

**THE WISDOM OF BENJAMIN  
FRANKLIN; BEING REFLECTIONS  
AND OBSERVATIONS ON MEN  
AND EVENTS, NOT INCLUDED IN  
POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649146550

The wisdom of Benjamin Franklin; being reflections and observations on men and events, not included in Poor Richard's almanac by Benjamin Franklin & John J. Murphy

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN & JOHN J. MURPHY**

**THE WISDOM OF BENJAMIN  
FRANKLIN; BEING REFLECTIONS  
AND OBSERVATIONS ON MEN  
AND EVENTS, NOT INCLUDED IN  
POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC**



L:  
F83763w

# The Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin

BEING REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS  
ON MEN AND EVENTS, NOT INCLUDED  
IN POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC

CHOSEN FROM HIS COLLECTED PAPERS  
WITH INTRODUCTION

By JOHN J. MURPHY

NEW YORK  
Brentano's, Union Square  
MCMVI

H22 H95  
19 H. H. H.

PS  
746  
718

*Copyright, 1906, by Brentano's*

## CONTENTS

v

PREFACE, xi

LETTERS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON TO BENJAMIN  
FRANKLIN, 3

RELIGIOUS OPINIONS, 7-37

Franklin's prayer, 9

Need of toleration, 14

Efficacy of prayer, 17

Multiplication of churches, 19

Benevolence a duty, 21

His view of death, 25

Faith in God's love, 27

Ordinations, 28

Inspiration of the Scriptures, 30

Hope of universal salvation, 31

A tale of tolerance, 32

Profession of faith, 34

Infallible churches, 36

POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS, 39-73

Ambition and avarice, 41

Wisdom and wealth, 46

Property qualifications for voting, 47

Office seeking, 50

Governing, the noblest amusement, 52

POLITICAL OBSERVATIONS—*Continued*

Thoughts on the Republic, 54

Liberty, 55

The future of America, 55

The treachery of princes, 59

Patronage, the root of evil, 61

Non-sustained officeholders, 62

“The faith of an Act of Parliament,” 62

An argument for peace, 65

The cost of war, 66

The effect of printing, 67

Enemies, 68

The prospect of English success, 69

Plea for an armistice, 70

Justice, 71

“No good war or bad peace,” 73

Letter to Mr. Strahan, 73

## SOCIAL CUSTOMS, 75-92

Hereditary legislators, 77

On the Order of the Cincinnati, 77

## ECONOMIC VIEWS, 93-121

Emigration, 95

Happy mediocrity, 96



## CONTENTS

vii

*ECONOMIC VIEWS—Continued*

- European and American opinions, 102
- Free trade, 104
- Taxation, 105
- Manufacturers, 106
- Land owning and independence, 107
- Legislative corruption, 108
- Monarchy better than oligarchy, 109
- Landlordism, 110
- The standard of value, 111
- Patent system, 112
- Industry, 112
- A satire on pro-slavery arguments, 113

## DOMESTIC RELATIONS, 123-135

- Modesty, 125
- Bachelors, 127
- Choice of a wife, 128
- Moravian marriages, 128
- Boys and church-going, 130
- Domestic circumstance, 132
- How to grow young, 133
- Infirmities of age, 134
- Give the old their own way, 134

## THE CONDUCT OF LIFE, 137-173

The art of virtue, 139

Contrast between Cato and Cretico, 141

In public affairs, 149

Advice, 150

How to make up one's mind, 152

The malice of mankind, 155

Optimism and pessimism, 158

The love of praise, 163

The philosophy of hats, 167

Social courage and cowardice, 169

## MISCELLANEA, 175-193

In praise of wine, 177

Potts and Parsons, 182

What dishonors a family, 183

Simplified spelling, 184

Newspaper abuse, 186

On lending money, 187

The training of children, 189

The art of conversation, 190

Poetic fragment, 190

Happiness and wisdom, 191

Anecdotes, 192

## SERVICES OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 194-202

## PREFACE