was received with derision as something ridiculous. The great experiments of 1749 by which that identification was established were therefore made with some secrecy; for Franklin, as every one is, was sensitive to ridicule. But he was soon able to turn the tables on those who derided him. Though the Royal Society had declined to publish his earlier experiments he had found publication for them in the Gentleman's Magazine of London; and they had scarcely been published before they began to attract attention throughout all Europe. When, therefore, the experiments of 1749 were published the name of Franklin was in every one's mouth. "The Philadelphia experiments," as they were called, were the rage. People of society as well as people of science, crowned heads as well as students and philosophers, made haste to repeat them, and when Franklin went to England in 1757 it was to find himself a famous man. Learned societies of every sort, not only in England but throughout all Europe, made haste to enroll him among their numbers. The University of Edinburgh and the University of Oxford bestowed upon him their honorary degrees. The Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris made him one of their eight foreign members. The Royal Society of London, repenting their earlier injustice, elected him first a member and then a fellow, and this without the requiring of the customary fee. They also granted him their Copley medal, and announced to him that they would send him their "*Transactions*" as long as he lived. And thus in every respect was Franklin's life full of renown and honor. At home he was respected for his character, loved for his personal qualities, admired for his abilities, and, because of his wisdom and discretion, entrusted with the most difficult and

honorable employments. Abroad he was looked upon, not only as the greatest man of his nation, but as one of the greatest men of the age—as uniting in himself, indeed, the wisdom of the sage, the observing and reasoning talent of the philosopher, the polish, the tact, the discretion, the shrewdness of the born diplomatist, the abounding common sense and practical discernment of the successful man of affairs, and the distinguishing intellectual qualities of the accomplished literarian. And with this estimation of his contemporaries, both fellow-countrymen and men of other nations, the estimation of all subsequent times substantially agrees.

10. *Cleanliness.*

Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. *Tranquillity.*

Be not disturbed at trifles, or accidents common or unavoidable.

12. *Chastity.*

13. *Humility.*

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

The last of these virtues was added to the list at the suggestion of a Quaker friend. Franklin claims to have acquired a good deal of the *appearance* of it, but concluded that in reality there was no passion so hard to subdue as *pride*. "For even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility." The virtue which gave him most trouble, however, was order, and this he never acquired.—DR. WILLIAM GARNETT.

FRANKLIN'S "POOR RICHARD," AND "FATHER ABRAHAM"

Nothing, perhaps, shows the fondness of the people for the sayings of Mr. Saunders [Poor Richard] better than the history of that famous piece in which the best of them are brought together. It came out in a day of darkness and of gloom. The French and Indian war had been raging for four years; and success was still with the French. Washington had been driven from Fort Necessity. Braddock had perished in the woods. The venture

against Niagara had failed. That against Ticonderoga had done little. The sea swarmed with French and Spanish privateers. Trade was dull. Taxes were heavy. Grumbling was everywhere. Men of all sorts bemoaned the hard times. The war ought to stop. The assemblies, the grumblers said, ought to put out more credit bills. The mother country ought to pay the cost of colonial troops. Were every one of these remedies used they could not, Franklin thought, cure the hard times. Economy and thrift alone could do so. Here, then, was a fine chance for a sermon by "Poor Richard" with a reasonable hope of being heard. A sermon was accordingly written, put in the mouth of a wise old man called Father Abraham, and published in the almanac for 1758. It was pretended that "Poor Richard" had heard the speech at an auction. A fitter place Father Abraham could not have chosen; for the auctions of those days were shameful scenes of extravagance and folly. Called thither by bell and crier, the people gathered long before the hour named, were plied with rum at the cost of the vendue master till, when the sale opened, they offered bids and paid prices such as never would have been had from them in their sober senses. To a throng of this sort Father Abraham spoke.

. . . . . .

The praise bestowed on Father Abraham, by those who heard him at the auction stand, was soon taken up by the civilized world. The sale of the almanac had always been large. Year after year ten thousand copies, or one for every hundred inhabitants of the land, came from the press. But ten thousand copies did not begin to meet the demand for "Poor Richard" of 1758. Such was the

eagerness of the people to read the Address that the newspapers published it again and again. Franklin himself sent it forth as a broadside, and at last, in 1760, his nephew, Benjamin Mecom of Boston, made it into a pamphlet, adorned with a huge folding plate of Father Abraham in his study. The title is "Father Abraham's Speech to a great number of people, at a Vendue of Merchants' Goods; introduced to the public by Poor Richard (a famous Pennsylvanian conjurer and almanac-maker), in answer to the following questions: 'Pray, Father Abraham, what do you think of the times? Won't these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?'" . . . . . Thus started by Mecom, the speech was quickly republished in the same form at New Haven, at New London, at Philadelphia.

Franklin was then at London, and thither his work followed him; was printed on a broadside, was widely circulated, was hung up on the walls of workshops and houses; crossed the channel; was done into French, and bought in great quantity by priests and nobles for distribution among the poor. Since that day it was spread over the whole of Europe, and may now be read in French, in German, in Spanish, in Italian, in Russian, in the language of Holland, in the language of Bohemia, in modern Greek, in Gaelic, and in Portuguese. Under the title *"La Science du Bonhomme Richard,"* it has been thirty times printed in French and twice in Italian. As *"The Way to Wealth,"* it has been issued twenty-seven times in English in pamphlet form, and innumerable times as a broadside. Never since 1770 has a period of five years been suffered to go by without a new edition of *"The Way to Wealth"* appearing in some form in some language. Printers have used it to advertise their business. Shorthand writers have issued it in phonetic characters. It may be found in the publications of societies for improving the condition of the poor; in "Prompters;" in "Immortal Mentors;" in "Moral Tracts;" in "First Notions of Political Economy;" in "Elements of Morals;" in "Whole Duties of Men and Women;" and as a rebus for the amusement of the idle. Without question, the speech of Father Abraham is the most famous piece of literature the colonies produced. After 1758, Franklin wrote no more for "Poor Richard." In 1796 the almanac ceased to appear.—JOHN BACH MCMASTER, *in "Benjamin Franklin as a Man of Letters," in "American Men of Letters" Series.*

FRANKLIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Since the day whereon Franklin's Autobiography was first made public, innumerable books written by our countrymen have come into fashion and gone out of fashion and all but disappeared. Hardly a man whose name adorns the American literature of the first half of the century but saw his books pass through a period of neglect. Irving did, and Cooper, and Halleck, and Willis, and Hawthorne, and many more. But the Autobiography of Franklin has suffered no neglect. With the great mass of our people it has always been popular, and has in the United States alone been republished fifty-one times. What is better, the people read it. Such records as can be had from public libraries all over the country reveal the fact that the book is read at each of them on an aver-

age of once a month. At some, where the humblest and least educated come, its popularity is amazing. Indeed, at the Cooper Union Library in New York, the Autobiography, during 1885, was called for more than four hundred times, and the Life by Mr. Parton, upwards of one thousand. If it be put with books of its kind, and judged as an autobiography, it is beyond doubt the very best. If it be treated as a piece of writing and judged as literature, it must be pronounced the equal of Robinson Crusoe, one of the few everlasting books in the English language. Save "Poor Richard," no other piece of Franklin's is so widely admired, and on these two most unquestionably rest his literary fame.—JOHN BACH MCMASTER.

FRANKLIN AS A MAN OF LETTERS

The place to be allotted Franklin among American men of letters is hard to determine. He founded no school of literature. He gave no impetus to letters. He put his name to no great work of history, of poetry, of fiction. Till after his day, no such thing as American literature existed. To place him, with respect to Irving, Bryant, Cooper, Prescott, and the host of great men that came after him, is impossible. There is no common ground of comparison. Unlike them, he never wrote for literary fame. Had he cared for such fame, he would not have permitted friends and strangers to gather and edit his writings during his lifetime; he would not have suffered death to overtake him when the Autobiography was but half done; he would not have made it an invariable rule to never send anything to the press over his own name. His place is among the giant race of pamphleteers and

essayists, most of whom went before, but a few of whom came immediately after, the war for independence. And among them he is easily first. Their merit lies in what they said: the merit of Franklin's lies not only in what he said, but in the way in which he said it.—JOHN BACH MCMASTER.

FRANKLIN'S STYLE AS A WRITER AND KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE

Franklin produced little which did not serve an immediate and practical purpose, and which was not expressed in the plainest and clearest English. A metaphor, a simile, a figure of speech of any kind, is rarely to be met with. The characteristics of his writings are, short sentences made up of short words, great brevity, great clearness, great force, good-humor, apt stories, pointed allusions, hard common sense, and a wonderful show of knowledge of the practical art of living. Knowledge of life he had in the highest degree. He knew the world; he knew men and the ways of men as few have known them. No other writer has left so many just and original observations on success in life. No other writer has pointed out so clearly the way to obtain the greatest amount of comfort out of life. What Solomon did for the spiritual man that Franklin did for the earthly man. The Book of Proverbs is a collection of receipts for laying up treasure in heaven. "Poor Richard" is a collection of receipts for laying up treasure on earth.—JOHN BACH MCMASTER.

AN INSTANCE OF FRANKLIN'S WIT

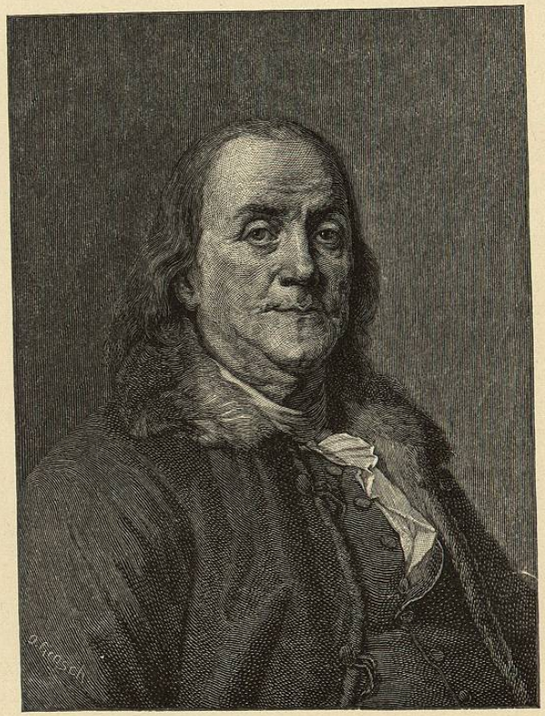
On that memorable 4th of July, 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was signed Franklin took part in

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

SELECTED STUDIES AND REMINISCENCES

FRANKLIN'S MARRAIGE

Finding difficulties in the way of a financial alliance, Franklin appears to have bethought himself of affection as a substitute for dollars, so he blew into the ashes of an old flame and aroused some heat. Before going to England he had engaged himself to Miss Deborah Read; but in London he had pretty well forgotten her, and had written to her only a single letter. Miss Read, meanwhile, apparently about as much in love as her lover, had wedded another man, "one Rogers, a potter," a good workman but worthless fellow, who soon took flight from his bride and his creditors. Her position had since become somewhat questionable; for there was a story that her husband had another wife living, in which case of course her marriage with him was null. There was also a story that he was dead. But there was little evidence of the truth of either tale. Franklin, therefore, hardly knew what he was wedding, a maid, a widow, or another man's wife. Moreover, the runaway husband "had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay." Few men, even if warmly enamored, would have entered into the



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.
Painting by Duplessis.

matrimonial contract under circumstances so discouraging; and there are no indications, save the marriage itself, that Franklin was deeply in love. Yet on September 1, 1730, the pair were wedded. Mrs. Franklin survived for forty years thereafter, and neither seems ever to have regretted the step. "None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended," wrote Franklin; "she proved a good and faithful helpmate; assisting me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy." A sensible, comfortable, satisfactory union it was, showing how much better is sense than sensibility as an ingredient in matrimony. Mrs. Franklin was a handsome woman, of comely figure, yet nevertheless an industrious and frugal one; later on in life Franklin boasted that he had "been clothed from head to foot in linen of [his] wife's manufacture." An early contribution of his own to the domestic *ménage* was his illegitimate son, William, born soon after his wedding, of a mother of whom no record or tradition remains. It was an unconventional wedding gift to bring home to a bride; but Mrs. Franklin, with a breadth and liberality of mind akin to her husband's, readily took the babe not only to her home but really to her heart, and reared him as if he had really been her own offspring. Mr. Parton thinks that Franklin gave this excellent wife no further cause for suspicion or jealousy.—JOHN T. MORSE, JR., *in "Benjamin Franklin" in "American Statesmen" Series.*

FRANKLIN'S EFFORT AT SELF-IMPROVEMENT IN MORALS

After his marriage, Franklin conceived the idea of obtaining moral perfection. He was not altogether satisfied

with the result, but thought his method worthy of imitation. Assuming that he possessed complete knowledge of what was right or wrong, he saw no reason why he should not always act in accordance therewith. His principle was to devote his attention to one virtue only at first for a week, at the end of which time, he expected the practice of that virtue to have become a habit. He then added another virtue to his list, and devoted his attention to the same for the next week, and so on, until he had exhausted his list of virtues. He then commenced again at the beginning. As his moral code comprised thirteen virtues, it was possible to go through the complete curriculum four times in a year. Afterwards he occupied a year in going once through the list, and subsequently employed several years in one course. A little book was ruled, with a column for each day and a line for each virtue, and in this a mark was made for every failure which could be remembered on examination at the end of the day. It is easy to believe his statement: "I am surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I have the satisfaction of seeing them diminish."—WILLIAM GARNETT, M. A., D. C. L., *in "Heroes of Science—Physicists."*

FRANKLIN'S THIRTEEN VIRTUES

The senses in which Franklin's thirteen virtues were to be understood were explained by short precepts which followed them in his list. The list was as follows:

1. *Temperance.*

Eat not to dullness: drink not to elevation.

2. *Silence.*

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

3. *Order.*

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

4. *Resolution.*

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. *Frugality.*

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

6. *Industry.*

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

7. *Sincerity.*

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

8. *Justice.*

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

9. *Moderation.*

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