easily grasped and long retained.

Unavoidably this volume is not a complete story nor a full description of the times. Not just one volume but many volumes would have been required for any such full treatment.

In general and friendly criticism, it may be noted that this book has some slight repetitions, that there are too many long citations, that the pages are crowded about forty lines to the page, and that the print is somewhat too small for old eyes, that illustrations could have added much to the image intended, and that maps are lacking.

Whether viewed as historical literature or considered as a reference work, this weighty book has high value. In keeping with much recent historiography, a major emphasis of the volume is that of party politics. One result is the inclusion of much familiar material. Another aspect is the omission of a great many other features of life in Europe and in North America. A brief survey of the Index of the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography will reveal how many general features are not found in this specialized work. Social history, including institutional matters and, especially, economic situations, is usually neglected by writers on the history of politics. As in the case of The Founding of a Nation there is not room for any elaboration of that social material without which the ocean of historical fact is somewhat ignored in attention to its whitecaps and surf.

The publication is not a textbook. This would be true of an advanced class on the short period, 1763-1776. It flirts with sacred history but does not embrace it. It deals too much with party politics and biographical data.

All in all, the publication will find a good but not a large sale. English-speaking intellectuals will find it worthwhile, in disregard of its price and of the time necessary for its full comprehension.

Nothing less than congratulations are due the author, his collaborators, and his publisher.

Professor Emeritus of the University of Pittsburgh

Alfred P. James


Perhaps no one in the American past except Jefferson equalled
Ben Franklin in talent, interest and achievements. His multifaceted career has intrigued scores of biographers and historians. We know of Ben Franklin, printer and publisher; Ben Franklin, civic spirit and Pennsylvania politician; Ben Franklin, colonial agent and elder statesman; and, even a Ben Franklin, gallivanter. Still there always seems to be a side of Ben Franklin that needs examination. Poor Richard's Politicks offers a look at an aspect of Franklin heretofore ignored, Ben Franklin, political philosopher.

Partially explaining why history has overlooked the political ideals of Franklin is that, unlike his contemporaries, John Adams and Tom Jefferson, he left no systematic exposition of his philosophical views. His political blueprint can be culled only from a vast reading of the published and unpublished writings that spanned his busy and lengthy career.

When Ben Franklin contemplated his political model, he thought exclusively of the society that might emerge on the American continent. It was not a theoretical design for the world. Like the true Newtonian that he was, Franklin searched for a society that was properly ordered, virtuous, harmonious yet allowed for growth and change.

At the base of Franklin's new American order would be a society that, through hard labor, achieved comfort and social morality. In the resourceful continent available to them, Franklin believed Americans could attain a condition of mild affluence, or "happy mediocrity." Government, while providing authority and stimulating the economy, was to remain simple and economical. The cohesive force of Franklin's new order was "benevolence" defined as a willingness "to do good offices to, and promote the general Welfare and Happiness of our Fellow Creatures."

Franklin recognized that no society stands still. He anticipated that the Americans would expand across the continent and possibly build a new economic order. He envisioned a mercantile America that would be more populous than Europe and self-sufficient. America would become a world marketplace and a haven for those who sought a better life. But it was to be an Anglo-Saxon America. There was no room for Indians, Negroes or foreigners in Franklin's society.

As the society grew and changed, government would serve as the adjuster of the many parts in order to bring about harmony and unity. By showering privileges upon no preferred group, the government would preserve equality. Furthermore, the government would bring unification of the colonies. This feature was central to Franklin's
dreams and he sought to realize it with the Albany Plan. Its rejection brought his personal disappointment and represented a severe blow to his philosophical dreams. The eventual acceptance of the Constitution by the states gave him great satisfaction for then Americans could begin to build the new order about which he dreamed.

While the author has focused on Franklin, the political philosopher, he recognized that one cannot dissect Franklin and examine only a part. Franklin, the practical man, is therefore always with Franklin, the dreamer. The author has suggested how Franklin's philosophical notions were frequently made more relevant by the practicalities of colonial America. Above all, Professor Conner, with considerable insight and wit, has demonstrated again that Franklin was indeed a talented and interesting American.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

W. Wayne Smith


This book is an accomplishment in scholarship. Added to many others being offered to the public today it can — not only for its content, but also for its clear evidence of thorough research and quality of scholarship — help many Americans, white and black, restructure their thinking and their values. Coming at a time, as it does, when the public is being flooded with millions of words on "black history" most of which is trash and serves only to overcompensate those who feel deprived of fulfillment as we conceive fulfillment, and thus further to mislead them while at the same time giving undue financial rewards to the purveyors (who have little concern to that consequence), this book makes a valid contribution.

Author Roland McConnell explores the military contributions made by black men from the days of the Spanish in what was to become the United States to the glorious culmination in the Battalion of Free Men of Color in Louisiana serving under Andrew Jackson in repulsing the British at New Orleans. Between-times with French culture as catalyst their emergence as a meld of Africa and Europe suggests some valuable vectors of thinking for those who today are seeking some guidance from history's lesson-pages.

First off, one is struck by the effect of the struggles between Spain and France upon this little enclave of blacks who for a century