rogers, who was no other than the Deborah Read whom he had known and admired as a young girl; and on September 1 of the year 1730 they were married. Mrs. Franklin proved to be a thrifty, industrious wife, and soon became of great help to her husband. She took care of the house, tended the tiny shop, bought rags for the paper-mill, stitched pamphlets, folded newspapers, and did a thousand and one little things to aid him in his business.

At first they were very poor and lived -simply. "My breakfast," says Franklin, "was, for a long

time, bread and milk (no tea), and I ate it out of a twopenny 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 neighbors."

This, of course, was later, when he was well established in business and had money at his command; but it shows the thrift and frugality which marked his whole life, and to which his wife, in a great measure, contributed.

It was while he was still almost penniless that he drew up the plan for his second great project for the advancement of learning — the foundation of a public subscription library. Of this we shall learn **more in the next chapter.**

CHAPTER VIII

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC

IT had been the custom for members of the Junto to keep what books they owned in the club room, Where they might be used by the other members. One end of the room was set aside for books, and soon they had a Very respectable library; but when some of the books became injured and torn from rough handling, their owners refused to allow them to remain in circulation any longer and took them away. It was then that Franklin conceived the idea of a public circulating library — probably the first of its kind in the world.

His plan was to raise enough money by subscription for the purchase of books abroad, and then have each subscriber pay two dollars and a half a year for the increase of the library. The subscriber, on his side, was to be allowed to borrow what books he wished for reading in his own home. Franklin fixed the initial subscription at ten dollars; but, though the amount was small, he had great difficulty in securing subscribers; and it was not

until March, 1732, that fifty names had been obtained and all the money collected.

A list of books was immediately made out and sent to England, and in October the first shipment arrived. The books were placed in the Junto room, a librarian was appointed, and the infant library was formally opened.

It was a success from the beginning, and soon had to move to larger quarters. During the second year of its existence Franklin himself acted as librarian, and printed a catalogue of the books. For this, and for other printing, he was excused from paying his annual dues for two years. He found the institution of immense benefit to him. "This library," he says, "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 allow'd myself."

Other libraries of a similar character soon sprang up all over the country. To-day they are numbered by the thousands. The original library — "The Library Company of Philadelphia," as it is called — still exists in Philadelphia. It is the largest and best library in that city. With its branches it contains more than 240,000 volumes. The parent



Courtesy of The Century Co.

THE LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA, AS IT WAS IN 1800.

(Original picture, by Birch, in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

of all public libraries, it is a lasting monument to Benjamin Franklin's foresight, public spirit, and energy.

It was in December of this same year, 1732, that he issued the first number of his famous almanac. In those days almost every printer in America appears to have published an almanac. It was a part of his business) and generally a source of profit. Besides giving the days of the week and of the month, as modern calendars do, the almanacs gave the changes of the moon, the dates of eclipses, the positions of the planets and other stars, and even attempted to foretell the weather.

Until Franklin's almanac appeared there was no attempt to include in them any wit and humor. They were serious pamphlets, and acted as guides to the people, especially to the farmers. They were generally published under the name of some man of learning who had furnished — or was supposed to have furnished — the material for them.

Franklin wrote his own, but took the name of Richard Saunter, or Saunders, an English scholar of the seventeenth century, and called his publication "Poor Richard's Almanac." As an almanac it was neither better nor worse than the other half dozen publications of a similar kind then printed in Pennsylvania; but what made it far superior

to them were the quaint and witty sayings and maxims scattered through its pagtfi. Their introduction into a pamphlet of that Character was something entirely original, and came about in a curious way. "Observing," says franklin, "that it [the almanac] was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I consider'd it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common perple, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occur'd between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated indusury and frugality." Here again his spirit of thrift and economy stood him in good stead, and suggested the idea of using the blank spaces in his almanac for the insertion of proverbs and sayings, many of which have since become world-famous.

They were not all of his own invention. He himself admits that they were taken from many sources and were "the wisdom of many ages and nations." Yet every one of them bears the mark of his own peculiar individuality and wit; and in some instances he even improved on the originals.

Here, at random, are a few of the best known of them: "A word to the wise is enough." "**Three** may keep a secret if two of them are dead." "It

is hard for Aan empty sack to stand upright."
"Deny self for self's sake." "Keep thy shop and
thy shop will keep thee." "Forewarned, fore-
armed." "Diligence is the mother of good luck."
"Wealth is not his that has it, but his that enjoys
it." "God heals, and the doctor takes the fee."
"He that can have patience can have what he
will." "Let thy discontents be thy secrets."
"He that falls in love with himself, will have no
rivals." "Onions can make even heirs and widows
weep." "He that would have a short Lent, let
him borrow money to be repaid at Easter." "There
are three faithful friends, an old wife, an old dog,
and ready money."

The almanac was an immediate success. Three editions of the first issue were sold in a month, and the average sale for the whole twenty-five years during which Franklin edited it was never under ten thousand copies. As a preface to his almanac for 1758, the last one he personally published, he collected most of the best known of Poor Richard's sayings and formed them into a sort of connected discourse, supposed to be the speech of a wise old man to the people attending an auction sale. It was a brilliant piece of writing, and before long was copied and quoted everywhere. Even to-day it is oije of the most popular things in American liter-

ature. There have been no less than seventy-five editions of it in English, fifty-six in French, eleven in German, and nine in Italian; and it has been translated into almost every language in the world, including Russian and Chinese.

The immense sale of the first issue of the almanac gave Franklin, for the first time in his life, a little extra money. A part of this he spent in sending one of his best workmen to Charleston, South Carolina, where there was no printer, and setting him up in business there. Under the agreement Franklin received one third of the profits. The scheme proved so successful that later he made similar arrangements with several other of his workmen, and not only enabled them to start in business for themselves, but established printing presses in parts of the country which until then had none.

Meanwhile the *Pennsylvania Gazette* had prospered, and was the leading newspaper of the colony. Measured by modern standards its news would seem meager; but compared with other journals of the day it stands in a place by itself. Its superiority is shown by the fact that the *Mercury* and other of its contemporaries did not scruple to steal from its columns. The following statement, printed in his paper, is a good example of the

humorous way in which Franklin called his rivals to account:

" When 'Mr. Bradford publishes after us, and has Occasion to take an Article or two out of the *Gazette*, which he is always welcome to do, he is desired not to date his Paper a Day before ours, (as last Week in the Case of the Letter containing Kelscy's Speech &c.) lest distant Readers should imagine we take from him, which we always carefully avoid."

He was so encouraged by the success of the *Gazette* that three years after he had bought it he started the publication of a fortnightly paper in German. It was called the *Philadelphische Zeitung*, and was for the benefit of the many Germans who had settled in Pennsylvania; and though it never had the circulation of the *Gazette*, it was of considerable profit to its owner, and had the distinction of being the first paper printed in a foreign language in America.

Aside from its news and its breezy, up-to-date articles on matters of general interest, there was still another cause for the prosperity of the *Gazette*. This was its advertisements. Before Franklin's time advertisements in the papers were few, and related generally to runaway servants and sales of lands and goods. Franklin advertised everything, and **was** so successful that the advertisements alone

in the *Gazette* took up four or five pages — a space unheard of in either the colonies or England.

As a rule advertisements are stupid things to read; but Franklin knew how to make them interesting and amusing, and many of those he wrote are full of humor. This is especially true of such as relate to himself or to his family. The following refers to a pet horse or pony belonging to his young son William:

" Strayed, about two Months ago, from the Northern Liberties of this City, a small bay Mare, branded IW on the near Shoulder and Buttock. She being but little and barefooted, cannot be supposed to be gone far; therefore if any of the Town-Boys find her and bring her to the Subscriber, they shall, for their Trouble, have the Liberty to ride her when they please, from

"WILLIAM FRANKLIN."

Another advertisement refers to the loss of his wife's prayeft-book; and the finder is admonished, with humor and force, that its speedy return is expected:

"Taken out of a pew in the Church, some months since," it reads, "a Common Prayer Book, bound in red, gilt, and lettered D. F. on each cover. The person who took it is desired to open it, and read the Eighth Commandment, and afterwards return it into the same pew again; upon which no further notice will be taken."

A third shows Franklin's generosity in lending books and the trouble he had in having them returned to him:

"The Person that borrowed B. Franklin's Law-Book of this Province, is hereby desired to return it, he having forgot to whom he lent it."

And in still another advertisement Franklin informs his readers that "He has in his Hands the 2d vol. of Cowley's Works, in Octavo, of which he does not know the Owner."

Besides these, and many similar ones, the *Gazette* was filled with advertisements relating to his business, and the wares that he had for sale at his printing-office; and from the number and variety of the articles, he must have carried a curious assortment of goods in his little shop. In one issue we read that there has been

"Just imported, another Parcel of
SUPER FINE CROWN SOAP,"

which "is cut in exact and equal cakes neatly put up, and sold at the New Printing Office at *is* per cake;" while another notice informs us that the "Widow Read" (his wife's mother) has "removed from the upper End of High street to the New Printing-Office near the Market," where she "con-

tinues to make and sell her excellent *Family Salve* or Ointment, for Burns or Scalds, (Price is an Ounce)" and "At the same Place may be had *Lockyeis Pills* at 3d a Pill."

At various other times he advertises "Very good lampblack;" "Very good chocolate;" "Very good Sack at 6s per Gallon;" "Linseed Oil;" "Compasses and Scales;" "Seneka Rattlesnake Root, with directions to use it in the Pleurisy &c.;" "A very neat new fashion'd vehicle or four-wheel'd chaise, very convenient to carry weak or other sick persons young or old;" "Good Rhode Island Cheese and Cod Fish;" "Very good Iron Stoves;" "Choice Bohea Tea;" "A New Fishing Net;" besides books, pamphlets, and stationery supplies of every description.

It must have been a strange little shop with all these things for sale in it; but Franklin was always quick to grasp an opportunity, and he turned many an honest penny in his numerous ventures. It was this practical insight, coupled with his extraordinary energy and common sense, that made him the successful man of affairs, and enabled him, during the twenty-odd years of his active business career, to acquire a comfortable fortune.

CHAPTER IX

FRANKLIN THE CITIZEN

WELL established in business, and with the foundations of his fortune securely laid, Franklin turned his attention to the needs of the city, and of his fellow townsmen, and soon began to take a leading part in public affairs. From 1728 until about 1756 — a period which marked his continuous residence in Philadelphia — he was identified with practically every important reform. In many cases he conceived them himself, and carried them, almost unaided, to successful conclusions.

His usual way of procedure was to read, at a meeting of the Junto, an article dealing with the reform proposed. When the matter had been thoroughly discussed, he would communicate the plan to the clubs in correspondence with the Junto; and, finally, he would publish the complete idea in the *Gazette*.

In this way he started public discussion which resulted in abolishing the "town watch." This was a poor and inefficient organization. The con-

stable of each ward of the city summoned a number of householders to patrol the streets with him at night. Those who chose could be excused by paying a dollar and a half a year. This was supposed to pay for the hire of a substitute, but in reality it went into the constable's pocket, and the streets at night were left unguarded. To remedy this evil Franklin suggested that proper men be hired as regular constables, and that the householders be taxed, according to the value of their properties, to pay for them. At first there was great opposition to his idea, but in time it was approved and adopted, and the first step was taken toward founding a permanent police force in Philadelphia.

In a similar manner he was instrumental in establishing a volunteer fire department, and he himself formed the Union Fire Company, the first of its kind in Philadelphia. Each member was obliged to keep ready and in good order six leather buckets and two strong bags, for carrying goods out of burning houses; to go at once to every fire with at least half of his buckets and bags; and to do his utmost to help put out the flames. This company remained in active service as late as 1791, and at that time headed the list of numerous other fire companies in the city, having thirty members, one engine, two hundred and fifty buckets, thir-

teen ladders, two hooks, and one eighty-foot rope, — but no "bags"!

In 1736 Franklin was appointed clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and in the following year he was made deputy-postmaster of Philadelphia. Neither of these positions was very important, but they gave him an excellent training for the great public posts which he was to hold later.

In connection with his work as clerk of the Assembly, an anecdote is told which shows the extraordinary activity of his mind. During the sessions there were many hours when he had to sit in idleness, listening to debates in which he could take no part; but instead of dozing, as many of his predecessors had done, he occupied his time by making "Magical Squares." This was a sort of mathematical pastime, very popular in his day, and involved a great deal of thought and ingenuity. Franklin became exceedingly skillful at it, and devised "Squares" far more complicated and intricate than any that had been made before. His most wonderful one — the one which he himself humorously described as the "most magically magical of any magical square ever made by any magician" — he planned and drew up in a single evening. Here is one, not quite so "magical," perhaps, but sufficiently complicated to show the

cleverness of its famous maker. Its ingenuity will be very evident to anyone who follows the directions, and makes the many additions that are suggested.

52	61	4	13	20	29	36	45
14	3	62	51	46	35	30	19
53	60	5	12	21	28	37	44
11	6	50	54	43	38	27	22
55	58	7	10	23	26	39	42
0	8	57	56	41	40	25	24
50	63	2	15	18	31	34	47
16	1	64	49	48	33	32	17

Its properties are described in Franklin's own words:

1. That every straight row (horizontal or vertical) of 8 numbers added together, makes 260, and half each row half of 260.

2. **That the bent row** of 8 numbers, ascending and **descending** diagonally, viz. from 16 ascending to 10, and from 23 descending to 17; and every one of its parallel bent rows of 8 numbers make 260. — Also the bent row from 52 descending to 54, and from 43 ascending to 45; and every one of its parallel bent rows of 8 numbers make 260. — Also the bent row from 45 to 43, descending to the left, and from 23 to 17, descending to the right, and every one of its parallel bent rows of 8 numbers, make 260. — Also the bent row from 52 to 54, descending to the right, and from 10 to 16, descending to the left, and every one of its parallel bent rows of 8 numbers, make 260. — Also the parallel bent rows next to the above mentioned, which are shortened to 3 numbers ascending, and 3 descending, &c., as from 53 to 4 ascending, and from 29 to 44 descending, make, with the 2 corner numbers, 260. — Also the 2 numbers 14, 61 ascending, and 36, 19 descending, with the lower 4 numbers situated like them, viz., 50, 1, descending, and 32, 47, ascending, make 260. — And, lastly, the 4 corner numbers, with **the** 4 middle numbers, make 260.

It was made only to fill in a few idle hours, but it proved valuable training for the mind. Indeed, Franklin never let slip an opportunity for self-improvement. Another incident of this period, related by himself, shows how he made the game of chess serve his ends.

"I had begun," he says, "in 1733 to study languages; I soon made myself so much a master of the French as to be able to read the books with ease. I then undertook the

Italian. An acquaintance who was also learning it, us'd 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 in parts of the grammar to be got by heart, or in translations, etc., which tasks the vanquish'd was to perform upon honour, before our next meeting. As we play'd pretty equally, we thus beat one another into that language."

The subject of education always interested him. Almost entirely self-taught, he realized the benefit of an early and thorough schooling. In those days Philadelphia had no school of any importance and no college. It was natural, therefore, that he should try to supply the want. In 1743 he drew up a scheme for establishing an academy, and endeavored to interest his friends and the public in it. But the time was badly chosen. England was at war with Spain and France. Massachusetts and some of the other New England colonies had already made preparations to defend themselves, and were even fitting out expeditions to aid their mother country. Everywhere there was a general feeling of alarm. Franklin soon realized the uselessness of trying to push his project at such a time, and, laying it aside temporarily, turned his attention to a more pressing matter — the defense of Pennsylvania.

Of all the colonies, Pennsylvania was the only one that had done nothing toward arming herself against a possible invasion. The Quaker doctrine against war, and the Quaker influence in the Assembly, were the two reasons for this. Franklin tried to awaken the Assembly to a sense of their danger. Failing in that, he wrote a pamphlet called "Plain Truth," in which he set forth the alarming condition of affairs, and appealed to the people for help.

The pamphlet made a tremendous stir, and shortly after its appearance he was asked to draw up a plan for a volunteer association for defense. He did so, and calling a public meeting of the citizens, aroused them to such enthusiasm that twelve hundred at once enrolled themselves in the association. Within a few days almost every man in the province who was not a Quaker had joined. Companies were formed, arms procured, and before long Pennsylvania had an army of more than ten thousand men to put in the field.

Franklin was elected colonel of the Philadelphia regiment, but resigned in favor of a Mr. Lawrence, and then turned his energies toward raising money for building a fort to guard the Delaware River. When the fort was finished, it was discovered that there were no cannon with which to equip it.

Franklin procured some old guns from Boston as a temporary defense, and had a shipment of cannon ordered from London; but fearing that they would arrive too late, he and several of his friends were sent to try to borrow some cannon from Governor Clinton of New York.

Eighteen cannon were borrowed, brought to Philadelphia, and mounted in the fort, where they remained while the war lasted. Franklin took his turn with the rest of the militia and, as a common soldier, helped to guard the fort and the city.

Happily for Philadelphia, no invasion took place. Peace was declared in 1748, and the Pennsylvania militia disbanded. Franklin's share in the defense of the province, and the important part which he had taken in assuring its safety, won him the confidence and trust of the people; and they came to regard him as their leader and adviser in times of trouble.

Freed from his military duties, he again took up the project of founding a school, and, following his custom, wrote a pamphlet setting forth his scheme, which he called "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania." A copy of this pamphlet was sent to each of the subscribers of the *Gazette*. When Franklin thought sufficient **time**

had elapsed for his idea to bear fruit, he opened a subscription for the building of his school, and through his influence and good management twenty-five thousand dollars were collected. With this comfortable sum to start on, the Philadelphia Academy was opened toward the end of 1749.

Pupils applied in such numbers that soon it was found necessary to move to larger quarters; and a building which had been erected for religious and public meetings was procured and altered to accommodate the school. Three years later a charity school was added, where a hundred free pupils were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; and in 1779, just thirty years after it had been founded, the Academy was elevated to the dignity of a college, and became the present University of Pennsylvania. Franklin lived to see it reach its final triumphant stage, and remained one of its trustees until a year or so before his death.

Another project which had been conceived by his friend Dr. Thomas Bond, and which he aided greatly, both by collecting subscriptions and by persuading the Assembly to appropriate money **for** it, was the establishment of a hospital in Philadelphia. The idea was a novel one in America, **and** Franklin had a hard time in convincing the **people of the** need for such an institution. He

kept at them, however, with his usual perseverance; and in 1755, before a mighty concourse of the townspeople, the corner stone of the Pennsylvania Hospital was laid.

This hospital, grown to a size and importance far beyond its founders' fondest dreams, still stands upon its original site at Eighth and Pine streets, and, like most of the projects in which Franklin had a share, is the best known and best regulated of its kind in Philadelphia.

The question of paving the streets next claimed his attention. Living as he did near the principal market, he had good cause to complain of the mud and dirt which collected in the roadways, making them almost impassable in rainy weather. Through his efforts the street leading to the market was finally paved with stone. It proved a convenience to every one; and when the people saw how clean the street and the pavements could be kept, they insisted that all the streets of the city should be paved in the same way.

Franklin was asked to present the matter to the Assembly. He drafted the act, and though he had left on his first mission to England before the law was passed, it was through his help and exertions that the people obtained this much-needed improvement.

Meanwhile, in the midst of all these activities, and with his mind filled with projects for the welfare of the city, Franklin still found time for study at home, and for carrying on experiments with air and electricity which were to make his name famous throughout the world.

CHAPTER X

FRANKLIN THE SCIENTIST

FROM his earliest years Franklin appears to have had a fondness for science and scientific subjects. It was his favorite hobby, and he was always studying some phenomenon of nature, reading up the latest discoveries in natural philosophy, or making his own experiments to prove or disprove some new theory. What first turned his mind to science it is impossible to say. Very probably it arose from his eagerness to acquire knowledge. This was almost a passion with him; and throughout his early life it was his happy lot to be thrown constantly in the company of learned men. As a boy, it will be recalled, he associated with the "ingenious men" who helped his brother publish the *New England Contant*; during his stay in England he made friends with Dr. Mandeville, Sir Hans Sloane, and other noted scientists; and on his return to Philadelphia he had formed the Junto, where points of "Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy" were discussed by the members.

One of the subjects debated by the club, "How may smoky chimneys be best cured?" was of great interest to Franklin; and in 1742 he not only supplied an answer to the question, but solved the much greater problem of heating a room comfortably, by inventing the " Pennsylvania Fireplace, " or, as it is better known, "the Franklin Stove." The principle upon which this stove worked was simple. The heat, rising from an open fireplace, was made to come down again before going out through the chimney, and so heated the other currents of air in the room. "I suppose," says Franklin, "our ancestors never thought of warming rooms to sit in; all they proposed was to have a place to make a fire in, by which they might warm themselves when cold." In describing the virtues of his invention, he adds that "your whole room is equally warm, so that people need not crowd so close round the fire, but may sit near the window, and have the benefit of the light for reading, writing, needlework, &c. They may sit with comfort in any part of the room, which is a very considerable advantage in a large family."

One can scarcely realize what a boon this invention of Franklin's was to the people of his day. There were no furnaces, no stoves, nothing but open fireplaces, which warmed only one's face

and hands, while the cold air nipped at one's back and heels. Franklin could probably have made a fortune out of his "Fire-Place." Indeed, the governor of the province was so pleased with it that he offered to issue a patent on it, which would have given its inventor the sole right to sell it for a long term of years. Franklin, however, refused to take it, on the principle, as he generously says, "that, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any inventions of ours."

An ironmonger in London, it appears, had no such generous ideas. Adding a few small improvements, he secured a patent on the stove, and passing it off as his own, made a considerable sum of money from the sale of it in England. It is characteristic of Franklin that he never took any action against the man, nor contested his right to the patent.

In the winter of 1746-47 Franklin began the study of electricity. A year or two before, great interest in this subject had been roused by the perfection of the Leyden jar, and lecturers went about the country displaying the apparatus, and giving their half-terrified, half-fascinated audiences electrical shocks. Franklin met one of these men during

a visit to Boston and was extremely interested in the experiments performed. On his return to Philadelphia he found that Peter Collinson, a member of the Royal Society in England, and the man who purchased the books for the Philadelphia Library, had sent, with his last shipment of books, one of the newly devised glass tubes for the generation of electricity. These tubes were about two and a half feet long and as thick as a man could conveniently hold in his hand. The electricity was generated by rubbing the tube briskly with a piece of cloth, and then touching it to the Leyden jar or other object to be charged. This was the only means then known for manufacturing electricity.

Franklin immediately became fascinated with it, and, procuring other tubes from the glassworks, soon had all his acquaintances rubbing them. To most of them it was merely a new toy, but to Franklin and to three of his close friends, Ebenezer Kinnersley, Thomas Hopkinson, and Philip Syng, electricity became the object of study and investigation for many years. They worked both separately and together, testing experiments, already **known** and trying many new ones of their own invention. They set fire to rum and brandy with **the** electric spark, lighted candles by it, performed **amusing tricks** with a spider **made of burnt cork**,

and finally, after many attempts, produced what was probably the first electrical battery. It was composed of eleven panes of window glass inclosed in thin leaden plates and supported by a silken cord, with wires and chains connecting them. The glass was soon found to be too cumbersome, and they replaced it by Leyden jars, which were easier to handle and capable of storing more power. It was during these early stages of their experiments that Philip Syng contrived a machine for generating electricity. This did away with the slow and tiresome method of rubbing the tubes with cloths and was of immense benefit to the four investigators.

Franklin far outshone them all, both in the depth of his observations and in the boldness of his experiments. It was a quality of his mind to improve on everything that he took up; and during the first winter of his study in this new vein he threw aside the old idea as to the nature of electricity, and proved that it was collected, and not created, by friction; that the power itself was "really an element diffused among, and attracted by, other matter, particularly by water and metals." From these assertions he arrived at the conclusion that electricity remains in a positive and negative, or, as he himself called it, a plus and a minus state. This explained why

the electric spark leaped from the charged, or positive, object to the uncharged, or negative, one; and accounted for many other electrical phenomena until then not understood. It is the accepted theory to-day, and its discovery marked the beginning of modern knowledge of electricity. We have long since ceased to treat the mysterious fluid as a curiosity, for it is now recognized as a powerful and useful force.

In the autumn of 1748 Franklin formed a partnership with his foreman, David Hall, who took over the running of the printing-shop. The arrangement promised to give Franklin all the time he wished to pursue his electrical studies. This, however, was not to be the case, for "the public/" he writes, "now considering me as a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes;" and within a very few months he was appointed a justice of the peace, chosen one of the City Council, and finally elected a member of the Assembly. He accepted all three offices, but soon resigned from that of justice of the peace, on the plea that he had not sufficient knowledge of the law. The other posts he continued to hold, and moving to the southeast corner of Second and Race streets, then a "retired" part of the town, devoted his spare hours to his electrical studies.

For the time being he gave up his experiments with electrical machines, and set to work to discover what place, if any, electricity had in nature. Other men had suggested that lightning and electricity were the same thing, but no one had yet proved it. To do this became Franklin's object, and during the winter of 1748-49 and all of the following summer he was busily engaged making observations and drawing inferences from them. An extract from his notes of that period shows with what patience and acuteness he gathered his facts, and with what wonderful keenness and intelligence he arrived at his deductions. "Electrical fluid," the notes read, "agrees with lightning in these particulars: 1. Giving light. 2. Color of the light. 3. Crooked direction. 4. Swift motion. 5. Being conducted by metals. 6. Crack or noise in exploding. 7. Subsisting in water or ice. 8. Rending bodies it passes through. 9. Destroying animals. 10. Melting metals. 11. Firing inflammable substances. 12. Sulphurous smell. The electric fluid is attracted by points. We do not know whether this property is in lightning. But since they agree in all the particulars wherein we can already compare them, is it not probable they agree likewise in this?"

The substance of these notes is contained in a

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series of observations which he drew up early in 1749, and which he enlarged later in what is probably the most celebrated of all his articles on electricity, called "Opinions and Conjectures concerning the Properties and Effects of the Electrical Matter, and the means of preserving Buildings, Ships, &c, from Lightning, arising from Experiments and Observations made at Philadelphia, 1749."

In this paper he put forth two suggestions which made his name famous both in Europe and America. They are contained in two brief paragraphs. After describing an experiment by which a pointed wire was made to act as a conductor of electricity, he continues: "May not the knowledge of this power of points be of use to mankind, in preserving houses, churches, ships, &c, from the stroke of lightning, by directing us to fix, on the highest part of those edifices, upright rods of iron made sharp as a needle, and gilt to prevent rusting, and from the foot of those rods a wire down the outside of the building into the ground, or down round one of the shrouds of a ship, and down her side till it reaches the water? Would not these pointed rods probably draw the electrical fire silently out of a cloud before it came nigh enough to strike, and thereby secure us from that most sudden and terrible mischief?"

Here, in two sentences, he sets forth the idea which he afterward developed in his world-renowned invention of the lightning-rod; but when he wrote it was still only an idea and had not been put to the test. Indeed, he had not yet even succeeded in proving scientifically the identity of lightning with electricity; but he was absolutely convinced of it himself; and in his second suggestion he describes the way in which it could be established beyond doubt. "To determine the question, whether the clouds that contain lightning are electrified or not," he says, "I would propose an experiment to be tried where it may be done conveniently. On the top of some high tower or steeple, place a kind of sentry-box . . . big enough to contain a man and an electrical stand. From the middle of the stand let an iron rod rise and pass bending out of the door, and then upright twenty or thirty feet, pointed very sharp at the end. If the electrical stand be kept clean and dry, a man standing on it, when such clouds are passing low, might be electrified and afford sparks, the rod drawing fire to him from a cloud. If any danger to the man should be apprehended (though I think there would be none), let him stand on the floor of his box, and now and then bring near to the rod the loop of a wire that has one end fastened to the

leads, he holding it by a wax handle; so that sparks, if the rod is electrified, will strike from the rod to the wire and not affect him."

Unfortunately, there was no steeple in Philadelphia where Franklin could try this experiment himself; and in July, 1750, he sent the pamphlet containing the suggestions, together with a lot of other data on electricity, to his friend Peter Collinson in London. Collinson, realizing the importance of the papers, had them printed under the name of "New Experiments and Observations in Electricity, made at Philadelphia, in America." He presented a copy to the Royal Society, where it was read and caused a great stir.

By some fortunate chance a copy fell into the hands of a well-known French scientist, the Count de Buffon. He immediately had it translated into French, and during the summer of 1751 had it published in Paris. It had an enormous sale. Scientists took up Franklin's theories and tried to prove or disprove them as the case might be. His name became familiar to every learned man in Europe. King Louis XV had some of the most noted of the experiments performed in his presence, and ordered a letter to be written to the Royal Society, expressing his admiration of Franklin's queries. But even greater fame was awaiting

Franklin. In the spring of 1752 the Count de Buffon and two of his fellow-scientists caused the apparatus suggested by the Philadelphian to be erected on a hill in the little town of Marly in France; and here on May 10, in the midst of a thunderstorm, they succeeded in drawing electricity from the clouds. Franklin's idea that electricity and lightning were the same thing was proved beyond the shadow of a doubt.

The Royal Society, on learning of the Count de Buffon's complete success, unanimously elected Franklin a member of their body and voted him a medal.

Meanwhile, quite unconscious of the honors which were being heaped on him abroad, Franklin was quietly pursuing his studies in Philadelphia; and while the Count de Buffon was carrying on his experiments at Marly, Franklin conceived the idea of attempting similar experiments by means of a kite.

The kite was made of silk with a sharp-pointed wire fixed to the upright stick of the framework. To the end of the cord which held the kite a silk ribbon was tied, and where the cord and the ribbon joined a metal key was fastened. The person flying the kite stood under a shelter so that the silk ribbon would not get wet. This he held in his

hand, and as soon as the thunder clouds passed over the kite he would be able to draw sparks from the key.

It was June before Franklin had an opportunity to test his kite. The probable place where the experiment was made was a desolate bit of common near what is now Eighth and Race streets. Fearing that he might be laughed at, Franklin told no one what he was going to do, and on the approach of a thunderstorm he stole away from his house with only his son William to help him. They managed, with some difficulty, to get the kite up, and then stood in the open door of an old ruined cowshed to see what would happen.

For a time nothing happened. The heavy clouds passed over the kite, but no sign of a spark appeared from the key. Franklin began to think that his theory was wrong, and that all his work for the past few years was wasted. He had given up hope, and was almost ready to go home, when suddenly he saw the fibers of the hempen cord which held the kite stiffen and rise, as a person's hair is said to rise with fright. Trembling with excitement he touched his knuckle to the key. There was a crack, a flash, and he felt the unmistakable thrill of electricity run through him! Almost afraid to believe in his success, he applied the key to a Leyden

jar which he had brought with him; and when he thought it was charged, he touched it with his fingers. The shock he received dispelled his last doubts!

The next ship from Europe brought news of the Count de Buffon's experiments at Marly, and Franklin suddenly found himself famous both at home and abroad.

He received his new honors with great modesty. It was not until October — four months after his memorable discovery — that he sent to CoUinson any account of his tests with the kite, and even then he described the incident as a possible experiment, and without suggesting in any way that he had attempted it himself.

In the meanwhile, however, he had made his discovery serve a useful purpose, and had turned the first of his famous "suggestions" into a reality by inventing the lightning-rod. The use of it spread rapidly; but there were those who believed it a dangerous thing, and asserted that the accumulation of electricity in the earth was the direct cause of the earthquake which occurred in 1755. Even as late as 1770 a clergyman in Boston stated solemnly that "as lightning is one of the means of punishing the sins of mankind, and of warning them from the commission of sin, it is impious to prevent its full execution."

In England there was an amusing discussion as to whether the pointed ends favored by Franklin, or blunt ends, should be used. George III favored blunt ends, and ordered them to be substituted for the pointed ends then on Kew Palace. The king's decision was ridiculed by some clever wit in the following stanza:

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**"While you, great George, for safety hunt,
And sharp conductors change for blunt,
The nation's out of joint.
Franklin a wiser course pursues,
And ail your thunder fearless views,
By keeping to the point."**

Franklin's most important discoveries are connected with electricity; but every branch of natural science was of interest to him, and he studied and wrote about light, heat, fire, air, the sun spots, the stars, the tides, the wind, waterspouts, rainfall, ventilation, sound, and a dozen other subjects.

He was one of the foremost scientists of his day, and might have been the greatest of all time if politics and the duties of public life had not claimed him and turned his energies into other channels.

CHAPTER XI

FRANKLIN THE SOLDIER

FRANKLIN took his seat in the Pennsylvania Assembly at a time when ill feeling between that body and the proprietaries of the province was reaching a crisis. These proprietaries, as they were called, were Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn, founder of the colony. Upon their father's death and that of their brother John, they had succeeded to huge estates in Pennsylvania; and, like William Penn, were practically rulers of the colony. Both lived in England, but had a governor to represent them in Pennsylvania, and no act of the Assembly could be made a law without the governor's assent. This led to endless disputes, as the governor could do nothing without the Penns' permission; and the two proprietaries were more concerned in preserving their own interests than in advancing those of the province.

Franklin sided very strongly with the people, and the services which he rendered them in the Assembly were numerous and important. No

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record of public debates was ever kept, but if it had been, his share in them would have been small; for, as he himself declares, "I was a bad speaker; never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in the choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my point."

He depended upon intelligence and force of argument, where other men depended upon oratory; and his advice and suggestions always commanded attention and respect.

As the value of his services became more and more apparent, he was called upon to assist the colony in outside affairs.

In 1752 he was appointed a member of a commission to meet the Indians and form a new treaty with them. The meeting took place at Carlisle, Pennsylvania; and through Franklin's adroitness and tact the treaty was made to the satisfaction of both the Indians and the colonists.

A year later the postmaster-general of America died, and Franklin and a man named William Hunter were appointed by the government in England to fill his place. In those days the postal system in the colonies was very primitive. There were no mail coaches, the mail being carried entirely on horseback. The post roads along which the carriers traveled were often mere bridle paths

cut through the forests. Only the larger cities lying along the coast between Boston and Charleston, South Carolina, had post offices, and letters addressed to persons living inland were taken to their destinations by any chance travelers who happened along. There was one mail a week between New York and Philadelphia in summer, and one every two weeks during the winter; while a person writing from Philadelphia to Boston had to wait a month and a half for a reply.

With his usual energy Franklin immediately set about improving the entire system. He increased the number of mails between important cities; caused the post roads to be widened and straightened, reduced the rates of postage, charged for the carrying of newspapers, which until then had been delivered free, and generally put the whole service upon a more modern footing. Under his management the post office not only paid expenses, but, for the first time, yielded the government a small revenue.

While he was still perfecting his mail system, war with the French was again threatened; and he was sent to represent Pennsylvania at a conference of the colonies held in the old Dutch town of Albany, in New York. The object of this conference was to form some plan for mutual defense

against the French. On the trip to Albany Franklin drew up a scheme for the union of the colonies, which he presented to the meeting, and which was generally approved. The government in England, however, thought it gave the colonies too much power and made them too independent, so it came to nothing. Curiously enough, it was very similar to the plan suggested for the union of the states after the Revolution, and the one which was finally adopted.

The conference in Albany broke up without accomplishing anything, and Franklin returned to Philadelphia. This was in the summer of 1754. In the spring of the following year the quarrel between the Assembly and the proprietaries broke out afresh over the question of taxation. The proprietaries were willing that the colonists should pass laws taxing themselves as much as they chose, but refused to allow the governor to give his consent to any law which made the Penns' own large estates subject to taxation. The Assembly, on their side, refused to pass any law which exempted the proprietaries lands from being taxed with the rest. It was at a time when war was about to be declared and money was badly needed, but neither side would give ground, and the quarrel grew more and more bitter.

In the midst of the dispute the French and Indian War broke out, and word was received that General Braddock, who was then in Maryland preparing to march on the enemy, had heard that Pennsylvania had refused to supply funds for the army, and was much enraged at this lack of loyalty. Franklin was immediately sent to Braddock's camp to explain the situation to him. Joining the governor of New York and the governor of Massachusetts, who had been summoned to confer with the general, Franklin set out on horseback. The three proceeded south as quickly as they could, sleeping each night at some stately and well-kept mansion on their road, and riding by day through woods and fields in the balmy April weather.

When they reached the camp Franklin's first mission was to remove from Braddock's mind the doubts which he had as to Pennsylvania's loyalty. This he accomplished with such success that the general asked his advice about the country and its inhabitants, and even persuaded him to assist in preparing the army for its long march. The thing which hampered Braddock most was lack of transportation. In both Maryland and Virginia there was a scarcity of wagons; after scouring the countryside, he had managed to find only twenty-five. Franklin undertook to supply his wants

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from Pennsylvania; and in twenty days he had one hundred and fifty wagons, two hundred and fifty-nine pack horses, and a large quantity of hay and oats at the general's disposal. Braddock thanked him again and again, commended him for what he had done, and later mentioned him with warm admiration in his dispatches home.

It was during his visit to Braddock's camp that Franklin first met a young man who was then only an officer on the general's staff, but who was soon to become one of the most famous men of this country. That man was George Washington.

Braddock's troops set out on their march against the French, and Franklin journeyed back to Philadelphia. No one doubted the success of the expedition. They were trained troops, therefore they could not be beaten by Indians. In Philadelphia preparations were made to celebrate the coming victory, and a subscription was begun for a display of fireworks. When, therefore, the news of Braddock's disastrous defeat was brought to the city, it was received in stunned silence. No one could believe it possible; but the remnant of Braddock's troops, broken and panic-stricken, soon arrived in the city and confirmed the tidings. The English had been completely routed, and Pennsylvania **lay** at the mercy of **the** enemy.

This was in July. During August, September, and October the Assembly and the governor continued their wrangling over the question of taxing the proprietaries' estates, and no law was passed to raise money for the defense of the colony.

In September the French and their Indian allies began to advance into the frontier counties of the province; and by the first of November tales of war and the destruction of villages reached the city almost every day. Meanwhile, through the efforts of Franklin, the facts of the quarrel between the governor and the Assembly had become known in England; and the Penns, fearing that the king might be persuaded to take their estates away from them, ordered the governor to add five thousand pounds — twenty-five thousand dollars — to any amount which the Assembly might vote for purposes of defense. Franklin advised the Assembly to accept the money, and pass the necessary laws for raising by taxation additional funds for defense. This the Assembly did, voting the large sum of sixty thousand pounds — three hundred thousand dollars — and exempting, under protest, the lands belonging to the Penns.

Franklin was made one of the war commissioners, and immediately began to buy arms and provi-

sions, recruit men, and make preparations for sending them to the front. Late in November word came that the Moravian village of Guadenhutten had been burned by the Indians and its people massacred. This was in Northampton County, not more than seventy miles from Philadelphia. Now thoroughly alarmed for the safety of the city, the governor asked Franklin to lead a party to the rescue of the outlying settlements. Franklin consented, and toward the middle of December set out at the head of about five hundred men.

The march through the rough and thinly populated country was difficult in the extreme. The weather was bad, the roads little more than forest tracks choked with mud; supplies were scarce and sometimes impossible to obtain. It took the little army almost a month to reach Bethlehem, the chief town of the county, and distant from Philadelphia only fifty miles. Here Franklin remained a few days, reassuring the people, and sending out detachments into the neighboring country to reconnoiter and erect stockades.

To what dangers they were exposed is shown by an incident which took place while they were marching from Bethlehem to Guadenhutten. Just before they left Bethlehem eleven farmers, who had

been driven from their homes by the Indians, came to Franklin and asked for firearms. They wished to return to their farms and rescue their cattle. Franklin gave each one a gun and ammunition, and the men departed. Shortly after they had started it began to rain. In the midst of the storm they met a party of Indians. The farmers tried to fire at them, but their guns were soaked and would not go off. The Indians, closing in on them, killed all but one, who managed to escape. Warned by their fate, Franklin advanced toward Guadenhutzen with great caution. His scouts, ranging the woods, found traces of the Indians on every side; but the little army was allowed to proceed without interruption, and arrived at the ruined village in safety. Here a stockade was marked out and work on it immediately begun. Within five days one log fort was completed, and before very long two others were finished in the country near by.

Secured against surprise, Franklin sent out small parties to scour the country. They met no Indians, but found many places on the surrounding hills where they had evidently posted spies to watch the army's proceedings.

Franklin made his men as comfortable as he could in their rough quarters, and settled down to

spend the winter in the wilderness. Toward the end of January, however, word arrived from Philadelphia that the governor was on the point of summoning the Assembly, and that the old quarrel was likely to be renewed. Both Franklin's friends and the governor were anxious for him to return. He left the army in charge of Colonel Clapham, a soldier of experience, and, journeying back to Philadelphia by easy stages, reached that city about the middle of February, 1756, after two months' service in the field.

He found the Assembly and the governor once more at swords' points. It had been discovered that the five thousand pounds given by the proprietaries was not an outright gift, but was to be collected as best it might be from those of the Perms' tenants who were behind in their rent. This enraged the Assembly, and the old dispute about taxing the Penns' estates was revived with great bitterness. The remainder of the winter was spent in useless quarreling; and, as on previous occasions, the Assembly adjourned without accomplishing anything. Worn out by ceaseless wrangling, the governor, Robert Morris, sent his resignation to England, and Captain William Denny was appointed by the Penns to fill his place. He arrived in Philadelphia about the middle of

August, and was welcomed by the people, who looked upon him as their deliverer. But they were soon undeceived. He was as bound by his instructions from the Penns as Governor Morris had been. He and the Assembly could not agree on anything.

By December the people had grown desperate. There was no money in the treasury; the Indians were again menacing the outlying districts; and the frontier was unprotected. Realizing that something must be done at once, the Assembly passed an act exempting as before the Penns* estates from taxation, but taxing beer and liquors in their place. They had every reason to believe that the governor would consent to this law, and sent it to him for his signature. But to their surprise and anger the governor refused to sign. A committee from the Assembly went to see him. He told them that his instructions forbade him to approve the law as it stood. There would have to be many changes made in it. The committee tried to persuade him, but without success; and he finally sent the act back to the Assembly with a statement that he would not allow it to pass; and, as there was no one to judge between himself and the Assembly, he would immediately send the reasons for his action to the king.

The Assembly received his message in blank amazement. They were afraid that the governor's attitude would leave them worse off than they were before. Several days were spent in discussing the new situation, and finally they decided to follow the governor's example and appeal to the king. Franklin and an old gentleman named Isaac Norris were appointed to go to England and present their grievances. Norris pleaded his advanced age; but Franklin accepted the mission, and toward the end of June, 1757, after innumerable delays, he and his son William, who had been commissioned to accompany him, set out from New York on their long journey across the sea.

CHAPTER XII

THE SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND

ON this voyage to England an incident occurred which shows Franklin's keenness of observation. One day he noticed that the wakes of two of the ships which were accompanying his vessel were remarkably smooth, while everywhere else the water was quite rough. Puzzled, he called the captain's attention to the circumstance, and asked him the meaning of it.

"I suppose," said the captain, "that the cooks have just been emptying their greasy water through the scuppers, and that it has greased the sides of the ships a little."

Franklin was not disposed to take the explanation seriously; but some years afterward, as he was walking beside a pond which happened to be ruffled by the wind, he remembered the incident, and, procuring a cruet of oil, dropped a little of it on the water. "It spread itself," he says, "with surprising swiftness upon the surface; but the effect of smoothing the waves was not produced; **for I had**

applied it first on the leeward side of the pond, where the waves were greatest; and the wind drove my oil back upon the shore. I then went to the windward side, where they began to form; and there the oil, though not more than a teaspoonful, produced an instant calm over a space several yards square, which spread amazingly, and extended itself gradually till it reached the lee side, making all that quarter of the pond, perhaps half an acre, as smooth as a looking-glass. After this I contrived to take with me, whenever I went into the country, a little oil in the upper hollow joint of my bamboo cane, with which I might repeat the experiment as opportunity should offer, and I found it constantly to succeed."

The most important of these experiments was made at the seaport of Portsmouth, in England, in the presence of a few naval officers and members of the Royal Society, and resulted in the general recognition of the power of oil to quiet the sea.

To return, however, to his mission to England. He and his son landed at Falmouth about the middle of July, and set out immediately for London, where they arrived on July 26, 1757.

The appearance of Franklin now was in striking contrast with the raw-boned, youthful Franklin of nineteen who had landed in London thirty-two

years before. Then he was penniless and without work; now he was rich, with a servant for himself, a negro for his son, and a carriage of his own to convey him wherever he wished to go. Then he had been sent to London under false pretenses; now he was the accredited agent of one of the largest and most important colonies in America, with full power to look after her affairs. Then he had no friends; now he was a member of the Royal Society, and one of the most famous men in Europe. All the learned scientists hastened to call on him; letters of congratulation came from electricians in Holland, Germany, France, and Italy; he was received and entertained everywhere.

Comfortably settled in his lodgings, he at once took up the business upon which he had been sent. A meeting was arranged between him and the proprietaries at Thomas Penn's house in Spring Garden. Franklin explained at great length the Assembly's attitude and the grievances of the people. The Penns listened in a haughty way, but would agree to nothing. They asked him to put his complaints down on paper. He did so. They said they would give the matter their attention. Franklin had to be satisfied with this; but he felt sure that the proprietaries would do nothing, and so tried to gain his end by other means.

Following an old custom of his, he had his son William write articles for the papers, giving the true state of affairs in Pennsylvania. When these articles had attracted some notice, he followed them up by a large volume containing the complete history of the disputes between the Assembly and the governors, from William Penn to Governor Denny. This work was also written by his son, but under the elder Franklin's guidance. When the book was published, Franklin saw that copies of it were sent to all the influential statesmen in England; and before long he had the pleasure of knowing that it was awakening public sympathy for the people of Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile nothing had been heard from the Penns. A year passed before they finally took any notice of his complaints, and then they did not reply to him, but sent their answer direct to Governor Denny in Philadelphia. In this answer they denied all of Franklin's claims, and refused to grant any concessions whatever. The document had no apparent effect, either on the Assembly, which still placed implicit confidence in Franklin, or on Franklin himself, who continued to work for the interest of the colony in his own wise way.

He widened the circle of his friends, made the acquaintance of noblemen and members of Parlia-

ment, and, by letting them know the facts of the case, won many of them over to his side. He even tried to obtain an audience with the great William Pitt, the Secretary of State, and the most powerful man in all England; and though he failed in this, he became known to some of Pitt's secretaries, and through them he reached the great man's ear.

Meantime a very important event had taken place in Philadelphia. Governor Denny, grown weary of his continuous disputes with the Assembly, had at last been persuaded to ignore his instructions, and to give his consent to a law which taxed the Penns' estates equally with other lands in the colony. This law was for the purpose of raising one hundred thousand pounds — half a million dollars — for the defense of the province, and it provided that the money should be printed and issued. It was passed early in 1758, when Franklin had been about eight months in England.

Now, one of the conditions under which the Penns held Pennsylvania was that all laws passed by the Assembly and consented to by the governor, should be sent to England for the approval of the king. There was a committee in London called "The Right Honorable the Lords of Committee of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council for

Plantation Affairs," who advised the king as to whether he should approve the laws or not.

The law taxing the Penns' estates was forwarded to England sometime in 1758; but it was not until the spring of 1760 — almost two years later — that it came up before the Committee. The Penns, enraged at their governor's act, employed lawyers to oppose the law. Franklin engaged lawyers to defend it. The matter was argued at great length before the Committee, who finally decided in the Penns' favor, and ordered that the law should not be allowed.

Franklin received the decision of the Committee just as he was preparing to set out for a tour of Ireland. He had his chests and saddle-bags unpacked at once, and took up the apparently hopeless task of having the report set aside.

He first explained to the Committee the ruinous consequences which would result to the province if the law was not passed, since the money which it authorized had not only been printed and issued, but a great deal of it had already been spent. He assured them that if they would let the law stand he would guarantee that the Assembly would pass another law removing the objectionable features. There were two special objections raised by the Penns, and mentioned in the Committee's report.

The first was that the law would permit all the unsurveyed waste lands of the proprietaries to be taxed; the second was that it would now be possible for the surveyed waste lands of the proprietaries to be taxed higher than property of the same description owned by other persons. Franklin promised that these objections would be taken into consideration by the Assembly when it passed the new law. The Committee, won over by his offer and the force of his arguments, withdrew their old report and issued another, in which the original law was allowed to remain, providing the objections were removed as Franklin suggested.

It is very probable that he knew at the time that these objections had no foundation in fact. At any rate, the Assembly never passed the second law; and when, at the request of the governor, a committee was appointed to inquire into the objections, it was found that the unsurveyed lands of the Penns had never been taxed, and that their surveyed lands were taxed no higher than other lands of like character. Thus, by his shrewdness and tact, Franklin gave the colonists the law for which they had been struggling so bitterly, and won a complete victory over the Penns.

During the long years of waiting before the matter was finally settled, he had plenty of leisure

for his own affairs. He employed it in study, in writing, and in traveling in England and Scotland, and was everywhere received with open arms.

In the summer of 1758 he spent a few days at the University of Cambridge, where he met the principal professors, and with them performed numerous experiments with the recently-invented thermometer. In the spring of the following year he was given the degree of Doctor by the University of St. Andrews, in Scotland, a title by which he was always afterward known. He visited this university also, and was welcomed with great honor and respect.

In his lodgings in London he set up his electrical apparatus and entertained his hosts of friends with his famous experiments. His machine for generating electricity was the best and most powerful then in existence, and is said to have been capable of producing a spark nine inches long.

At some of the later gatherings at his lodgings he exhibited a musical instrument called the armonica, which he had practically invented himself, and on which he played very creditably> It was made of a number of half spheres of glass tuned to the different notes of the piano. They were set revolving by means of a wheel and a pedal. The player sat before them and produced

the notes by placing his moistened fingers on the revolving rims. The idea was suggested to Franklin by seeing a friend of his produce a musical tone by rubbing his finger around the edge of a glass bowl.

Before he had even thought of perfecting the armonica, he was quite a good performer on the guitar, the harp, and the violin; and there is some reason to believe that he even tried his hand at composing music himself.

Of his writings during this period, probably the most famous was a pamphlet which he wrote shortly after General Wolfe's daring capture of Quebec from the French. The question arose whether England should retain Canada or the so-called Sugar Islands of Guadeloupe as a part of the terms of peace. Franklin's pamphlet was called "The Interest of Great Britain Considered, with regard to her Colonies, and the acquisitions of Canada and Guadeloupe." He was in favor of the English retaining Canada, and the sound arguments which he advanced are said to have influenced the government when it finally decided his way.

Mention has already been made of his experiments with the thermometer at Cambridge. The perfection of this instrument had interested scientists everywhere in the question of heat; and



*Through the courtesy of G. F. Putnam's Sons, New York and London,
from Hobson's "Life of Franklin."*

ELECTRICAL MACHINE

Own.

Inklyn Insitute, Philadelphia

during his residence in England Franklin attempted many experiments to test the effect of heat upon different colors as well as upon woollens and other materials for clothing. One of these he describes very interestingly in a letter to a friend.

"I took," he says, "a number of little square pieces of broadcloth from a tailor's pattern-card, of various colors. There were black, deep blue, lighter blue, green, purple, red, yellow, white, and other colors, or shades of colors. I laid them all out upon the snow in a bright sunshiny morning. In a few hours (I cannot now be exact as to the time) the black, being warmed most by the sun, was sunk so low as to be below the stroke of the sun's rays; the dark blue almost as low, the lighter blue not quite so much as the dark, the other colors less as they were lighter; and the quite white remained on the surface of the snow, not having entered it at all. . . . May we not learn from hence, that black clothes are not so fit to wear in a hot sunny climate or season, as white ones?"

This principle is well established to-day, and recognized by every one when having clothes made for hot or cold weather; but Franklin was the first to discover it, and suggest its usefulness to the world.

With his victory over the proprietaries, his work abroad was practically ended. He remained about a year and a half longer, however, taking care of some unimportant matters for the colony

and visiting his countless acquaintances and friends. Before he finally left, two events took place which were the cause of much pleasure and satisfaction, both to himself and to his son. Oxford, the oldest and most famous university in England, following the example of St. Andrews, presented him with the degree of Doctor, in recognition of his services to science and philosophy; and shortly after, through the influence of some of his powerful friends, the important post of governor of New Jersey was granted to his son.

Loaded down with these additional honors, Franklin set sail for home the last of August, 1762, and reached Philadelphia in the autumn of the same year.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PAXTON MASSACRE

PEACE between England and France was formally declared on February 10, 1763. So far as the two countries were concerned this ended the French and Indian War, but it did not end the troubles with the Indians themselves. All along the outlying settlements, from Niagara to Florida, the savages continued to burn villages, murder families, and lay waste farms and homes.

Pennsylvania suffered more than other colonies. From the early spring of 1763 to the following winter all the western part of the province was overrun by Indians.

Among some of the people living in that region it was the opinion that the trouble was caused by the Quakers' policy of making friends with the savages. The idea spread rapidly; and by December the anger of the settlers along the western frontier had been roused to fever heat.

Near the town of Lancaster there was a small village of Indians, the remnant of one of the tribes

which had made the original treaty with William Penn. They did not belong to hostile bands, but had always lived peaceable lives, and had remained friendly with the whites. On December 14 a party of heavily armed horsemen from the neighboring district of Paxton descended upon the little Indian village at dawn, killed and scalped every Indian in it, and burned the place to the ground. It chanced that about fourteen of the inhabitants escaped. These were hastily gathered together by the magistrates of the surrounding country and placed in the workhouse in Lancaster for safe keeping. Two weeks later the same band of horsemen rode into Lancaster, forced their way into the workhouse, and massacred these Indians with even more brutality than they had shown toward the others.

Franklin, aroused by the atrocity, wrote a strong pamphlet denouncing the act. Many sided with him, but the general feeling appeared to be in favor of the settlers; and all efforts to arrest the band of horsemen proved fruitless.

While the deed was still fresh in people's minds, a party of friendly Indians, one hundred and forty-five in number, were brought to Philadelphia by a Moravian missionary, and lodged there for safety. The news was sent to the Paxton district; and a

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band of several hundred, armed with hatchets and rifles, set out for Philadelphia. The city was terror-stricken. John Penn, the son of one of the proprietaries, was the newly appointed governor. He had been in the country only a few months and felt himself incapable of coping with the situation. Like the governors before him, he turned to Franklin for help, and even made his headquarters in the latter's house.

Following his method of a few years before, Franklin again formed an association for defense, and managed to raise a regiment of a thousand men.

Meanwhile the Paxton party had arrived at Germantown, only a few miles from the city. There was a hurried consultation between the governor and his council, at the end of which Franklin and three other citizens rode out to meet the invaders and try to placate them. The regiment, ready to march at any moment, remained drawn up in the city. The barracks where the Indians had been sent was closely guarded. Every instant the city expected to be attacked. In the mean time, however, Franklin had succeeded in his mission. He not only convinced the leaders of the Paxtons that the Indians were too well protected to be taken, but actually persuaded them to give up their expedition and turn back.

Practically alone, he had saved the city from invasion and riot; but there were those who believed that the Pax ton band were right in wishing to kill off the Indians, and, as Franklin himself says, "I became a less man than ever; for I had, by this transaction, made myself many enemies among the populace."

He might also have added that he had made enemies among the richer classes, including the governor's party, and even the governor himself; for Penn, instead of being grateful to Franklin for his timely assistance, now openly sided with those who favored the massacre of the Indians at Lancaster, and refused absolutely to take Franklin's advice and order the arrest of the Pax ton band. So, through his desire for justice, and his friendship for the inoffensive and friendly Indians, Franklin found a strong party arrayed against him; but his friends were still in power in the Assembly; and when they met for the regular session, early in 1764, they were ready for the struggle which was about to take place. As usual the trouble arose over certain laws to which the governor would not give his consent; one, drawn up by Franklin himself, granted to the militia regiments of the colony the right to vote for their own officers, instead of allowing the governor to appoint them,

as had previously been the case; another, an act to raise money for defense, brought up once more the disputed question of taxing the proprietaries' estates. The law, as passed by the Assembly, taxed the Penns' lands equally with others, but the governor, in spite of the king's decision to the contrary, insisted that they should be taxed at a lower rate, and refused to sign the act.

After a heated debate the Assembly decided to consult the people as to whether they should not petition the king to remove the proprietaries and make Pennsylvania a royal province. They adjourned on March 20, and during the next seven weeks meetings were held, the question was discussed, and numerous petitions were signed all over the colony. When the Assembly met again on May 14, there were three thousand names in favor of a change of government, and only three hundred in favor of the Penns. The Assembly immediately passed a resolution to appeal to the king to resume the government of the province in his own name, and shortly after it adjourned.

In those days the members of the Assembly were elected for one year only, the election occurring on the first of October. All that summer the feeling between Franklin's party and that opposing him ran high. Every one knew that the point at

issue was whether proprietary rule should end or not; and Franklin's strong leaning toward converting Pennsylvania into a royal province, together with his defense of the Indians, made Governor Penn and his side very bitter against him. Franklin and a man named Galloway were the candidates named to represent the city on what was called "the Old Ticket."

On Election Day the voting place was opened at nine in the morning, and the steps leading to it were so crowded with voters that it took each of them a quarter of an hour to reach the voting place. The voting continued all day and well into the night. By three o'clock the next morning "the New Ticket" men, the party opposing Franklin, suggested that the polls be closed. Franklin's party objected, as they had many old and crippled voters who were not able to stand in the crowd and were just then being brought up in chairs and stretchers to vote. These men, about two hundred in all, voted between three and six o'clock in the morning. Meanwhile the other side, taking alarm, had sent horsemen and footmen to Germantown and other near-by towns to gather voters of their own; and by nine o'clock these began to pour in. The voting did not end until three in the afternoon, at which time the New Ticket party had

succeeded in procuring five hundred additional votes; and Franklin and Galloway were defeated by the narrow margin of twenty-five.

It was the first and only time in his life that Franklin ever failed to win a public office, and in this instance it was perhaps very fortunate that he did fail; for his party, again in control of the Assembly, immediately appointed him to act as their agent in England, and present to the king their petition asking for a change of government.

On November 7, 1764, Franklin left Philadelphia. Three hundred citizens on horseback escorted him to Chester, on the Delaware River, where his ship was awaiting him.

There, with cheers and good wishes ringing in his ears, he set sail. A month later he reached London and at once took up his old lodgings in Craven Street. When the news of his safe arrival was learned in Philadelphia, his friends made it an occasion for festivities; and the **church bells** were rung until nearly midnight.

CHAPTER XIV

FRANKLIN THE AGENT

So far as the petition to the king was concerned, Franklin was never able to accomplish anything. In the ten years between 1765 and 1775, when the troubles which resulted in the Revolution reached a climax, he tried at various times to get the government to take the matter up, but so many other important things relating to all the colonies were then stirring the people that the petition sank into insignificance.

He had been in England only a few weeks when the famous Stamp Act came before Parliament. This Stamp Act was a law which forced the colonists to pay a tax directly to the English government. The tax was to be placed on all legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, advertisements, and even almanacs. Stamps were used, and were pasted on the paper taxed; hence the name of the Stamp Act.

Until then the colonies had been allowed to pass their own laws as to taxation, and to use the money so raised for their own purposes. This was the

first time that the English government had interfered ; and as none of the colonies was represented in Parliament, the indignation of the people was immediately roused.

Before the passage of the law, Franklin and agents in London for other colonies did their utmost to persuade the head of the party in power, Mr. Grenville and his friends, to withdraw the act. Franklin was particularly strong in his arguments, although neither he nor the other agents — nor any one in England, for that matter — foresaw the troubles that would result. In spite of his protests the law was passed; and Grenville, hoping to please the people in Pennsylvania, asked Franklin to name some honest and responsible man as the officer to distribute the stamps and receive the tax in that province. Franklin suggested John Hughes, a merchant of Philadelphia, a member of the Assembly, and one of his intimate friends.

Hughes was appointed. Unaware of the rising storm in America, Franklin thought he had conferred an honor upon his old acquaintance; but when, in July of 1765, the news of the people's indignation and wrath began to reach London, he realized that he had made Hughes one of the most detested men in the whole colony.

From the very first the colonists determined to oppose the tax. At every meeting held throughout the country resolutions were passed to that effect, and the people pledged themselves to buy no more goods made in England, to try to grow their own wool, and to wear only the clothes which they themselves could make. When the document appointing Hughes arrived, the people turned on him. He was shunned by every one; both he and his house were threatened with attack; and rather than run the risk of being mobbed and having his property destroyed, he resigned his position.

Even Franklin himself did not escape public disapproval. The bells, which had announced his arrival in England, were muffled and tolled dismally, to show how deeply the people were incensed. They even called him a traitor and a turncoat. His enemies, seizing the opportunity to arouse sentiment against him, had pamphlets and caricatures, representing him as unfaithful to his trust, printed and circulated. There was even a time when the new house on Market Street, which his wife had had built during his absence, was in danger of being raided by the angry mob.

From the instant the news of the colonists' determination to fight the tax reached his ears, until Parliament opened in December, Franklin

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bent every energy toward getting the Stamp Act repealed. He succeeded so well that Parliament itself decided that the true state of affairs in America should be looked into; and for six weeks the members heard evidence and examined witnesses relating to the colonies and their grievances.

Franklin was one of the principal and most important witnesses. His knowledge of facts, and his experience as a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, gave his statements the force of truth, while his native wit and humor enabled him constantly to turn the tables on the men opposing him. As an acquaintance, the Rev. George Whitefield, wrote of him: "Our worthy friend, Dr. Franklin, has gained immortal honor by his behavior. . . . The answer was always found equal if not superior to the questioner. He stood unappalled, gave pleasure to his friends, and did honor to his country."

The immediate result of his examination was the repeal of the Stamp Act, which took place a few days after the hearing of witnesses was closed. Franklin's delight at the happy outcome of the matter was unbounded. Although he may have appeared to submit to the act in the beginning, it was through his perseverance and courage that **the** law was abolished; and when the news of his

success reached America, he was again hailed as the hero of the colonies. Even his old enemies in Philadelphia forgot their grudges and assisted in celebrating his victory. Governor Penn and the mayor of Philadelphia gave a party for three hundred gentlemen at the State House, at which they drank his health and sang his praises. The city was illuminated in his honor; and on the occasion of the king's birthday a great banquet was given on the banks of the Schuylkill River, followed by a procession in which the principal object was a huge barge named FRANKLIN.

With his work satisfactorily ended, he sent in his resignation as agent to the Assembly, and asked their leave to return to Philadelphia; but they refused to allow him to give up his position, and immediately appointed him to serve for another year.

The joy of the Americans, however, was short-lived. Scarcely more than a year later the English government again took up the question of taxing the colonies, and passed the celebrated law which taxed tea and other goods sent to the provinces from England. The tax was small, and in itself of little account; but the colonists, still smarting under the sting of the Stamp Act, refused to pay it, and declared that they would oppose

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it to the end. Like the Stamp Act, it was taxation without representation, and entirely unfair and unjust. Riots took place in Boston and elsewhere. People gave up using tea and all the other articles subject to the tax.

Franklin, in spite of his previous success, was now powerless to stop the passage of this law. He used every argument that he could think of to persuade the government not to anger the colonists again; but this time the party in power was pledged to put the matter through and would not listen to him. His own opposition to the tax, and the courageous way in which he was ready to meet it, are well expressed in his own words: "I have some little property in America," he writes; "I will freely spend nineteen shillings in the pound to defend my right of giving or refusing the other shilling; and, after all, if I cannot defend that right, I can retire cheerfully with my little family into the boundless woods of America, which are sure to afford freedom and subsistence to any man who can bait a hook or pull a trigger." These were brave words for a man of sixty-one!

Following the custom which he pursued during his previous stay in England, Franklin spent a great part of his summers in traveling. It was during this summer of 1767, shortly after the new tax

law had been passed, that he paid his first visit to Paris. Sir John Pringle, the queen's physician, and one of Franklin's closest friends in England, accompanied him. They traveled by post chaise from London to Dover, crossed the English Channel to Calais, and from there journeyed by carriage to Paris. Owing to the fame of his experiments in electricity, his name was well known in France, and he found a hearty welcome awaiting him. He was even introduced at the French Court.

"We went to Versailles last Sunday," he writes in a letter, "and had the honor to be presented to the king, Louis XV; he spoke to both of us very graciously and very cheerfully, is a handsome man, has a very lively look, and appears younger than he is. In the evening we were at the *Grand Convert* where the family sup in public. The table was half a hollow square, the service gold."

When any of the royal family made a sign that they wished a drink, two attendants came from an inner room, one bearing wine, the other water. Each man drank a little of what he had brought before presenting it to the guest.

"Their [the diners'] distance from each other," Franklin continues, "was such as that other chairs might have been placed between any two of them. An officer of the court brought us up through the crowd of spectators, and placed Sir John so as to stand between the queen and Madame

Victoire. The king talked a good deal to Sir John, asking many questions about our royal family; and did me too the honor of taking some notice of me."

No doubt the incident reminded Franklin of an old saying of his father's, who, in his instructions to the boy, frequently repeated the proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings." In Franklin's case the words were literally fulfilled; and before he died he had not only "stood before" George II and George III of England, Louis XV and Louis XVI of France, and Emperor Joseph of Austria, — five kings in all, — but he had sat down with one, the king of Denmark, to dinner.

The trip to Paris lasted only a month, but it gave Franklin an insight into French manners and customs which was to be of immense value to him later on.

On his return to England all hope of averting the trouble between the mother country and the colonies appeared to be at an end, and he was preparing to leave for home, when, in the spring of 1768, the newly founded colony of Georgia made him her English agent. The next year New Jersey followed the example of Georgia, and in 1770 Massachusetts, his native province, honored him in **the same way**. A young **man** named 'Arthur

Lee was appointed by Massachusetts to act as a substitute in case Franklin should be away from London or should return home.

It was in connection with his appointment as agent for Massachusetts that a very disagreeable incident occurred. As was the custom, he called on Lord Hillsborough, the minister who had charge of American affairs, to announce his appointment and present his commission. Lord Hillsborough insisted that he was not properly appointed. Franklin showed him his commission. Lord Hillsborough refused to recognize it, since it had not been consented to by the governor of Massachusetts, and he declared that no agent could be elected without the governor's consent. This was something new to Franklin. He asked for his commission, which Lord Hillsborough was still holding; and when it was returned to him, he begged his Lordship's pardon for taking up so much of his time.

"It is, I believe," he continued, "of no great importance whether the appointment is acknowledged or not, for I have not the least conception that an agent can *at present* be of any use to any of the colonies. I shall therefore give your Lordship no further trouble."

Franklin withdrew, knowing that his last chance of getting the colonists' grievances before the government had been taken away. Refused recognition

as agent, there was nothing he could do except write pamphlets and articles for the papers, in the hope that the English people themselves might be led to see the unfair way in which the colonies were being treated; but they appear to have taken very little interest in the dispute, and his labors were wasted- It was at this time that he first began to realize what the outcome of the quarrel would be; and in a letter written to the Assembly of Massachusetts, in May, 1771, he foretells the revolt of the colonies and their final break with England.

In this year a curious incident took place. A bookseller with whom Franklin dealt sent word that he had a collection of books which he thought might interest him. Franklin found that the books were thirty volumes of bound pamphlets, printed in 1715. Each volume had notes and comments written by a previous owner on the margins of the pages. Something familiar in the penmanship caught his eye; and on examining it closer he discovered that it was the handwriting of his Uncle Benjamin, the favorite uncle of his boyhood. The books had evidently belonged to this uncle and had been sold by him when he went to live in Boston, fifty-six years before. "The oddity," says Franklin, "is that the bookseller, who could suspect nothing of any relation between me and the col-

lector, should happen to make me the offer of them." Needless to say Franklin purchased the books.

Among his important discoveries of this period was the fact that repeated breathing of the atmosphere poisons it. He proved this by breathing through a tube into a deep glass mug, and then putting a lighted candle into the mug. The candle was instantly extinguished, and could not be made to burn in the mug until the bad air had been purified. From this experiment he drew the conclusion, now so well known to all, that fresh air was necessary for the preservation of health. He was one of the first to condemn the practice of sleeping in rooms with closed windows, and insisted on having bedrooms, sick rooms, and especially hospitals, properly ventilated.

In the world of science and learning Franklin was now, as he had been for years past, in the foremost rank. He was a valued member of nearly every learned association and club in all Europe. He was a manager of the Royal Society, and president of the recently-founded American Philosophical Society. He was one of the few foreign members of the Royal Academy of Sciences in France. His writings on philosophical and scientific subjects were read everywhere. Already

three editions of his works had been published in Paris, and in 1773 a new edition of them came out in England.

He was the one American who had won recognition and an enviable name for himself in Europe — the only man, probably, who might have healed the breach between England and the colonies. Yet, in spite of his fame and his world-wide reputation for clear-headed intelligence and common sense, the English government paid no heed to his warnings; and, as the storm gathered and broke, he was among the first to feel its brunt.

CHAPTER XV

THE HUTCHINSON LETTERS

TOWARD the end of 1772, while talking to a member of Parliament about the situation in America, Franklin happened to remark that all of the offensive acts and measures which had been passed against the colonies had originated in England. The member of Parliament denied this, declaring that many of them had been inspired and even demanded by some of the leading Americans themselves. When Franklin doubted the truth of such a statement, his friend offered to give him absolute proof.

A few days later he put in Franklin's hands a packet of letters written by Thomas Hutchinson, who was then governor of Massachusetts, and by other men of prominence in New England, to William Whately, a member of Parliament who had lately died. There were thirteen letters in all, and they had evidently been handed about and read by many persons, for when Franklin received them they were much soiled and torn. They were

not private letters in any sense, but had been written for the express purpose of being shown in public. Franklin read them through in amazement. What the member of Parliament had told him was true. Hutchinson and other men had grossly misstated the colonists' side of the question, and had not only grossly misrepresented the colonists' contentions, but had suggested the means by which those contentions could be set at naught. They had even asked for the quartering of troops in Boston to enforce obedience to the new laws, an act which had roused the fury of Massachusetts, and which later was one of the principal causes for that colony's joining in the Revolutionary War.

Realizing the importance of letting the Massachusetts Assembly know the contents of these letters, Franklin asked permission to copy them. The member of Parliament would not consent to that, but gave Franklin leave to send the originals to Boston; and on December 2, 1772, Franklin inclosed them in his batch of official communications. They were read by the members of the Massachusetts Assembly with utter disgust; and in June of the year following, when the Assembly met, a petition was drawn up requesting the king to remove both Governor Hutchinson and Andrew Oliver, his lieutenant governor. This petition was

sent to Franklin and was forwarded by him to Lord Dartmouth, the man who had succeeded Lord Hillsborough as the minister in charge of American affairs.

Meanwhile, in spite of Franklin's instructions, the letters had been published in Boston. Copies of them soon found their way to London and were printed in most of the leading newspapers.

Curiosity was at once aroused as to how the letters had been secured; and Thomas Whately, the brother of William Whately, was immediately suspected. He denied all knowledge of them, and charged John Temple, a former lieutenant governor of New Hampshire, with having stolen them. There was some reason for this charge. Upon his death William Whately had left all his letters and communications to his brother Thomas; and on several occasions the latter had allowed Temple to go over them. It was proved later, however, that Temple was innocent, and knew no more about the letters than Thomas Whately himself.

Enraged at Whately's accusation, Temple sent him a challenge. Whately accepted it, agreeing to fight the duel without seconds. The two men met at dawn the next morning, December 11, 1773, in the Ring of Hyde Park. Temple had a sword and a brace of pistols; Whately had only a

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sword. The former suggested starting the duel with the pistols, and offered one to Whately. They fired at each other without any result, and then fell to with their swords. Temple, who had some skill at fencing, soon discovered that Whately knew nothing about the use of his weapon, and tried to stop the duel by wounding his sword arm; but Whately laid about him so wildly that Temple could not deliver his thrust. When he finally did, Whately caught the sword in his left hand; and the blade, instead of killing him, entered his left side, giving him a severe but not a dangerous wound. Whately muttered that he was willing to stop; but Temple, who was very deaf, did not hear him and stabbed him again. This ended the fight; and Whately, though twice wounded, was able to stagger to a carriage and be driven home. Rumors of the duel were soon noised about. Temple was accused of giving Whately his second wound after the latter had fallen, and of continuing the fight after Whately had asked him to stop. Temple defended himself by publishing a long description of the duel in one of the leading newspapers, in which he excused his conduct on the ground of his deafness, and again solemnly denied the charge that he had taken the letters, or knew anything about them.

This account was the first intimation that Franklin had of the affair. He had been visiting in the country during the quarrel between Temple and Whately, and had returned to London only after the duel had been fought. He immediately wrote a letter to the newspapers explaining that neither Whately nor Temple had had anything to do with taking the letters, since they had never been in either man's possession, and admitting frankly that he himself had procured them and sent them to Boston. Who had given them to him, and how they had been obtained, he refused to tell; and to this day the name of the member of Parliament who turned them over to him has never been discovered.

He believed that his explanation had ended the matter; but the party in power, who had come to fear him, now saw a chance to disgrace him, and they made the most of it. His letter had appeared on December 26, 1773. On January 8, 1774, two weeks later, he received notice that the Committee for Plantation Affairs would, on the Tuesday following, consider the petition from Massachusetts asking for the removal of the governor and the lieutenant governor. The matter had been put aside for so long that Franklin grew suspicious at this sudden revival of it, and when he attended

the meeting he found that his suspicions were only too well founded. Governor Hutchinson and Oliver had, through their agent, employed Alexander Wedderburn, a grasping and unprincipled lawyer, to represent them. The proceedings had scarcely begun before the question of the letters was brought up, and Wedderburn stated to the Committee that he proposed to find out how the Massachusetts Assembly came into possession of them, and through whose hands. Realizing the trap which had been set for him, Franklin asked that the matter be adjourned until he could engage a lawyer to defend his side. The Committee granted him three weeks.

On January 29, 1774, the Committee met again in a building called the Cockpit. The room where the hearing was held was about the size of an ordinary parlor, with an open fireplace at one end, and a long table running the length of the room at which the members of the Committee sat. Everyone else had to stand.

Franklin had engaged the services of John Dunning, one of the leading lawyers of England, and, leaving the case entirely in his attorney's hands, chose a position beside the fireplace, where he remained during the whole meeting. "He stood," **writes** one who was present, "conspicuously erect,

without the smallest movement of any part of his body. The muscles of his face had been previously composed, so as to afford a placid, tranquil expression of countenance, and he did not suffer the slightest alteration of it to appear."

The room was crowded. There were present no less than thirty-five members of the King's Privy Council, besides hosts of Americans and friends of Franklin. The proceedings were opened by the Clerk of the Committee, who first read the petition, then the resolutions of the Massachusetts Assembly upon which the petition had been drawn, and finally the famous letters themselves.

Mr. Dunning spoke briefly, but eloquently, in favor of the petition. Then Wedderburn began. For fifteen minutes he praised Governor Hutchinson and what he had done for Massachusetts; then he turned on Franklin, and not only accused him of causing all the trouble between Hutchinson and the Massachusetts Assembly, but charged him with having stolen the letters, and sending them to Boston in the hope that he might be appointed governor in Hutchinson's place. These false and outrageous statements took up the greater part of his speech, and were greeted by many members of the Committee with bursts of laughter and delight.

When Wedderburn had finished, Mr. Dunning replied to him, but he had been standing three hours and was quite worn out; his voice was hardly more than a whisper. Besides, nothing that he could say would have helped. The Committee had probably decided against the petition before the meeting; and when they issued their report they laid great stress upon the fact that the letters had been "surreptitiously obtained," and contained nothing unworthy of the men who had written them. They refused absolutely to remove either Hutchinson or Oliver, or to grant any other of the Assembly's requests. Smarting under Wedderburn's insults, but with his conscience clear and his face calm, Franklin left the room and returned to his lodgings. This was on Saturday; on the following Monday he received official notice that he was dismissed as deputy postmaster-general of America. No reasons were given, but he knew only too well that the government had taken this means of showing him that its triumph was complete.

Wedderburn may have succeeded in injuring him in the eyes of the English, but he had made **him** a hero and a martyr in the eyes of the colonists; **and** when the news reached Philadelphia the **effigies of Hutchinson** and Wedderburn were carried

by a hooting mob through the streets and burnt, while everywhere people pledged themselves to send their letters by private messengers and make no more use of the public mails.

There remained little for Franklin to do in London. He was a discredited man with those in power; some of the hostile newspapers even demanded his arrest. His own particular friends, however, stood by him faithfully; and he went about in their society and attended the meetings of the Royal Society and his other clubs very much as he had done before. Realizing that he could be of no more use to the colonies, he once more set about making his preparations to return home, and was almost ready to sail when the news of the gathering of the first American Congress reached London. This Congress was composed of men from all the thirteen colonies, and had been formed to protest against the stand of the English government. Franklin's friends in England and America advised him to put off his departure until Congress had met, since he might be able to aid them in London. He agreed, risking the very real danger of arrest rather than lose a last chance to heal the breach between the two countries; but his sacrifice was useless. The petition which Congress finally sent was presented by **him and**

two other colonial agents, and was refused without a hearing.

While he was waiting for news of the fate of the petition, several men of prominence in London, among whom were Lord Howe and a member of Parliament named David Barclay, approached him secretly on the subject of effecting a reconciliation between the colonies and England, and suggested that Franklin should draw up a list of propositions to which the colonists would agree. He was assured that the party in power was disposed to listen to any reasonable demands.

Franklin drew up the list, but was told that the government would not consent to some of its provisions. He drew up another, and still another, finally pledging himself to pay out of his own pocket for the tea destroyed at the "Boston Tea Party"; but objections were raised to all of them, and at last, when the party in power found that it could not make him back down in his demands, it tried to bribe him by offering him a "proper consideration" for his services, and giving him a solemn promise of "subsequent rewards." He refused the offer indignantly, and the secret negotiations between him and the **government** came to an end.

The presentation of the petition from Congress

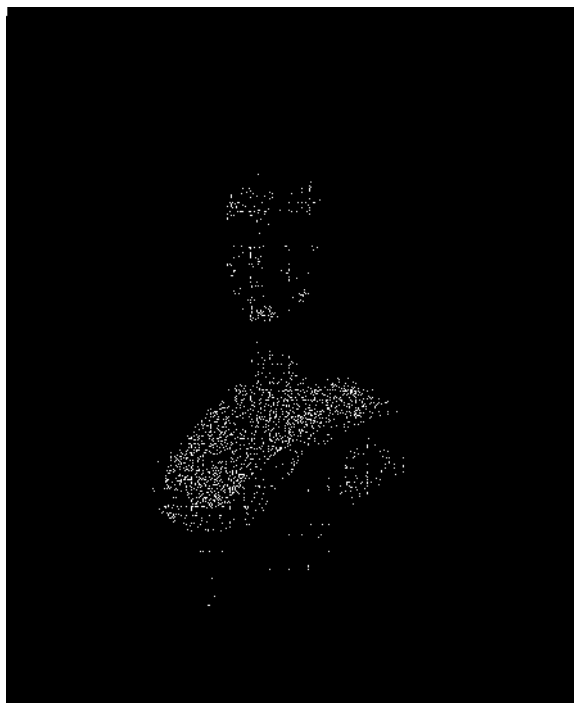
was Franklin's last official act in England. Shortly after it had been dismissed, he received the sad news of his wife's death in Philadelphia; and a month or so later, still firm in his belief that his arrest had been ordered, he slipped quietly out of London and proceeded cautiously to Portsmouth, where, on March 21, 1775, he set sail for home.

An incident which happened during his last days in England serves to show how deeply he felt for the colonies in their troubles, and how eager he was to use every means possible to put them before the English in their right light.

While visiting at a nobleman's house the talk turned to the subject of fables. Some one remarked that the day of fables was past, and that no one could find an animal, bird, or fish, about which he could write a fable with any success. Every one agreed except Franklin, who had remained silent during the discussion. One of those present asked his opinion. He replied that he believed the subject was inexhaustible.

"Can you think of one now?" asked the gentleman.

Franklin answered that he could. "If your Lordship will give me a pen, ink, and paper," he continued, "I believe I can furnish you with one in a few minutes."



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DEBORAH READ, WIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

The articles were brought. He retired to a corner of the room and began to write. In a very short time he returned and handed the paper to one of the noblemen. This is what he had written :

" Once upon a time, an eagle scaling round a farmer's barn, and espying a hare, darted down upon him like a sunbeam, seized him in his claws, and remounted with him in the air. He soon found that he had a creature of more courage and strength than a hare, for which, notwithstanding the keenness of his eyesight, he had mistaken a cat. The snarling and scrambling of the prey was very inconvenient, and, what was worse, she had disengaged herself from his talons, grasped his body with her four limbs, so as to stop his breath, and seized fast hold of his throat with her teeth. ' Pray/ said the eagle, ' let go your hold and I will release you.' ' Very fine,' said the cat, ' I have no fancy to fall from this height and be crushed to death. You have taken me up, and you shall stoop and let me down.' The eagle thought it necessary to stoop accordingly."

The eagle, of course, represented England, the cat, the colonies; and the fable described so correctly the situation between the two countries, that even those who were against him had to admit its justice, and joined in congratulating Franklin heartily on **his** ingenious performance.

CHAPTER XVI

FRANKLIN THE PATRIOT

ON May 5, 1775, the vessel in which Franklin had crossed the ocean anchored off Philadelphia. He landed in the evening, and went at once to the house in Market Street which his wife had had built for him, but which he had never seen. Here he found his daughter, Sarah Bache, and her husband, Richard Bache, awaiting him.

His arrival was announced in all the leading newspapers. One of them, the *Pennsylvania Packet*, made it the occasion for addressing to Franklin the following flattering lines:

" Welcome! once more
To these fair western plains — thy native shore.
Here live beloved, and leave the tools at home
To run their length, and finish out their doom.
Here lend thine aid to quench their brutal fires,
Or fan the flame which Liberty inspires,
Or fix the grand conductor that shall guide
The tempest back and 'lectrify their pride.
Rewarding Heaven will bless thy cares at last,
And future glories glorify the past."

Not only were the verses overflowing with his praise, but the title also lauded him as "the friend of his country and of mankind."

Probably the first news that he heard was that of the battles of Lexington and Concord, which had been fought only two weeks before. These battles marked the real beginning of the Revolution; and everywhere, from New Hampshire to Georgia, the colonies were calling the people to arms.

Franklin had arrived at an opportune moment, and was immediately drawn into the thick of affairs. On the morning following his return, the Pennsylvania Assembly unanimously resolved that he be "added to the deputies appointed by this House on the part of Pennsylvania, to attend the Continental Congress expected to meet on the 10th instant in this city."

Already the delegates from the different colonies were beginning to pour in for the meeting. The members from South Carolina arrived first, landing from the ship which had brought them from Charleston. The day after, more than five hundred citizens went out to meet the delegates from North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, among whom were Patrick Henry and George Washington, and escorted them back to

the city; and the next day the men representing New Jersey, New York, and New England rode into Philadelphia from the north. When the Congress finally met, almost all of the sixty-three members were present.

Franklin's work in this Congress was very much like the work he had done when he was a member of the Assembly. He made few speeches, and drew up virtually none of the important acts and resolutions; but in this one session he served on no less than ten committees, and before anything important was decided upon, his counsel was always sought and his advice taken. He was the one man in whose prudence and common sense every one trusted. Indeed, at this time, before Washington, Jefferson, and the other famous patriots and statesmen had come to the front, he was the greatest and best-beloved man in all America; and, curiously enough, was even called the "Father of his Country," a title by which Washington is now universally known.

One of the first committees upon which Franklin served had been appointed to devise a postal system. The plan which he suggested was approved by Congress, and he was unanimously elected postmaster-general of the colonies. This office carried more power with it, and was of

FRANKLIN THE PATRIOT

greater importance, than his old position under the English government; and it was no doubt a source of great satisfaction to him to realize that it had been given him only a year and a half after his uncalled-for dismissal.

The chiefs of the post office were always allowed to send their letters free of charge, and instead of using stamps they wrote their names on the envelopes. When acting for the English government Franklin had inscribed his letters, "Free, B. Franklin." Now, with his usual keen sense of humor, he changed the position of the words, and wrote instead "B free Franklin."

Besides his numerous duties in Congress, he was also a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and chairman of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety. Upon this committee rested the task of calling out and drilling the troops, providing ammunition and supplies, and generally preparing the province for defense. So thoroughly did Franklin carry out his work, that before the end of the year the banks of the Delaware River bristled with forts and batteries, while a fleet of small gunboats, propelled by oars, guarded the approaches of the city day and night.

The amount of work which he accomplished in those hot months is almost incredible. "In the

morning at six," he wrote to Dr. Priestley, an English friend, "I am at the Committee of Safety. . . . which committee holds till near nine, when I am at the Congress, and that sits till four in the afternoon." After that there were countless consultations, committee meetings, and discussions of all sorts until bedtime. Yet in spite of these labors and in spite of his age, — he was now sixty-nine, — he appears to have kept *in* excellent health and spirits; and when on August 1, Congress adjourned for a few weeks, instead of taking a rest, he paid a visit to his son, William, who was still governor of New Jersey, and lived in Perth Amboy, in that province.

As it happened, this was the last time that Franklin was ever to visit his son. William Franklin was a strong supporter of the English, and during the few days that his father spent with him, their discussions were many and heated. They parted friends, but soon after William Franklin came out publicly in favor of the king, and became very active in the party opposing the colonists. From that time forth all relations between him and his father were broken off.

Congress met again on September 13. Bad news awaited the members. Washington, who had been placed in command of the little American

army in New England, sent word that he had neither clothing, money, nor supplies of any kind, and that his men were beginning to leave him. Franklin, Thomas Lynch of South Carolina, and Benjamin Harrison of Virginia, all members of Congress, were appointed by that body to go to Cambridge, where Washington then was, and try to devise some plan for taking care of the army.

The three commissioners left Philadelphia on October 4, and arrived in Cambridge thirteen days later. Before starting out Franklin resigned from both the Assembly and the Committee of Safety, giving his advanced age as the reason. He also wrote a long letter to Dr. Priestley, in which, in a humorous but very striking way, he showed how little the English had accomplished toward subduing the Americans. "Britain/' he said, "at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunkers Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* Dr. Price's mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory."

The commissioners met Washington and his officers, and sat for four days, during which time the plans for the establishment and support of the army were successfully drawn up and completed. As always, Franklin took a leading part in the arrangements; and many of the most valuable ideas were suggested by him. So, in a measure, he shared in the honor of founding the first regular army in the United States.

After remaining a few days in the company of Washington, the commissioners journeyed back to Philadelphia, having been gone only six weeks.

Again bad news awaited them. A royal proclamation had been issued in England declaring that the colonies were in a state of rebellion; and a short time after its appearance Parliament had passed a law called the Prohibitory Act, which sanctioned the killing of the Americans, the destruction of their property, and all the other acts of violence which had been committed against them both on sea and land. Taken together, these acts amounted to a declaration of war. From the instant he heard of them, Franklin refused to recognize the English government, and was heart and soul in favor of independence for the colonies. Toward the end of the earlier session of Congress, he had submitted a plan for the union

of the states; but the time was not then ripe for so bold a measure, and nothing had come of it. Now he advanced it again, and labored for it incessantly, winning over many of the more lukewarm members by his persistent efforts.

It was generally realized that the Americans, unaided, would never be able to carry on a successful war against England. France and Spain were known to be friendly to the colonies; and late in November of this year, 1775, a committee, of which Franklin was one, was appointed by Congress to send agents to foreign countries and learn their attitudes toward the Americans. This committee was called the Secret Committee; and on account of his long residence abroad, and the many friends he had made there, Franklin took charge of the greater part of the work.

He wrote letters to Mr. Dumas, an acquaintance who resided in Holland; to Arthur Lee, his former assistant as agent for Massachusetts, who was still living in London; and to Don Gabriel de Bourbon, a Spanish prince, with whom he had once carried on an extensive correspondence on literary matters, — asking them all to discover, if possible, how the foreign governments felt toward this country. These letters were given to Thomas Story, a special messenger, who was employed to take them to

their destination, receive the reports of the gentlemen to whom they were addressed, and return as speedily as he could with their replies. A short time after Monsieur Penet, a French merchant who was on his way home, was intrusted by the committee with a large order for arms, ammunition, and clothing, which he was to have filled in France and shipped back to America. He also took with him a batch of letters from Franklin to some of his French friends, among whom was Dr. Dubourg, the translator of Franklin's works, and a man of prominence in Paris.

Not satisfied with these first efforts, the Secret Committee soon adopted bolder methods, and early in 1776 began making preparations for sending a special agent to France, armed with authority to deal directly with the French government. The man selected to go was Silas Deane, a man who knew a great deal about American affairs. Before he left Franklin gave him a list of instructions, telling him exactly how to proceed in his negotiations. His visit to France was to be kept an absolute secret; and to insure his dispatches to Congress from being read, he was given a quantity of invisible ink and specially prepared paper, with orders to write ordinary business letters signed "Timothy Jones" on one half of the sheet, while

he reserved the remainder for his real communication, written in the invisible ink. Silas Deane sailed in April and arrived in France in June, long before any news had been heard from Story.

It was while the preparations for Deane's departure were in progress that sad tidings came of the failure of the Continental Army to capture Quebec. The attempt had been made on December 31, 1775. General Montgomery had been killed and General Benedict Arnold had been wounded.

Remembering what good results had come from sending a committee to Cambridge, Congress resolved to pursue the same methods, and appointed Franklin and two Maryland members, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll, as commissioners, with instructions to proceed at once to Montreal, meet Benedict Arnold, and do everything that was possible to insure the safety of the army and the success of the American cause. They were even authorized to treat with Canada and try to persuade the people to join the colonies in their war for independence.

It was late in March, 1776, when the three commissioners left Philadelphia, and, accompanied by John Carroll, Charles Carroll's brother, set out on their long and fatiguing journey to the north.

CHAPTER XVII

FRANKLIN THE COMMISSIONER

AFTER a journey of two days the commissioners reached New York. Here they went on board a sloop which had been awaiting them, and started up the Hudson River for Albany. It took them five days to make the trip. They spent two days in Albany, discussing affairs with General Schuyler and General Thomas, who had charge of the town, and then, escorted by two officers, traveled in a large country wagon to Saratoga, thirty-two miles away. The ride was a very tiresome one, and almost more than the aged Franklin could stand.

"At Saratoga," he wrote home, "I begin to apprehend that I have undertaken a fatigue which, at my time of life, may prove too much for me; so I sit down to write to a few friends by way of farewell."

A week's rest, however, put him on his feet again, and the commissioners moved on toward the southern end of Lake George. Snow still covered the ground, and the lake was filled with broken ice; but in spite of the difficulties con-

fronting them, they determined to push on as quickly as possible. A batteau, or large scow, about thirty-five feet long, had been prepared for them. In this crude boat they embarked, making the journey up Lake George in thirty-six hours. At the northern end of the lake they were met by five yoke of oxen, which dragged the batteau on wheels across the strip of land separating Lake George from Lake Champlain.

Northward through Lake Champlain they sailed, arriving at the end of it in three days and a half. Here carriages were awaiting them which took them to Montreal.

"We were received," says John Carroll, "by General Arnold, and a great body of officers and gentry, and saluted by the firing of cannon and other military honors. Being conducted to the General's house, we were served with a glass of wine; while people were crowding in to pay their compliments; which ceremony being over, we were shown into another apartment, and, unexpectedly, met in it a large number of ladies, most of them French. After drinking tea, and sitting some time, we went to an elegant supper, which was followed with the singing of the ladies, which proved very agreeable, and would have been more so if we had not been so fatigued with our journey."

The commissioners, however, soon learned that Canada would not join the colonies; even their efforts to borrow money for the cause came to

naught. The Canadians had expected that the commissioners would bring money with them to pay for the quartering and provisioning of the army; and when they discovered that this was not the case, they became indifferent and refused to aid the Americans in any way. The commissioners reported the state of affairs to Congress; and advised that body that if money could not be raised to support the army in Canada, so that it would be respected instead of hated, the only thing to do was to withdraw it across the border into the colony of New York.

The report had scarcely been dispatched when a messenger arrived with the news that an English fleet had landed troops at Quebec, and put to rout the remnant of the American army stationed there. A hurried council of war was called, at which the commissioners decided not to wait for instructions from Congress, but to withdraw from Canada at once what remained of the army.

The following day Franklin and John Carroll left for the south to report to Congress, while the other two commissioners remained behind to oversee the transportation of the troops from Canada to the northern end of Lake Champlain.

Franklin arrived in Philadelphia in the early part of June. He had done everything in his

power to win Canada over to the American side, and though he had failed, it was through no fault of his, but by reason of circumstances over which he had no control, and for which he was in no way responsible.

He found a new state of affairs awaiting him in Pennsylvania. Congress had passed a law dissolving all governing bodies whose authority came from the king. The Assembly, coming under this law, had ceased to exist, and delegates had been elected to confer together and decide upon the proper measures to be taken to form a new state government. Out of the twenty-five delegates chosen from Philadelphia Franklin was one. The conference met on June 18, and in five days' time had drawn up a plan for a convention of citizens to be elected by the people, to consist of eight members from Philadelphia, and eight from each county. This convention was to agree upon a constitution under which Pennsylvania would be governed. The election was held; and Franklin was not only elected again, but, when the convention met on July 16, he was unanimously chosen to act as president of the meeting.

In the meanwhile, however, a great event had taken place in Congress. During Franklin's absence in Canada the question of formally announcing

the independence of the colonies had been debated with great spirit; and now nearly all of the members were in favor of it. A few days after his return, Congress elected by ballot a committee of five to draw up a proper declaration. Franklin was chosen a member of it, the other four being Robert Livingston, Roger Sherman, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson.

In the actual drafting of the famous Declaration of Independence, Franklin had no share. Jefferson wrote it, and afterward read it to Franklin and Adams for their approval. Neither made any corrections, and it was submitted to Congress virtually as Jefferson had drawn it.

Here it came in for a great deal of criticism, and parts of it were cut out or revised. Provoked at the way in which his work was being mutilated, Jefferson expressed his annoyance to Franklin, who was sitting beside him. Franklin sympathized with him, and told him that, whenever possible, he avoided drawing papers which were to be reviewed by a public body.

"I took my lesson," he continued, "from an incident which I will relate to you. When I was a journeyman printer, one of my companions, an apprenticed hatter, having served out his time, was about to open shop for himself. His first concern was to have a handsome signboard,

with a proper inscription. He composed it in these words : *John Thompson, Hatter, makes and sell Hats for ready money,* with a figure of a hat subjoined. But he thought he would submit it to his friends for their amendments. The first he showed it to thought the word *hatter* tautologous, because followed by the words, *makes hats*, which showed he was a hatter. It was struck out. The next observed that the word *makes* might as well be omitted, because his customers would not care who made the hats so long as they were good. . . . He struck it out. A third said he thought the words *for ready money* were useless, as it was not the custom of the place to sell on credit. . . . They were parted with; and the inscription now stood: *John Thompson sells hats.* 'Sells hats?' says his next friend; 'why, nobody will expect you to give them away. What, then, is the use of that word?' It was stricken out, and *hats* followed, as there was one painted on the board. So his inscription was reduced ultimately to *John Thompson*^ with the figure of a hat subjoined.*

The Declaration, with its corrections, was finally approved by Congress. When the time came to sign the document, John Hancock, one of the delegates from Massachusetts, declared that it was now too late to pull different ways, and that the members must all hang together.

"Yes," said Franklin quickly, "we must, indeed, all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately!"

Franklin's work in connection with the great

document was not of the sort to attract much public attention. He had discussed it with his friends, debated it with members of Congress, fought for it quietly but courageously for months; and on that memorable Fourth of July, 1776, when it was read to the assembled citizens for the first time, there was no one in all that throng who heard it with a deeper thrill and a greater sense of gratitude than Benjamin Franklin.

Congress employed the remainder of that summer in deciding upon the terms for the union of the newly-founded states. Franklin labored hard over the matter, and many of his suggestions were embodied in the final plan. At the same time he was presiding over the Pennsylvania Convention, and though his work in Congress kept him away from many of the sittings, he was on hand when most of the important debates took place. He was also a member of the committee appointed to devise a seal for the United States. Jefferson and John Adams were the other two members. The seal which they finally suggested, however, was of elaborate design, and was not adopted by Congress.

The days immediately following the reading of the Declaration of Independence were full of stir and excitement. The king's arms were removed from shops, taverns, and government buildings.

The ones in the State House were pulled down before a great crowd of spectators, laid upon a bonfire of tar barrels, and, with great solemnity, burnt. A steady stream of troops passed through the city on their way to New Brunswick, in New Jersey, the rendezvous of the army. Boatloads of soldiers sailed up the Delaware River toward Trenton and other points north. Scarcely a day passed without some messenger arriving with news from the front.

It was toward the middle of July that Congress received the first tidings of the arrival of Lord Howe at Sandy Hook, with a fleet of one hundred and twenty vessels. This was the same Lord Howe with whom Franklin had entered into negotiations in London. His first act was to send on shore a declaration to all the royal governors, announcing that he had been authorized to grant pardons, providing the colonies would give up the independent stand they had taken. The messenger who bore this declaration to Congress bore also a personal letter to Franklin, in which Lord Howe asked Franklin's assistance in preserving peace between America and England. Franklin read the letter to Congress. The members instructed him to answer it. He did so, stating that if Lord Howe were ready to treat with the United States as a sovereign country, it might not be too late to

come to an understanding; but that the Americans would never again submit to being governed by England.

This letter was delivered to Lord Howe on board his flagship in New York Harbor; and three weeks later he wrote once more to Franklin, assuring him of his friendship and regretting that he could not count on Franklin's aid. To this letter Franklin returned no answer.

A few weeks later Lord Howe paroled General Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner, and sent him to Congress with a message that he would like to confer with some of the members. He gave his solemn promise that he would regard them as private gentlemen, and meet them at any place they might appoint.

After a three days' debate it was finally decided to send Franklin, Edward Rutledge, and John Adams as a committee to learn what sort of terms Lord Howe had to propose. Franklin wrote to Lord Howe suggesting either "the governor's house at Amboy, or the house on Staten Island, opposite Amboy," as the place for the meeting. Lord Howe chose the house on Staten Island.

The committee were two days making the journey to Amboy. The roads were crowded with troops, all marching to join Washington and aid

in the defense of New York. It was difficult for the three men to get food and lodging at the taverns along the route. At New Brunswick, where they spent the second night, the inn at which they stopped was so full that Adams and Franklin had to sleep in the same bed. The room was only a little larger than the bed, and had only one small window. Adams closed it.

"Oh!" said Franklin, "don't shut the window. We shall be suffocated."

Adams said that he was afraid of the night air.

"The air within the room," Franklin answered, "will soon be worse than that without doors. Come, open the window and come to bed, and I will convince you. I believe you are not acquainted with my theory of colds."

Adams, obeying, got into bed; and Franklin began a long discourse on air, cold, and breathing, which proved so soothing that Adams fell asleep in the midst of it. Franklin also was asleep long before he had exhausted his subject.

The next day they arrived at Amboy opposite Staten Island. Here they found that Lord Howe had dispatched a boat to meet them. In the boat was a British officer who had been sent as a hostage to insure their safe return. The committee unan-

imously agreed that they would trust Lord Howe without a hostage, and invited the officer to go with them in the boat.

On Staten Island a regiment of Hessian troops had been drawn up to receive them. When Lord Howe saw his officer in the boat, he cried out,

"Gentlemen, you pay me a very high compliment, and you may depend upon it, I will consider it the most sacred of things."

He shook hands very cordially with Franklin, was introduced to the other gentlemen, and then escorted the party to the old stone mansion where the interview was to take place.

Refreshments had been prepared in a large room decorated for the occasion with green branches and moss. Here for half an hour they chatted agreeably, while they ate and drank. When the meal was finished the servants cleared the table, and the formal "interview" began.

From the beginning it was evident that no agreement could be reached. Lord Howe was authorized to treat with the Americans only as subjects of England. None of the committee would enter into any understanding with Great Britain except as the representatives of an independent country. On both sides the discussion was conducted with the greatest courtesy and

politeness, but neither party would give in, so the interview ended exactly where it began.

Lord Howe escorted his guests back to their boat, said good-by to them, and gave orders that they be landed on the New Jersey shore. A few days later the committee presented its report of the interview to Congress, which instructed them to have it published in the newspapers. This was done, and no further notice of it was taken.

It was some time in September before any news was received from France. Meanwhile, the battle of Long Island had been fought and lost, and New York had fallen. People began to wonder whether the struggle for independence was not doomed. In the midst of this gloom and depression, a letter of many pages arrived from Dr. Dubourg, Franklin's friend in Paris. It was addressed to Franklin, but it contained information of such importance that he made haste to present it to Congress. In it Dr. Dubourg not only assured him of his own assistance, but guaranteed the support of France. Already supplies were being bought for the Americans, and measures taken toward the purchase of guns and ammunition. Several of the powerful ministers had been interviewed and had expressed themselves as being in sympathy **with the American cause.**

Thrilled with joy and hope, Congress decided to honor the French nation by sending over a larger and more important embassy, the members of which were to be elected by ballot. The election took place on September 26. On the first vote Franklin was chosen unanimously. Thomas Jefferson and Silas Deane received the next highest number of votes; but on account of the ill health of his wife Jefferson was forced to resign, and Arthur Lee was appointed to fill his place.

When Franklin was told that he had been elected, he turned to Dr. Rush, who was sitting beside him, and said,

"I am old and good for nothing; but as the storekeepers say of their remnants of cloth, 'I am but a fag end, and you may have me for what you please.'"

A man of seventy, he had just been elected to fill a difficult post, and the greatest and most important work of his whole life still lay before him.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MISSION TO FRANCE

ON October 27, 1776, Franklin, accompanied by his two young grandsons, William Temple Franklin, the son of his son William, and Benjamin Franklin Bache, the son of his daughter, Sarah Bache, sailed from Marcus Hook, a small town on the Delaware River below Philadelphia. The vessel which carried them was the *Reprisal*, a fast sloop of war belonging to the infant navy of the United States. Captain Wickes commanded her. Franklin and his grandsons went on board secretly, since it was thought best to keep his mission from the knowledge of the British; and as soon as they had embarked the *Reprisal* weighed anchor and headed toward the sea.

One of Franklin's last acts before leaving Philadelphia was to lend Congress about twenty thousand dollars, all the money he could, at the moment, gather together from his personal fortune.

The cargo of the *Reprisal* consisted of* fifteen thousand dollars' worth of indigo, which was to

go toward paying the expenses of the embassy. There was very little ready money in the United States at that time, and the only way Congress had of paying for supplies furnished by France was to give their value in tobacco, indigo, cotton, and merchandise of various kinds.

During the voyage across the ocean the *Reprisal* was chased by the enemy's warships several times. The captain beat to quarters and made ready for battle, but his orders were to escape without fighting, if possible; and in each case he managed to elude his pursuers. The weather was stormy all the way across, but in spite of rough seas Franklin was able to get the daily temperature of the water, and verify some experiments, made on previous voyages, as to the warmth of the Gulf Stream.

As they neared the French coast they fell in with some English merchantmen, and, capturing two of them, carried them into port. The *Reprisal* arrived in Quiberon Bay, on the coast of Brittany, on November 29, and on December 3 Franklin and his grandsons were landed at Auray, a neighboring seaport. Franklin was very much fatigued by the voyage, but refused to remain in Auray. A post chaise was procured from Vannes, a town some distance away, and the party pushed on toward the city of Nantes.

"The carriage," Franklin says in the little journal which he kept, " was a miserable one, with tired horses, the evening dark, scarce a traveler but ourselves on the road; and to make it more *comfortable*, the driver stopped near a wood we were to pass through, to tell us that a gang of eighteen robbers infested that wood, who but two weeks ago had robbed and murdered some travelers on that very spot."

Franklin and his party, however, came through safely, and arrived at Nantes on December 7. This city was one of the great seaports of France. Monsieur Penet, the French merchant whom the Secret Committee had commissioned to buy stores for the Americans, lived there, and had already begun to ship supplies to the United States.

Franklin remained in Nantes several days, resting, and receiving hosts of friends and visitors. Then, thoroughly recovered from his fatigue, he continued his journey to Paris, where he arrived on December 21.

The enthusiasm with which the French people greeted him was truly remarkable. No doubt it was due in part to his fame as a scientist, and to his "Poor Richard's" sayings, which had already been translated three times into French; but his own personality and charm, together with the mystery surrounding his mission, and the general feeling of sympathy toward the young American nation, added greatly to his reputation; and

within a very short time he became the best-known and most popular man in the whole of France. This enviable reputation he retained during the entire period of his residence in that country.

"His name," says John Adams, when writing about him a few years later, "was familiar to government and people, to kings, courtiers, nobility, clergy, and philosophers, as well as plebeians, to such a degree that there was scarcely a peasant or a citizen, a *valet-de-chambre*, coachman or footman, a lady's chambermaid, or a scullion in a kitchen, who was not familiar with it, and who did not consider him a friend to human kind."

Honors were showered upon him everywhere. When he passed through the streets to any public function, crowds welcomed him with acclamations. He was received in the best houses, entertained by the nobility, and visited by the most prominent statesmen, scientists, and writers of the day.

Portraits, medallions, medals, engravings, and busts to the number of a hundred and more were made of him. There was not a print shop in France that did not have his picture on view. In a letter to his daughter, Mrs. Bache, written in 1779, three years after his arrival in Paris, he alludes humorously to this fact.

After describing a certain medallion about which she had inquired, he goes on: "A variety of others have been made

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since of different sizes; some to be set in the lids of snuff-boxes, and some so small as to be worn in rings; and the numbers sold are incredible. These, with the pictures, busts, and prints (of which copies upon copies are spread everywhere), have made your father's face as well known as that of 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. It is said by learned etymologists, that the name *doll*, for the images children play with, is derived from the word IDOL. From the number of *dolls* now made of him, he may be said, *in that sense*, to be *i-doll-ized* in this country."

Five days after Franklin's arrival in Paris, he, with Silas Deane and Arthur Lee, the other members of the embassy who had joined him there, was formally presented to the Count de Vergennes, French minister for foreign affairs. Deane had already had numerous interviews with the count, and had received his assurances of the good will of the French government; but as yet France did not feel that she could help the United States openly, and all the supplies which had already been sent to America had been shipped quietly and as though coming from private parties and not from the government itself. Lord Stormont, the English ambassador to France, had been very active in trying to stop the ships from sailing, and had even complained to the French government.

Under these circumstances the Count de Vergennes had to move cautiously; and when the American envoys presented their commission and asked France to lend America eight ships of the line to strengthen her small navy, he could only repeat his assurance of France's friendship, and give vague promises of assistance. A few days later, however, when the envoys' requests had been submitted to him in writing, the count told them that the government would lend the United States two million francs, — four hundred thousand dollars, — without interest, providing the transaction was kept a secret.

The envoys joyfully accepted the offer, and in January, 1777, sent the first instalment of *five* hundred thousand francs to Congress.

Franklin spent his first few weeks in France with Silas Deane in Paris, but the noise and bustle of the city, together with the constant flow of visitors, tired him greatly; so when Monsieur de Chaumont, a wealthy Frenchman, and a staunch supporter of the American cause, urged him to occupy a part of his large house in the neighboring village of Passy, Franklin accepted gratefully. It was in this house, only two miles from Paris, that Franklin lived during the remainder of his stay in France. Monsieur de Chaumont refused absolutely to allow

him to pay any rent, saying that, when the war was over, if Congress wished to compensate him, it might grant him a piece of the land in the great country which he had helped to set free.

Franklin sent his younger grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, a boy of eight years, to school in the neighborhood. It had been his intention to have William Temple Franklin, who was then eighteen, study law; but the stress of work was too great for Franklin to do alone, and he finally determined to keep his elder grandson with him as his private secretary.

The winter of 1777 was an anxious season for the envoys. General Burgoyne with an army of ten thousand men had set out from England to reenforce the British troops in America; and the meager news which came from the United States was anything but reassuring. After the capture of New York the enemy had invested the surrounding country, overrun New Jersey, and were advancing upon Philadelphia. France refused to give any further aid to the Americans until she could be certain of the success of their cause. For a time Franklin and his colleagues began to believe that they might be ambassadors without any country to represent. Then, in the spring, came the welcome tidings of the crossing of the Delaware

and the capture of Trenton by Washington, and immediately the enthusiasm of the French was revived.

In May the Marquis de La Fayette fitted out a vessel at his own expense and set sail for the United States. It became the fashion for young Frenchmen of all classes to go out to America and fight. Every day Franklin was besieged with applications, many of which showed so much eagerness and zeal that he had not the heart to refuse them.

The arrival in April of the American sloop of war *Lexington* also served to raise the envoy's hopes. The *Reprisal*, which had brought Franklin over, had been cruising around in European waters for months, capturing prizes and sending them to Nantes and other French seaports. Now, with the *Lexington*, and a small cutter named the *Dolphin*, she was sent out by the envoys to intercept the fleet of ships laden with linen which were due to sail from Belfast in June. The three vessels sailed entirely around Ireland; and though they failed to come up with the linen ships, they managed to capture or sink sixteen English merchantmen. They took their prizes into Nantes; but Lord Stormont protested to the French government, and the Count de Vergennes was forced to

order the vessels to leave the harbor. The English ambassador had made similar protests against the *Reprisal* before; but Captain Wickes, following his former practice, coolly outwitted the English. He invited a party of French shipowners on board his ship, took them and all the prizes outside the harbor, and there sold the captured boats to the Frenchmen. When the vessels returned to Nantes they came back as French vessels, and Lord Stormont could say nothing. Whether Franklin suggested this procedure or not is unknown; in its cleverness of thought it at least bears the marks of his inspiration.

In a similar matter Franklin was very deeply involved. Through a secret agent the envoys purchased a fast sailing vessel from the English, and had her sent to the French port of Dunkirk, where she was fitted out as a ship of war. She was called the *Surprise*. Captain Gustavus Conyngham was put in command of her. His first capture was the packet which carried the mails between England and Holland. He took her into Dunkirk and forwarded the mails to the envoys in Paris. Enraged at the way he had been previously tricked, Lord Stormont now protested so violently that the French government was forced to take active measures, and arrested Captain Conyngham and

his crew, confiscated the *Surprise*, and let the packet go free.

The envoys meanwhile had procured another vessel called the *Revenge*. Through their efforts Captain Conyngham and his men were released from prison and put in charge of her. Captain Conyngham let it be known that he was going to make a trading voyage to Norway, sent ashore his guns and most of his crew, and took on board a cargo of merchandise. In order to insure his peaceful behavior, the French government took the bond of Hodge and Allen, American merchants living in Dunkirk.

Captain Conyngham, setting sail, remained outside the harbor until nightfall, when a barge brought out his guns and crew, and he slipped away. A few days later two English warships appeared at Dunkirk to take the captain and his vessel to England, only to find that they had gone.

Lord Stormont immediately notified the Count de Vergennes and the latter ordered the arrest of Hodge. He was confined in the Bastille, in Paris, for six weeks, where he was lodged as comfortably as he would have been at home; and when the feeling against him had somewhat died down, on the application of Franklin he was released. Captain Conyngham not only made good his escape, **but,**

after many adventures, managed to take the *Revenge* safely to America.

So the summer and the autumn of 1777 passed away. By July there were as many as twelve American agents in Europe. Most of them had been sent to represent Congress in different countries, but, so far, France was the only nation that would recognize the United States even secretly, and most of the agents were living in Paris. On Sundays they usually dined at Franklin's house in Passy, where, with their secretaries and Franklin's grandsons, they sometimes made as large a party as twenty. In spite of their common interest in the welfare of the United States, however, and their outward show of friendliness, they were generally at odds with one another. Arthur Lee, one of the three envoys, caused most of the trouble. He was of a suspicious, jealous nature, always ready to believe anything bad about any one, and envious of everybody who was honored above himself. On his side were William Lee, his brother, and Ralph Izard, a wealthy resident of South Carolina, both men of his own type. Throughout the whole period of their residence in France, these men or their friends were opposing objections to every move of Franklin and his party, and even wrote letters full of insinuations against 'them to

Congress. At first they directed their malice at Silas Deane, but later Franklin himself came in for a share of it; and it was one of the most difficult tasks of his mission to placate them and keep them in good humor, so that the business of the United States might be carried on.

Inspired by the success of the *Reprisal* and the *Lexington*, the envoys ordered a frigate to be built for them in Holland; but long before she was finished the *Reprisal* had foundered at sea, the *Lexington* had been captured by the English ship of war *Alert*, and Franklin's high hopes of striking another blow at English commerce were dashed to the ground.

Again the envoys faced an anxious period of waiting. For some time no news had come from America, and they had no means of finding out how the war was progressing. A British fleet had blockaded the port of Nantes, so that none of the vessels loaded with supplies for the United States could set sail. Besides, their money was getting low. Under these circumstances, Franklin and his associates determined to appeal to King Louis XVI, asking him to recognize the independence of the United States, and grant them a loan of fourteen million francs. As part payment they offered to sell him the frigate being built in Holland.

On October 1 the appeal was presented. Weeks passed before an answer was received. The king agreed to purchase the frigate and grant a loan of three million francs, but refused to acknowledge the independence of the United States.

Scarcely had the envoys time to congratulate themselves on this partial success, when news came of the taking of Philadelphia by General Howe, Lord Howe's brother; and to the anxieties of his position Franklin had added the anxiety for the safety of his daughter and friends. It was months before he heard that Mrs. Bache and her family had escaped from the city, and that Captain Andre\ the English officer who was afterwards arrested and shot as a spy, had been quartered in his house. Yet even with these new troubles and perplexities to worry him, his wit was as sparkling as ever, and when an Englishman remarked to him that Howe had taken Philadelphia, he answered quickly,

"I beg your pardon, sir; Philadelphia has taken Howe."

How true this statement proved to be was shown later when Washington shut the British up in Philadelphia for many months.

This was the condition of affairs toward the end of November, 1777. In the beginning of December a rumor reached Passy that an American vessel

had landed at Nantes, and that Mr. Austin, a special messenger, was speeding toward Paris with important dispatches. All the American agents and officials hastened out to Passy to await the coming of the messenger. When he arrived their impatience was so great that they rushed out of the house to meet him, Franklin in the lead.

"Sir," he demanded, "is Philadelphia taken?"

"Yes, sir," replied Austin.

His worst fears realized, Franklin clasped his hands silently, and turned back toward the house.

"But, sir," cried Austin after him, "I have greater news than that. General Burgoyne and his whole army are prisoners of war!"

CHAPTER XIX

FRANKLIN THE TREATY MAKER

As soon as the news of General Burgoyne's defeat was made known to the French government, it sent word to the envoys by Monsieur Gerard, secretary of the king's council and under secretary for foreign affairs, that it would consider their proposals for an alliance with France. Franklin's joy knew no bounds. This was what he had been laboring for ever since he had arrived, and now, at the moment when he thought all hope was gone, the king himself was proposing an alliance.

On December 12, six days after the news had jreached Passy, the envoys drove out to Versailles and had a long conference with the Count de Vergennes, in which he renewed the proposal, and desired the envoys to draw up the terms of the treaties. On December 17, Monsieur Gerard again called on the envoys and gave them the final assurance that the treaties would be made, and that the independence of the United States would be recognized and maintained. A courier had been

sent to the court of Spain to learn that nation's attitude, and as soon as he returned the matter could be immediately put through.

The next six weeks were taken up with consultations, interviews, and discussions over the terms of the alliance. As usual, Arthur Lee did his utmost to hamper the proceedings, objecting to various clauses, and showing his envy and suspicions when anything was done without his concurrence; but at last, on February 6, 1778, the papers were signed by the envoys and by Monsieur Gerard, representing the French government.

There were really three treaties. The first one, called the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, bound both countries to trade fairly with each other and remain friends. The second, called the Treaty of Alliance, recognized the independence of the United States, and stated that its purpose was to maintain effectually the liberty and sovereignty of that country, both in matters of government and of commerce. This treaty was to be enforced only in case France, by aiding America, should be dragged into a war with England, and contained a provision that "neither of the two parties shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained." The third treaty was a secret one, in-

tended to allow Spain to join the alliance if she should desire to do so.

Monsieur Gerard wished to keep the matter secret until the treaties had been formally ratified by Congress; but during the negotiations Franklin, following a custom of his, had sent Mr. Austin to England to notify his friends and others there who favored the American cause; and on February 17, only eleven days after the treaties had been signed, the fact was announced in the House of Commons by Charles Fox. It was at the very moment when Lord North, the premier, was trying to get Parliament to grant America what Franklin had demanded during the last days of his residence in London; and the proceedings in Parliament had to be dropped, France having beaten England by almost two weeks.

When the treaties were signed, Dr. Bancroft, one of the Americans present, noticed that Franklin wore the same suit that he had worn in London on the day when Wedderburn had made his outrageous charges against him in the Cockpit. He mentioned the coincidence to Franklin, but the latter only smiled and refused to admit that he had worn the suit in remembrance of his injuries.

An amusing incident which occurred during the

negotiations shows Franklin's keen wit and tact in keeping the peace between his colleagues. One day a large cake was sent to the rooms in which the envoys were working. It was addressed to "*Le Digne Franklin*" (the worthy Franklin).

Mr. Deane, when he saw the inscription, turned to Franklin and said, "As usual, Doctor, we have to thank you for our accommodation, and to appropriate your present to our joint use."

"Not at all," replied Franklin; "this must W, intended for all the commissioners, only these French people cannot write English. They mean, no doubt, Lee, Deane, Franklin."

In spite of the French government's desire to keep the alliance a secret until Congress had been heard from, the envoys were very anxious to have the treaties publicly announced, and finally prevailed upon the Count de Vergennes and Monsieur Gerard to grant their request.

In order that the United States might be recognized as an independent country, it was necessary for the envoys to be presented at the French Court; and March 20 was the day fixed for this important event.

Etiquette required those appearing before the king to wear wigs. Franklin ordered one, and in due time the hairdresser brought it to Passy to

be tried on. He pulled and tugged, but no amount of effort would make it fit Franklin's head.

"Perhaps it is too small," suggested Franklin at length.

The wigmaker declared that it was impossible, and then, flying into a sudden rage, he flung the wig to the ground.

"No, Monsieur," he cried angrily; "it is not the wig that is too small, it is your head that is too large!" And swinging on his heel he left the room in a towering passion.

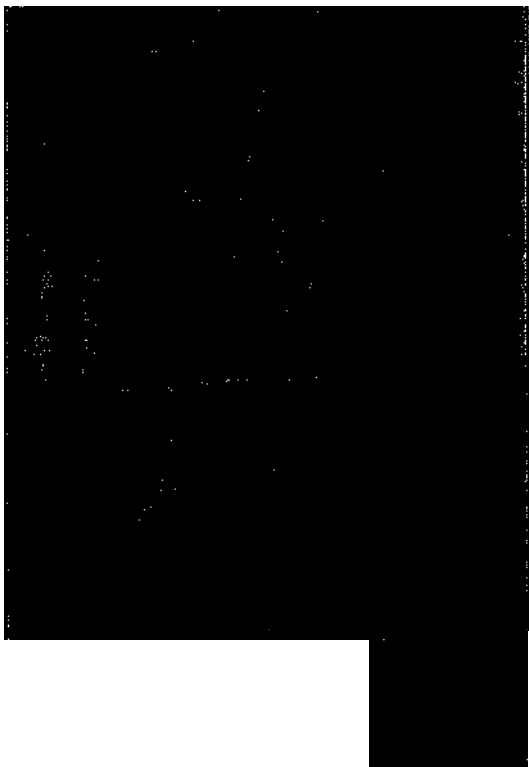
It was too late to order another wig, and so Franklin decided to break all rules and go to court without one. He also decided to leave off the sword and the *chapeau*, or hat, which was carried under the arm on such occasions; and dressed in a suit of black velvet, with white ruffles at his wrists and neck, white silk stockings and silver buckles, he entered his coach at Passy on the eventful morning; and, attended by a retinue of servants, was driven to Versailles, where the other envoys and a great crowd of Americans joined him. It is said that the court chamberlain, who guarded the doors of the palace, hesitated a moment before admitting him; but his dignified bearing and captivating manners won him the instant admiration of the court.

The Count de Vergennes escorted the envoys and their friends to the king's antechamber; and they were soon ushered into the king's dressing-room, where Franklin and his colleagues were presented to the king.

Louis X V I received them very graciously, assuring them of his friendship for the United States, and expressing his satisfaction at the way the envoys had conducted themselves during their residence in France.

The envoys were then taken across the widd courtyard of the palace and presented to the members of the king's cabinet, the crowd clapping and cheering them with great fervor. After magnificent dinner at the Count de Vergennei' resiðence, at which many of the nobility were present, they were conducted to the queen's apartments, where they found Marie Antoinette and the royal family playing cards. Franklin was particularly honored by the queen, who asked him to stand near her, and took occasion to speak to him in very friendly terms.

Hearing of the envoys' reception at court, Lord Stormont left Paris the next morning and returned to England. This meant that war between England and France was close at hand; but so unpopular was Lord Stormont that many



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

The statue by John J. Boyle, in front of the Philadelphia Post Office. A duplicate of this statue was unveiled in Paris on the two-hundredth anniversary of Franklin's birth, January 17, 1906.

looked upon his departure with a feeling of relief.

On the following day the envoys were present at a levee of the queen, and they then paid visits of state to the different members of the royal family. On this occasion they were entertained at dinner by Monsieur Gerard.

After the treaties had been made public, France lost no time in giving substantial aid to the United States. Early in April, not more than two weeks after the envoys had been presented at court, a fleet of French war vessels sailed for America. They carried with them Monsieur Gerard, who had been appointed a special ambassador to the United States; and on the same ship went Silas Deane, who, through the efforts of Arthur Lee and his party, had been recalled by Congress. On the day Silas Deane left Paris, John Adams landed at Bordeaux to fill his place.

On April 29 of this year, 1778, the famous public meeting between Franklin and Voltaire, the great French dramatist and poet, took place. It was at a session of the Academy of Sciences at which Franklin and Voltaire were present. During a lull in the proceedings a cry arose from the audience that the two illustrious men should be introduced. When this was done they bowed to

each other; but the people still clamored, so the two great philosophers shook hands. Even then those present were not satisfied and kept shouting, "You must embrace, French fashion." With that, as John Adams related afterward, "the two aged actors upon this great theater of philosophy and frivolity embraced each other by hugging one another in their arms, and kissing each other's cheeks; and then the tumult subsided/'

In this same year, about the middle of February, Captain John Paul Jones arrived at Brest with the ship *Ranger*. He had been sent over by Congress to take command of the frigate which the envoys were having built in Holland; but by the time he had reached France the vessel had been sold to the king. He set out in the *Ranger*; and after a most successful cruise, in which he captured the British frigate *Drake*, he returned to Brest sometime in May. Here he was welcomed by the French as a hero; but Arthur Lee, who had conceived the idea that Jones had not treated him with the respect due to his position, did everything in his power to hamper and annoy him; and when Jones presented a bill for five thousand dollars to pay for his expenses, Lee refused absolutely to **pay it.**

Franklin, however, remained Jones's firm friend, and a few weeks later wrote to Jones that the French government wished to put him in command of the frigate which it had purchased from the envoys, and suggested that Jones come to Paris and arrange the matter. In his letter Franklin stated particularly that neither Adams nor Lee, the other two envoys, knew anything of this proposition, and advised Jones to keep it secret. Indeed, from this time on, the French government insisted on dealing with Franklin alone, and only recognized Lee when it had to — a fact which made Lee even more envious and bitter than he had been before.

Jones went to Paris and had many interviews with Franklin and the French ministers. Everything seemed favorable, and he returned to Brest, where he was to await the arrival of the ship. Month after month went by, and still the vessel did not come. At first she was not finished, and then, when she was ready, some of the French naval officers became jealous that a stranger should be put in command of her, and raised objections to the appointment of Jones. Franklin did everything he could to further the latter's interests, but was unable to obtain anything more than promises.

It was at this stage that Jones, who had given up all hope of success, happened one day to pick up an old copy of "Poor Richard's Almanac." One of the proverbs caught his eye. "If you would have your business done, go," he read; "if not, send."

He took the advice, and without delay went to Versailles, where, after stating his case, he obtained leave to purchase a ship and engage a crew. As a compliment to Franklin and "Poor Richard's Almanac," from which he had drawn his inspiration, he called the vessel which he purchased the *Bon Homme Richard*; and when, about the middle of August, he sailed for a cruise in English waters, four other ships of war were put under his command and he was given the rank of commodore.

Meanwhile the trouble between the envoys had been growing worse and worse. Although a zealous patriot, Adams had sided with Arthur Lee and his party, and Franklin found himself almost alone. Lee's feeling toward him amounted now to open enmity, and he took no pains to conceal it, even writing letters to Congress, denouncing Franklin and insinuating that personal gain was the motive for most of his official acts. At last the situation became intolerable for every one concerned; and each of the three envoys, together

with William Lee and Ralph Izard, wrote home, describing the state of affairs in Paris, and advising Congress to revoke the commission which the envoys held and appoint one man sole ambassador.

Congress thought well of the idea; and, to the surprise and disgust of the Lee party, chose Franklin as the ambassador, or sole plenipotentiary, as he was called. LaFayette, who had leave of absence from the United States, brought the new commission to France with him, and delivered it to Franklin in February, 1779. John Adams returned to America, while Arthur Lee, who had been appointed the American representative in Spain, still held that position, although as yet Spain had not seen fit to recognize the United States.

The Count de Vergennes and other government officials who had grown to detest Lee and his party, were joyful at the news; and in April, as soon as Franklin had recovered from a painful attack of the gout, he was again presented at court.

The presentation was attended with greater ceremony and splendor than before; and it is even said that a lady of the court placed a wreath upon his head in token of the love and esteem *in* which he was held.

CHAPTER XX

FRANKLIN THE DIPLOMAT

THE next few years of Franklin's life in Paris were chiefly employed in borrowing money from France! Congress looked to him to supply the United States with funds, and he seldom failed them. During his whole term of office as envoy and plenipotentiary, he managed to obtain from the French government, either as a loan or as a free gift, the immense sum of twenty-six million francs. His success in this respect was mainly due to his wonderful charm of manner, and his no less wonderful tact. He was a born courtier and diplomat; indeed, he was the greatest, if not the only real, diplomat whom this country has ever produced.

In 1779 Congress commissioned him to purchase a sword for LaFayette and present it to him as a gift from the United States. When finished it cost over one thousand dollars. Franklin sent it to LaFayette by his grandson, William Temple Franklin. In the letter which accompanied it

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Franklin paid a graceful tribute to the young French general who had done so much for the cause of independence.

"By the help of the exquisite artists France affords," he graciously wrote, "I find it easy to express everything but the sense we have of your worth and our obligations to you. For this, figures and even words are found insufficient."

It was shortly after this incident that Franklin and LaFayette, by their joint efforts, persuaded the French government to send troops to the United States to aid the Americans. These soldiers were of immense benefit to Washington, and helped materially in bringing the Revolution to a successful conclusion.

Of his private life during these years volumes might be written. His house at Passy was the meeting-place of most of the great scientists and learned men of France. There was scarcely a day when some one of distinction did not call upon him, and his many dinner parties and receptions were attended by the most intelligent persons of every rank. Always of a sociable disposition, he charmed every one with his conversation and wit; and no small part of the success which marked his work for the United States was owing to the hosts of close personal friends whom he

made and kept, and the loyalty and enthusiasm for the American cause with which he inspired them.

Among his scientific writings of this period was a paper on the aurora borealis. This was read before the Royal Academy of Sciences in the spring of 1779, and gained for its author much renown, both in learned and in social circles.

The best of his lighter and purely humorous writings also date from this time. He wrote them for the amusement of his friends, and generally read them himself at the little gatherings which met either at his house, or at that of some acquaintance. Among the best known of these latter writings are, "The Petition of the Left Hand," "The Handsome and Deformed Leg," "Morals of Chess," and the famous "Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout," in which "Madame Gout," after warning Franklin that he himself is to blame for that very painful disease, ends by giving him many sharp twinges of it.

It is very probable that these stories and witticisms were written by him in English and later translated by some friend into French. At any rate, they were circulated widely over the whole of Paris, and repeated by every one as the latest specimen of Franklin's humor.

FRANKLIN THE DIPLOMAT

Of his personal appearance at this time he himself has left an amusing description. It occurs in one of the first letters that he wrote after his arrival in France. "Figure me in your mind," he says, "as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin gray straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap, which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles."

The fur cap he soon discarded, but the spectacles he wore to the end of his days. Until he arrived in France he had carried two pairs, one for reading and one for seeing objects at a distance. These he found inconvenient; and in Paris he combined the two in a single pair, and invented what would now be called bifocal glasses, the upper half of each glass being made for long distance, and the lower half for reading, writing, and the like.

Another account of Franklin is given by his friend the Abbe* Morellet:

"His conversation," writes the Abbe, "was exquisite — a perfect good nature, a simplicity of manners, an uprightness of mind that made itself felt in the smallest things, an extreme gentleness, and, above all, a sweet serenity that easily became gayety; such was the society of this great man, who has placed his country among the number of independent states, and made one of the most important discoveries of the age."

An anecdote of this period affords a good example of his quick and never-failing gift of repartee. He was invited to all the parties and functions given by the court. At these festivities he often met the old Duchess de Bourbon, who, like Franklin, was very fond of chess. One day, while they were playing, she happened to put her king in prize, and Franklin promptly took it.

"Ah," she said, "we do not take kings so."

"We do in America," answered Franklin.

There were many fetes given in his honor. The most celebrated was the one devised by the Count and Countess d'Houdetot in the spring of 1781, at their chateau near Paris. It was a fete champêtre, a sort of garden party, and at the dinner, which formed the main part of the entertainment, each guest in turn recited original verses in Franklin's honor. When the meal was over he was taken into the grounds and presented with a small Virginia locust tree, which his host and hostess requested him to plant in the garden. After he had obeyed their wishes, the countess recited some further verses commemorating the event; and then, to the accompaniment of a band of music, the assembled guests sang a song in praise of the famous philosopher. The proceedings of the fete, together with the verses, were printed and dis-

tributed in Paris, and afterward reprinted in the United States.

But all this praise did not blind him to the fact that old age was close at hand. It was at this time that he sent in his resignation to Congress. Several severe attacks of the gout had made him fear for his health, and the infirmities of age were creeping over him. He was now seventy-five years old, fifty years of which he had spent in the service of the public, and he thought it was high time for him to relinquish his post in favor of some younger man.

Congress, however, thought otherwise, and not only refused to accept his resignation, but, when the time was ripe, it made him one of the commissioners to take up the question of peace with England. John Adams and John Jay were among those appointed to act with him.

For several years secret agents had been coming over from England to see Franklin and discuss the prospects for peace, but nothing had resulted from these conferences. After the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, however, the English began to realize that all hope of conquering the United States was gone. The surrender occurred on October 17, 1781, and from that time on the English government was very anxious to bring the **war** to a close.

The first serious attempt to negotiate peace came in January, 1782; and the English tried to make separate agreements with France and the United States, but each nation refused indignantly to enter into any understanding with their common enemy without the concurrence of the other.

In March of this year, the party in England that had been in favor of the war was driven out of power, and the men who had been on the side of the Americans, and were stanch friends and supporters of Franklin, were put into office. Among these were Edmund Burke, Charles Fox, and Lord Shelbume; and as soon as the change of ministry was effected, they began to negotiate for peace in good earnest.

Unfortunately, at this time there were two secretaries for foreign affairs in England. Charles Fox was one, having charge of what was called the southern department, which included France. Lord Shelbume, the other, was the head of the northern department, which included the United States. The result of this absurd arrangement was that neither Lord Shelbume nor Charles Fox could treat with both France and America; and each had to send over his own special commissioner to Paris, one to enter into negotiations with the Count de Vergennes, the other with Franklin.

Mr. Grenville was Charles Fox's representative, Mr. Oswald, Lord Shelburne's; and the natural suspicion arose that England was again trying to make separate terms of peace with France and America.

The matter dragged on through the spring of 1782, without any result. Then, in June, John Jay, one of Franklin's fellow-commissioners, arrived in Paris, and Franklin, who had been carrying on the negotiations alone, was seized with a severe attack of influenza which laid him up for several months. One of the principal points upon which Franklin had insisted, during these first attempts to conclude peace, was the cession of Canada to the United States; and if he had been able to come to terms with England at that time, it is very probable that the latter country would have agreed to his demand. As it was, he was not well enough to continue his work until the summer was almost over, and by that time there were other conditions and problems to face.

The horrors of Indian warfare, and the treatment to which the Americans had been subjected during the war, had concerned him greatly; and during this year he brought the matter to the minds of the French and English in a very clever way. When he had first taken up his residence in Passy he **had** installed a small printing-press in his house.

On this he had printed many of his humorous writings — his "bagatelles," as he called them. Now he turned the press to a more serious use. He wrote and printed what was supposed to be a supplement of the *Boston Independent Chronicle*, an imaginary newspaper which he allowed the public to think was published in the United States. In this supplement he stated certain facts relating to the barbarous manner in which the war had been carried on. The principal article mentioned a large number of scalps that had been captured from the Indians by an American officer, and that were to have been sent as a special gift to George III. Following this grewsome account there came a letter purporting to have been written by John Paul Jones to Sir Joseph Yorke, the English ambassador to Holland. Sir Joseph had publicly charged Jones with being a pirate, and the letter was Jones's defense to the charge.

"A pirate," it read, "is defined to be *hostis humani generis* (an enemy to all mankind). It happens, Sir, that I am an enemy to no part of mankind, except your nation, the English; which nation, at the same time, comes much more within the definition, being actually an enemy to, and at war with, one whole quarter of the world. . . . A pirate makes war for the sake of *rapine*. This is not the kind of war I am engaged in against England. Ours is a war in defense of *liberty*, the most just of all wars; and of our

properties, which your nation would have taken from us without our consent, in violation of our rights, and by an armed force. Yours, therefore, is a war of rapine; of course a piratical war; and those who approve of it, and are engaged in it, more justly deserve the name of pirates which you bestow on me."

There were other shorter articles and a few advertisements, to give the "supplement" an appearance of genuineness. Franklin saw that copies of it were distributed throughout France and England, where it created an immense stir. No one appeared to have doubted that it was a real newspaper, and only one man ever guessed the authorship of the Jones letter. This man was the celebrated English wit and critic, Horace Walpole, who, in writing to a friend, asked, "Have you seen in the papers an excellent letter by Paul Jones to Sir Joseph Yorke ? *Elle nous dit bien des vtrites* [it tells us many truths]. I doubt poor Sir Joseph cannot, answer them! Dr. Franklin himself, I should think, was the author. It is certainly from a first-rate pen, and not a common man-of-war."

By the middle of August England had discovered the suspicions of the French government and the American commissioners, and had sought to mend matters by recalling Grenville and appointing another agent, Alleyne Fitzherbert, in his place.

This man was to treat with France in conjunction with Oswald, who was empowered to treat with the United States. A new difficulty [arose](#), however. In Oswald's commission the United States were not once referred to by that name, but were called the " Colonies or Plantations." John Jay imagined that this was a ruse on the part of the English, and meant that they would not recognize the independence of the United States. Both Franklin and the Count de Vergennes tried to persuade him out of this notion, but were unsuccessful. Finally, after a month of delay, the English government sent a new commission to Oswald in which the United States were mentioned by that name, and then John Jay consented to discuss^ terms with the English.

During the month of October conferences were held almost every day, but little, if anything, was accomplished. On October 26 John Adams joined Franklin and Jay, and a month later Henry Laurens, another commissioner, arrived in Paris. Thomas Jefferson, the last member of the commission, did not land in France until the matter was finished.

From the date of Adams's arrival, affairs moved faster. Parliament was to meet in a month, **and** if some sort of terms were not agreed upon by **that**

time, it was feared that the party that favored peace might be driven from power. There were three points in dispute: the extent of the boundaries of the United States, the right to fish off the Newfoundland Banks, and the compensation which the United States should pay to those in America who had been on the English side, and whose property had been taken or destroyed by the Americans.

After a great deal of discussion, the English commissioners finally agreed to the demands of the Americans as to the fishing rights and the boundaries, ceding to the United States the whole of that territory which is now the state of Maine; but they insisted that the English sympathizers in America, or "tones" as they were called, should be paid for their losses.

The matter stood in this shape at the end of November. On the 28th the commissioners met and debated, but came to no decision. On the 29th they met again; and when it was apparent that no progress could be made, Adams suggested that a courier be sent to England for further instructions.

"If that is the case," said Franklin, "he ought to carry something respecting a **compensation to the sufferers in America.**"

He produced a paper from his pocket and began to read it. It was in the form of an agreement, and bound England to pay the Americans "for ail the losses they had sustained at the hands of the British. This article, Franklin stated, he intended to have inserted as a part of the treaty.

The English commissioners were speechless. In dollars and cents the damage done by the English in the United States far exceeded the losses of the tories, and England would have to pay a much larger sum than the Americans. Oswald and Fitzherbert realized the clever trap that Franklin had set for them, and asked leave to withdraw for consultation. When they returned they announced that the question of compensating the tories would be dropped, and that they were willing to agree to the terms as proposed by the United States. The treaty was then read over, and on the next day, November 30, 1782, the document was formally signed.

This was only a preliminary treaty, and neither Franklin nor the other American commissioners had seen fit to notify the Count de Vergennes of its contents until after it had been signed. The Count was very much put out that the United States should have entered into the agreement without the consent of France; and for several

weeks there was a decided coolness between him and the commissioners. Franklin, however, managed to soothe him; and on January 18, 1783, the Count and Mr. Fitzherbert agreed upon the preliminary articles of peace between France and England in the friendliest way possible.

From this time until the following September the terms of the final treaty were talked over and debated, but neither the English government nor the American commissioners could come to any understanding, and at length the preliminary treaty was adopted as the final one. It was signed in Paris, on September 3, 1783; and on the same day, as soon as the Count de Vergennes had received word of the fact, the treaty between France and Great Britain was signed at Versailles. So, after almost two years of discussion and arguments, the negotiations were at last brought to a successful close.

CHAPTER X X I

THE FAREWELL TO FRANCE

IN 1782, shortly after the signing of the preliminary treaty, Franklin again sent in his resignation. No answer was received from Congress; and after the final treaty was signed, Franklin once more wrote to that body stating that he wished to be relieved of his post. A year and a half was to pass before Congress finally permitted him to return.

In the meanwhile Franklin was engaged in entering into treaties with other nations in Europe, all of which he concluded successfully for the United States.

The war was now at an end, and many Englishmen came over to travel in France. Franklin was then probably the most famous man on the whole continent; and it became the common and courteous thing to make a pilgrimage to Passy and call upon him. He had a continuous stream of visitors from morning until night. John Baynes, a young English lawyer, has left an interesting account of

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Franklin's appearance and mode of life. "Dr. Franklin's house," he says, "is delightfully situated and seems very spacious; and he seemed to have a great number of domestics. We sent up the letter, and were then shown up into his bedchamber, where he sat in his nightgown, his feet wrapped up in flannels, and resting on a pillow, he having for three or four days been much afflicted with the gout. . . . I never enjoyed so much pleasure in my life, as in the present conversation with this great and good character. He looked very well, notwithstanding his illness, and, as usual, wore his spectacles."

The invention of the balloon, in 1782, by the Frenchman, Montgolfier, interested Franklin greatly, and he not only subscribed liberally toward the advancement of the new science, but watched the experiments with keen delight. "The progress made in the management of balloons," he wrote to a friend, "has been rapid. Yet I fear it will hardly become a common carriage in my time, though, being easiest of all *voitures* [vehicles], it would be extremely convenient to me, now that my malady forbids the use of old ones over a pavement."

Indeed, at this time he was a constant sufferer from gout and other complaints. For weeks at a stretch he could not bear the slightest motion, and

had to remain continuously at home. It was even thought for a time that he would not be able to stand the journey to America, and would have to finish out the remainder of his days in France.

In 1784 occurred the famous inquiry into mesmerism. Mesmerism, as it was understood in that day, was not the scientific thing that we now know, but was a sort of fraud created by a man named Mesmer, who, in 1778, had established himself in Paris, and claimed to be able to cure all diseases by magnetic influence. He became immensely rich in the practice of his pretended cure, and the French government finally decided to investigate it. Mesmer himself managed to escape the inquiry, but Deslon, his most successful pupil, agreed to submit himself to the investigation.

The government appointed a commission composed of four of the most prominent doctors of the Faculty of Paris, and five members of the Royal Academy of Sciences, of whom Franklin was one. They went into the subject very thoroughly, taking the whole of the summer of 1784 for their examination. Many of the experiments **were** performed in Franklin's house and garden at Passy, where, on account of Franklin's infirmities, the commissioners frequently assembled to discuss the matter and decide upon their report. When it **was**

filed in August, it exposed the fraud and proved conclusively that the pretended cures had all been brought about by the imagination of the patients, and not by any of the magnetic powers which Mesmer and his followers claimed to possess. As a result of the findings of the commission, Mesmer and his pupils were driven out of Paris and quickly disappeared from France.

Old and feeble as Franklin had become, his intellect was as keen as ever, and some of his best essays date from this period. Among them were his famous article on "The Savages of North America" and his "Information to those who would remove to America." A striking example of his wit is contained in an incident which happened at this time, and though some doubt has since arisen as to the truth of the anecdote, it is still well worth relating.

A dinner was given to the French and the English ambassadors, at which Franklin was present. When the time for the toasts arrived the English ambassador was called on first.

"To England," he said, "the sun, whose bright beams enlighten and fructify the remotest corners of the earth."

The French ambassador was called on next. Not wishing to be outdone, he proposed the toast,

"To France — the moon, whose mild, steady, and cheering rays are the delight of all nations, consoling them in darkness."

When Franklin's turn came he rose and said, "To George Washington — the Joshua, who commanded the sun and moon to stahd still, and they obeyed him!"

It was during his stay in France that a new town in Massachusetts was named Franklin in his honor. He was very much pleased at the compliment, and when the Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, pastor of the town church, asked him to donate a certain sum for the steeple which the townspeople proposed to have built, Franklin advised them to save the expense of a steeple, and presented them with a fine collection of books instead.

This town in Massachusetts was the first one to be named after him. To-day almost every big city in the United States has a Franklin Park, or a Franklin Square, or a Franklin Street; and there is hardly a state in the Union that has not a county, city, town, or village which bears his name. In the index of any large atlas it will be seen that, in our country alone, the name Franklin appears nearly one hundred times. In Passy the street in which his house stood is called after him to this day.

On May 2, 1785, Franklin at last received

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word that his resignation had been accepted by Congress, and he immediately began to make preparations for his return to Philadelphia.

Thomas Jefferson, who had been for some months in Paris, was appointed to fill his position.

"You replace Dr. Franklin, I hear," said the Count de Vergennes to Jefferson.

"I *succeed* him," graciously replied Jefferson. "No one can *replace* him."

This was the feeling throughout France; and as the time for his departure drew near, ministers, nobles, and the common people all vied to do him honor. It was the custom for the king to present his portrait to each foreign ambassador upon his leaving for home. The portrait presented to Franklin was encircled by four hundred and eight diamonds and cost about ten thousand dollars.

Shortly before he left, Franklin was seized with a very severe attack of the gout, complicated with other ailments, and could not stand even the motion of a carriage. In consequence of this he had to give up the customary visit to Versailles to bid farewell to the king and queen. His original intention had been to sail down the river Seine to Havre, where he could take passage for America; but it was the middle of the summer before he was ready to leave, and by that time the river was so

low as to make navigation on it difficult and tedious. In this dilemma Queen Marie Antoinette came to his aid. She sent him one of her own *litiïres*, a sort of couch or litter carried between two large mules; and in this comfortable conveyance, accompanied by his two grandsons, and one or two friends, he left Paris on July 12, 1785.

His last official act in France was the signing of a treaty between Prussia and the United States. It contained a provision securing the property of private individuals against seizure and destruction in time of war — a subject upon which Franklin felt very deeply and which had never been in any treaty before. Denmark and Portugal were now the only two countries who were not bound by treaty to the United States; and in almost every negotiation Franklin had taken part.

His little party traveled leisurely through France, stopping at the chateaux of nobles or the houses of friends every night, and being entertained everywhere. The journey lasted ~~sue~~ days. After a short rest in Havre, they crossed the English Channel to Southampton. Here they spent several days, scores of Franklin's old friends in England flocking from all quarters to bid him farewell. Among his visitors was his son William, whom he had not seen for ten years. The meeting was

affectionate on both sides, and before Franklin sailed he had the pleasure of knowing that the breach between them was completely healed.

His condition had improved to such an extent that he was able to indulge in his favorite pastime of bathing. "I went at noon," he wrote in his diary, "to bathe in Martin's salt water hot bath, and, floating on my back, fell asleep, and slept near an hour by my watch, without sinking or turning! A thing I never did before, and should hardly have thought possible."

It would have been a feat, indeed, for any one to perform, but for an old man in his eightieth year to accomplish it and live to tell the tale was nothing less than marvelous.

It had been his intention to spend his time during the voyage home in continuing his Autobiography, which he had begun in England in 1771; but his health and spirits had continued to show such improvement that he turned to more difficult work, and during the seven weeks of the voyage he wrote three scientific essays. Together they made about one hundred printed pages. One of them discussed the problem of smoky chimneys and how they could be cured; another gave a minute description of his smoke-consuming stove; and the third and longest was a masterly article

on navigation. In this essay he suggests an appliance which is now universally used in marine construction. "While on the topic of sinking," he says, "one cannot help recollecting the well-known practice of the Chinese, to divide the hold of a great ship into a number of separate chambers by partitions, tight calked, so that, if a leak should spring in one of them, the others are not affected by it; and though that chamber should fill to a level with the sea, it would not be sufficient to sink the vessel." To-day such "chambers" are known as water-tight compartments.

On September 13 the ship sailed into Delaware Bay, and the next morning, with a favoring wind and on a flood tide, she arrived opposite Philadelphia. An immense throng had assembled at Market Street Wharf to welcome the party, and as Franklin stepped ashore he was greeted with the cheers and acclamations of the multitude.

On that same spot, sixty-two years before, he had first set foot in the city; but what a contrast there was between the hungry, friendless lad who had walked up Market Street on that chill Sunday morning, and this great philosopher and diplomat, whose name and fame had spread over two continents, and whose triumphant return was the signal for public rejoicing!

CHAPTER XXII

FRANKLIN THE GOVERNOR

FRANKLIN found Pennsylvania in the midst of political strife. There were then two parties in the state. One, called the Republicans, favored having two governing bodies in the legislature, something like the Senate and the House of Representatives in our present Congress. The other, called the Constitutionals, were in favor of having only one governing body, as the constitution of the state then provided for. Franklin was a Constitutionalist; and as the news of his arrival spread through the countryside, he was hailed as the saviour of his party.

He was very reluctant to enter public life again, but he finally yielded to the persuasions of his friends, and, a week or so after his return home, he consented to serve upon the Executive Council of the state. He was unanimously chosen chairman of the Council.

The election for governor of the state, or president, as he was then called, took place in October.

The Executive Council and the Assembly voted for the candidates. There were seventy-seven votes cast, and when they came to be counted it was found that Franklin had received seventy-six. The single vote which he lacked was probably the one which Franklin himself had cast!

The inauguration occurred on the same day as the election, a procession of all the officials and notables of the city escorting the new governor to the State House, where he was solemnly sworn in.

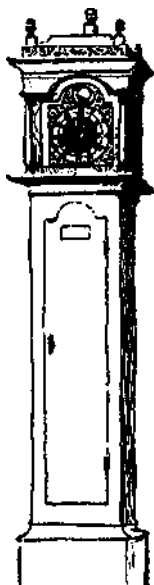
For years it had been one of Franklin's pet theories that state and government officials should be paid no salaries. The salary which he received as governor he used toward founding a college for Germans in the town of Lancaster, and for other public charities and institutions, not touching a penny of it himself.

During the next two years his life was peaceful and pleasant. He was reelected to the governorship in 1786, and again in 1787; and he governed the state with a wisdom and intelligence which it has never since known. The people prospered under his rule, and he himself appears to have been benefited physically by the official labors which his position imposed upon him. Except at the sessions of the legislature, his work was not very tiring, and the constant flow of friends

and visitors at his house on Market Street was no doubt a source of great pleasure and entertainment to him.

The addition of a wing to this house occupied much of his leisure time. It was three stories high. The first floor was designed for the meetings of the Philosophical Society; the second he reserved for his library; and the third was made up of lodging-rooms. In the library he took a special pride. It contained the largest and best-chosen private collection of books in the country; and here, in reading and study, he spent all his spare hours.

He gave his ingenuity full sway in the countless little improvements and labor-saving devices which he invented, not only for this room, but for other parts of the house. Finding it troublesome to reach up for books, he had his easy chair built in such a way that by turning up the seat it formed a stepladder, a contrivance in common use to-day. Later, FRANKLIN'S 'CLOCK



he introduced a simpler contrivance which he called his "long arm." It was a stick with an arrangement in the shape of a hand at one end by which he could take books from the highest shelf. Below the grate of the fireplace in the library he had had built a small iron plate or trapdoor, about six inches square, with a hinge and a small ring to raise it by. When this door was lifted, a current of air from the cellar rushed up through the grate and rekindled the fire.

In his bedroom he had two cords hanging beside his bed. One was to pull a bell. The other raised an iron bolt, about an inch square and nine or ten inches long, which dropped through staples at the top of the door leading into the room; and until the bolt was raised the door could not be opened. He also improved the crude mechanism which was then used for copying letters; and in 1787, Washington in his diary relates that he "visited a Machine at Dr. Franklin's (called a Mangle) for pressing in place of ironing clothes from the wash, which Machine, from the facility with which it despatches business, is well calculated for Table cloths & such articles as have not pleats & irregular foldings, and might be very useful in large families." Another, and perhaps the most original of his devices, was the vessel or tub in

which he took his daily bath. It was composed of copper, and made in the form of a slipper. He sat in the heel with his legs extended into the toe or vamp; and on the instep there was a stand big enough to hold a book, so that he might employ his time in reading or writing as he wished.

To guard against a recurrence of his old ailments, he had a sedan chair made, and during the last year or two of his life he was often carried about in it through the streets.

In May, 1787, after six years of delay, a convention was finally called in Philadelphia to frame a constitution by which the United States might be governed. Franklin was not originally elected a member, but when some doubt arose as to whether Washington would attend, Franklin's name was added to the Pennsylvania delegation, so that there would be present at least one man whose opinion **and** advice would be listened to by everybody.

As it happened, however, Washington did attend, **and** was chosen president of the convention. Upon his arrival in Philadelphia, one of his first acts was to visit Franklin; and during his whole stay in the city he was much in the 'company of **the** aged philosopher — Washington aged fifty-five **and** Franklin aged eighty-one.

The convention assembled **on** **May** 25, 1787.

A severe rainstorm prevented Franklin from attending on the opening day; but at the next meeting he was present, and he missed scarcely a day of the remainder of the long four months' session.

The convention was held behind closed doors, and very little is known of the debates and discussions that took place. It is known, however, that Franklin himself seldom, if ever, spoke from the floor. His feebleness made it impossible for him to stand very long upon his feet, so he wrote out his speeches beforehand, and had some member read them for him.

For the first two months the convention wrangled over the proper representation of the different states in Congress. If members of Congress were elected according to the size of a state, or according to its population, such small states as Rhode Island and Delaware would have only one or two representatives, while Virginia and Pennsylvania would have fifteen or twenty. Neither Rhode Island nor Delaware would come into any union where it would have only a small chance of being heard, and for a time it looked as though the convention would break up without accomplishing anything.

At last a committee was chosen to draw up some sort of agreement which would suit both the large

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and the small states. Franklin was a member of this committee, and suggested the simple plan of having each state represented equally in the Senate, while the number of members which it might send to the House of Representatives should be determined by its population. After heated debates this expedient was adopted; and Franklin had the signal honor of not only saving the convention from disruption, but of originating a system of representation which was fair to states of all sizes, and which remains to-day one of the most striking features of the Constitution.

Among the other things which he strongly advocated was that the President of the United States should be elected for a term of seven years, and not be eligible for reelection. The convention finally decided upon the four-year term, and made no mention of reelection; but lately Franklin's idea has found much favor, and it would indeed be curious if, after the lapse of more than a hundred and twenty-five years, his plan were finally adopted.

His work in the convention was a fitting close to his public career; and the services which he rendered his country in the framing of the Constitution would alone have been enough to have won him lasting fame. There is hardly a clause in that great document which does not* bear the

stamp of his advice and approval, while his never-failing wit and tact kept the members in good humor and made the Constitution not only a possibility but a glorious reality.

When all the terms had been agreed upon, Franklin urged the members to pass the Constitution unanimously; and he spoke to such good effect that even those who were not entirely satisfied with it signed it to a man.

A typical incident marked the closing scenes of the convention. It is related by James Madison, one of the members, and Franklin's staunch supporter throughout the whole proceedings. "While the last members were signing," he says, "Dr. Franklin, looking toward the president's chair, at the back of which a rising, sun happened to be painted, observed to a few members near him that painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art, a rising, from a setting, sun. 'I have/ said he, ' often and often in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the president, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; but now, at length, I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.'"

On September 17 the convention adjourned.

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The work for which it had been called together had been accomplished, and now it only remained for the thirteen states to adopt the Constitution. Franklin was untiring in his efforts in this direction, and through his persuasion and influence he won over several of the lukewarm states. When ten states had agreed to accept the provisions of the Constitution, a great parade, followed by a banquet and orations, was given in Philadelphia to celebrate the event; and Franklin, both as a leading member of the convention, and as the governor of Pennsylvania, was one of the most honored and distinguished guests.

This was probably his last appearance at any great public ceremony. After the convention he served out his third term as governor of Pennsylvania; and then, at the age of eighty-two, he was at last allowed to retire to the leisure and comfort of private life. But even then his immense vitality would not permit him to remain long idle. As soon as he had thrown aside the cares of public office, he began to work upon his half-finished Autobiography; and although he never completed it, he continued to work on it until a short time before his death.

The last years of his life were marked with the serenity and peace of a man whose labors are over

and whose work has been well done. Toward the end there were periods when he suffered a great deal, but he bore the pain with a calmness and bravery truly remarkable. No complaint ever issued from his lips; and in his library, where he spent the greater part of his time, or in his garden, where he loved to sit in the long summer afternoons with his grandchildren gathered about him, he greeted his hosts of visitors with the quick bright smile and the firm handclasp which had won him friends the world over.

"Let us sit till the evening of life is spent," he wrote to a friend. "The last hours are always the most joyful. When we can stay no longer, it is time enough then to bid each other good night, separate, and go quietly to bed."

This was his simple philosophy of life; and although his last few years were very precious to him, yet, when the time came, he was ready to go. On April 17, 1790, with his family and his closest friends grouped about him, he died as he had wished to die, quietly, calmly, serenely, and at peace with the world.

A great scientist, a great philosopher, a great diplomat—one of the greatest among the many great men of his day—Benjamin Franklin was, above all else, a great American.

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