WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

NEW YORK.—Dr. Robert H. Goddard, experimenting with rockets for the last 24 years, and steadily making progress, has had as his goal the penetration of the higher atmosphere, the possible catapulting of messages across the ocean, and sundry scientific inquiries to which he has thought his unique gunnery might supply the answer. Although much Jules Vernish stuff has been written about his "rockets to the moon" and about shooting people across the Atlantic in a few minuter, he has been an aloof and patient scientist, intent on seeing only what he sees and not making any handsome promises.

Dr. Goddard Has Both Feet On This World

So far as this courier knows, the suggestion by Maj. James R. Randolph that rockets may replace heavy artillery, for long-range bombardment of cities, is the first official recognition of their possible use in warfare. He specifically cites the work of Doctor Goddard, at a time when Doctor Goddard is piling up new patents and getting some of his biggest sizzlers under control. It is also the time when the tiny, motored plane, evolving from the toy, and controlled by radio, is absorbing the interest of the army experimenters as a possible bomb-dropper.

At Roswell, N. M., financed by the Daniel Guggenheim foundation, Doctor Goddard has a unique desert laboratory with plenty of elbow room and sky room. He now has a gyro steering mechanism on his rockets, by which they may be accurately aimed. He has gained 30 per cent in range over his best shots of two years ago, and is now forcing his rockets to a speed of 700 miles per hour.

His most valuable contribution to rocketeering, noted by Major Randolph, is his continuous flow of power, instead of the single initial explosion. Gasoline and oxygen, mixing and exploding as they issue from a tail nozzle, give steady propulsion.

Doctor Goddard, an amiable, unassuming, baldish man, began his rocket experiments at Clark university in 1914. He is a physicist, absorbed in pure science, admitting that we might hit the moon with a rocket if we wanted to spend that much power, but so far he keeps down to earth on immediate and specific problems—and makes progress.

IT DOES begin to look as though scientists will be the loudest of all when "Beulah Land" rings out at the next singfest. Once upon a time, religionists looked warily whenever a man of science opened his mouth, because so many of them were arguing against a hereafter. But Sir Richard Gregory, with his "It is just as permissible to assume that another world awaits habitation of an exalted type of humanity as it is to believe in the eternal existence of individuality," is only the latest of many to hit the sawdust trail.

Church and Test Tubes Are Teaming Up

Emeritus professor of astronomy, Queens college, London, is one of his present distinctions, and he is also a former editor of the magazine, Nature. The stars have been his chief guide for most of the years since he was born in 1864. How much their lessons helped him to his knighthood, 1919, and his baronetcy, 1931, is a question. But certainly, along with his acknowledged interest in heaven, they must take responsibility for his chief books, "The Vault of Heaven" and "Discovery, or the Spirit of Service of Science."

PROF. WALTER B. CANNON of Harvard avoided a mistake made by Howard Scott. When Mr. Scott appeared as the John the Baptist of technocracy, he started taking our measure for its immediate application. When Professor Cannon put out "biocracy" several years ago, as a cure for the ills of the "body politic," he made it clear that we could take it or leave it. Hence, while biocracy is still in the suspense file, Professor Cannon finds honor and advancement as the newly-elected president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which body is driving for some grand scale rationalization of science and society. That's the main idea of biocracy—a society which is not at war with the life force.

Cannon Cure Not Crammed Down Throats

He is one of the most distinguished physiologists in America, given to novel research. He is the discoverer of a method by which we may hear our brains ticking.

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Name Lavinia Means 'Cleansed'

The name Lavinia is of Latin origin and means "the cleansed." In Roman mythology Lavinia was the daughter of King Latinus and was supposed to personify the Latin race. It is one of the older names which seems to be in process of regaining its former popularity.

Engagement Rings of Iron

Engagement rings were made of iron in early Roman days, the gold ring for the occasion being introduced in the Second century.

New Book on Franklin Restores Him to His 'Grand Dimensions'

In His 800-Page Biography of the Famous American, Whose Birthday We Celebrate on January 17, Carl Van Doren "Rescues Him from the Dry, Prim People Who Have Claimed Him as One of Them" and Tells What He Really "Did, Said, Thought and Felt."

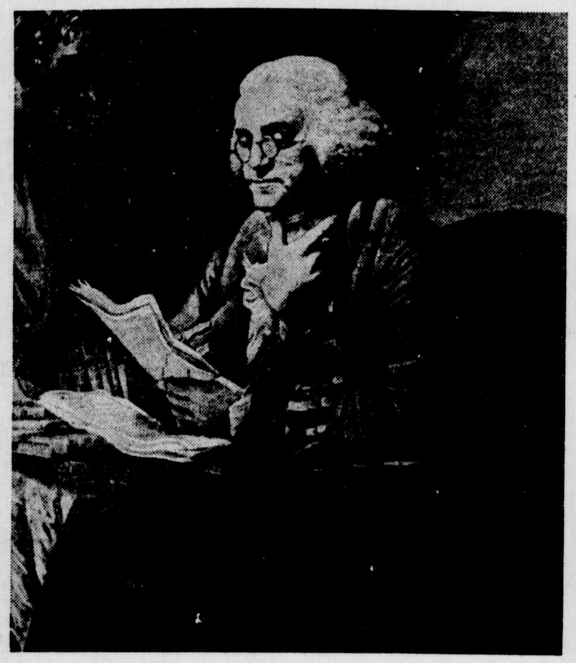
© Western Newspaper Union.

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

THIS year's celebration of the anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birth should have a greater significance to his fellow-Americans than ever before. Especially is this true if they have read a biography of him published recently.

Perhaps it would be more fitting to refer to it as THE biography. A great many books have been written about him, covering every period in his long and remarkable career and dealing with every phase of this "most versatile American." But for the first time in three-quarters of a century a biographer has undertaken to bring the whole of his life, with all the necessary details, into a single narrative long enough to do it justice.

The biographer who has done this is Carl Van Doren and his 800-page volume, published recently by the Viking Press of New York, is undoubtedly the "last word," the final full-length portrait of the man who was born 235 years ago—on January 17, 1704.

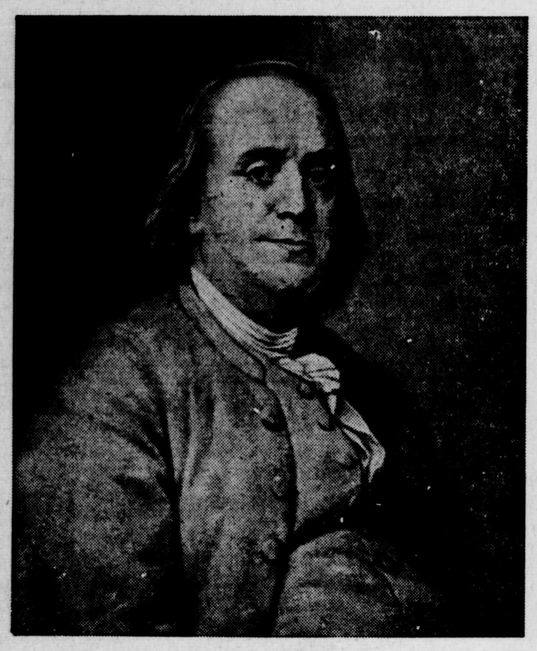


FRANKLIN IN LONDON

From a portrait painted by David Martin in London in 1767 and now owned by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

The general outlines of Franklin's life story is a familiar one to most Americans. They know of his boyhood in Boston, his work as an apprentice printer in the shop of his brother, James, and his start as a publisher, at the age of 17, when James incurred the displeasure of the authorities and young Ben had the task of getting out the New England Courant.

They are familiar with the story of his quarrel with his brother, his going to Philadelphia, there to walk down the street with a huge roll of bread under his arm and to be laughed at by pretty Deborah Read who later became his wife. Familiar, too, are the tales of his becoming foreman in the printing office of Samuel Keimer, his partnership with Hugh Meredith in publishing the Pennsylvania Gazette and his successful career as a printer and publisher which enabled him to retire from that business at the age of 42.



FRANKLIN IN PARIS

From a portrait painted in France by Joseph-Sifrede Duplessis in 1783 and now owned by the New York Public Library.

In the meantime his career as a philosopher had begun—in his "Poor Richard's Almanac," which spread his fame throughout the colonies, and in his formation of the Junto, a club in which he and his fellows discussed all manner of philosophical questions. Science next attracted him and most familiar of all the stories about him is that which tells of his interest in Leyden jars. For that led to the famous incident of the kite, the silk handkerchief, the rainstorm and the charge of electricity which ran down the twine to the key tied on the end of it. Of course, Benjamin Franklin didn't "discover" electricity, but he dramatized it, and when he wrote monographs on his experiments Europe began to take notice of this American colonial.

Americans know that he was also interested in politics and public affairs—that he served as clerk of the Pennsylvania assembly and afterwards as a member of it; that he established the postal system in this country; that he first planted the idea of a union of the colonies with his famous "Join or Die" snake cartoon; that he was indispensable to General Braddock in securing the waggoners necessary for hauling that leader's supplies on his disastrous expedition; that he went to England to represent the colonies in the dispute over the Stamp Act and thus started upon the career as a diplomat which was to bring him his greatest fame.

And these are only a few of the activities of the "many-sided Franklin" which have been made familiar to his fellow-Americans mainly through his "Autobiography," which he began writing in 1771. But according to Carl Van Doren, just because Franklin is best known from his "Autobiography," he is too little known. For, says this biographer,

". . . In that masterpiece of memory and honesty he dealt with his years as a rising tradesman and did not reach his more memorable years as imperial prophet, revolutionary statesman, cosmopolitan diplomatist, scientist, wit, moralist, sage. He never found time to carry out the history of himself as he intended. But the materials which he would have used still exist, scattered in journals, letters, and miscellaneous writings through his manuscripts and his collected and uncollected works."

So Mr. Van Doren set himself to the task of drawing these materials together and arranging them "in something like the order he might have given them. Nor are they mere raw notes for a book. He seldom wrote a line without some characteristic touch of wit and grace. Most of these materials need no rewriting to make them match the unfinished story they continue."

Although the biographer thus makes his task sound simple, the fact is that it was a monumental one. More than 10 years have elapsed between the time he started this biography and its completion. The very abundance of the new material which his research unearthed added to his difficulties, since it led to the temptation to let his book run beyond a readable length. However, the completed biography of more than 800 pages, "full as it is, is a biography cut with hard labour to the bone."

Not the least of the interest and value of the book is the new material which the biographer mentions. Concerning it, he says in the preface:

"Here first in any Franklin biography appear (in part) his 'elegy,' recently discovered and apparently his earliest writing that has survived; information about James Franklin's New England Courant based on the file kept, almost certainly, by Benjamin Franklin; an analysis of the hundreds of sayings of Poor Richard which Franklin left out of 'The Way to Wealth,' thereby much narrowing his reputation as a maker and sharpener of adages; various details of his business, domestic life, and personal expenditures taken from manuscript account books and advertisements in the Pennsylvania Gazette; a more exact discussion than has thitherto been printed of his surreptitious writings and of his 'Reflections on Courtship and Marriage'; a critical examination of the kite-flying episode; the narrative of Franklin's first diplomatic mission, to the chiefs of the Ohio Indians at Carlisle; the lifelong story of his affectionate friendship with Catherine Ray, with unpublished letters from her; his campaign as a soldier, known in full only to readers of a single monograph; his record in Pennsylvania politics as shown in the executive and legislative journals of the province; the insurance company's description of his house in Philadelphia; an unpublished manuscript in which he outlined his programme of opposition to the Stamp Act; a note on his meeting with Baron Munchausen and Raspe his chronicler; a circumstantial account of the Grand Ohio company from which Franklin hoped to make a fortune in land speculation; his acquaintance with James Boswell; two fables by Franklin published in 1770 but lost sight of until 1936; a comparison of two versions of Wedderburn's attack on Franklin, one as printed by the British government and one as remembered by Franklin's friends; the neglected record of his activities as chairman of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety; an unpublished letter to General Schuyler written during the mission to Canada; an accurate report of the conference with General Howe given directly from the minutes; the amazing melodrama of the British spies who surrounded Franklin in Paris; new translations of three of his Passy bagatelles, written by him, so far as is known, only in French."

Although Franklin is best known for his prose writings, for his ability as a "maker and sharpener of adages," such as those which he put in his "Poor Richard's Almanac," the fact is that his writing career started with a poem! It was an "Elegy on My Sister Franklin" which, Van Doren says, was "only recently discovered and is now first mentioned in a Franklin biography. The precise date of the elegy is still uncertain, as is the name of the sister-in-law whose death called it forth . . ."

The text of the elegy, as given in Van Doren's book, follows:

Warm from my Breast surcharg'd with Grief & Woe
These melancholy Strains spontaneous flow
Flow from a fav'rite Sister's sad Decease
Flow from the worthiest of the female Race . . .
My dear my much-loved Sister!—O my Friend
We in this World on nothing may depend:
For soon as we esteem ourselves possest
Of every needful Thing to make us blest
Some Friend's Demise (like hers we now lament)
Casual Mischance, or tragical Event
Like an intrudent Guest will intervene
Frustrate our Hopes and mar our blissful Scene.
How weak! how vain! how void all mundane Joys
A Medley fraught with Nonsense, Shew and Noise
O what is Life which we so high esteem
A Bubble, Vapous, Shadow, Fleeting Dream
From sordid Dust we sprang & surely must
Or soon or late return to native Dust
What mortal Man even in his best Estate
All Vanity, Pride, Folly and Deceit . . .
Crowns have their Thorns and Opulence its Bane
And all our Pleasures their Alloy of Pain
All the Vicissitudes of Life declare
Uncertainty alone is certain here . . .
No sublunary Blessings long endure
And from Death's Clutches nought can us ensure
Who o'er all Flesh maintains a sovereign Sway
And Millions fall his Victims every Day
Nor Worth, Wit, Beauty, Wealth or Power can free
From rigid Fate's immutable Decree . . .
Else might this worthy Saint whose wayward Fate
We now deplore have claimed a longer Date
Of circling Years her Kin to serve and bless
Enjoy her Friends and Life's good Things possess . . .
And tho' I humbly trust our Friend deceas'd
Is wafted to the Saints eternal Rest
Yet her sad Exit maugre my Resolves
In Woe's profound Abyss my soul involves
With Sighs & Groans my lab'ring Bosom swells
And down my cheeks Grief's mournful Stream impels
May Heaven forgive me if I ought offend
Whilst thus I mourn my dear departed Friend
Sure Heaven forbids not for our Friends to mourn
Nor to bedew with Tears their peaceful Urn

FRANKLIN IN PHILADELPH A

From a portrait by Robert Feke (?) or John Greenwood (?), painted probably about 1748 and now owned by the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard university.

"These are perhaps the earliest surviving words of Franklin, written when he had not yet finally decided between poetry and prose," says his biographer.

After reading young Ben's first literary effort (it was probably written when he was 17 or 18 years old), one can't help being grateful that he decided in favor of prose!

• • •

In explaining why he has gone into such detail in this biography, Mr. Van Doren says it is because "Franklin led a detailed life which in a general narrative loses colour and savour. But the chief aim of the book has been to restore to Franklin, so often remembered piecemeal in this or that of his diverse aspects, his magnificent central unity as a great and wise man moving through great and troubling events. No effort has been made to cut his nature to fit any simple scheme of what a good man ought to be.

"Here, as truly as it has been possible to find out, is what Franklin did, said, thought, and felt. Perhaps these things may help to rescue him from the dry, prim people who have claimed him as one of them. They praise his thrift. But he himself admitted that he could never learn frugality, and he practiced it no longer than his poverty forced him to. They praise his prudence. But at seventy he became a leader of a revolution and throughout his life he ran bold risks. They praise him for being a plain man. Hardly another man of affairs has ever been more devoted than Franklin to the pleasant graces.

"The dry, prim people seem to regard him as a treasure shut up in a savings bank to which they have the lawful key. I herewith give him back, in his grand dimensions, to his nation and the world."

• • •

Incidentally, a short time after Franklin wrote this poem, he wrote a parody upon "An Elegy Upon the Much Lamented Death of Mrs. Mehitabel Kitel, and suggested that since such poems can not be called "either Epic, Sapphic, Lyric or Pindaris, I presume it may (in honor and remembrance of the dead) be called the Kitelic." Says Van Doren: "Other contributors (to the Courant) caught at the name Kitelic and applied it again and again to bad native verse."

Franklin Provided First Official U. S. Flag

Flying in front of the Franklin Institute (Philadelphia) is the standard which has been adopted as its official flag.

The flag has an interesting story. It is a copy of the "Franklin Flag." While Franklin was ambassador at Paris, John Paul Jones, the American privateer, was doing great damage to British shipping. The admiralty issued orders to hang Jones as a pirate if he should be captured, for he flew no flag of any recognized nation.

The Dutch ambassador called on Franklin and officially asked for a description of the flag which should be recognized as the United States standard. Franklin sent this flag to Jones and described it to the inquiring diplomat as a means of identification. At about this time a ship was on its way with notice to Franklin that the "resolve" of June, 1777, had created the Stars and Stripes.

Recognized by foreign powers even before the present national standard was adopted, the Franklin flag is of red, white and blue with 13 stripes and 13 white stars on a blue background. It is different from the American flag, however, in that four of the stripes are blue, four are white, five are red; and the stars have seven points instead of five.—Franklin Institute News.

Pan-American Trade Proves Friendly Link Between Nations

The United States imports seven or eight million bags of Brazilian coffee each year. Here thousands of pounds are being burned in order to stabilize the price. The U. S. received its first shipment of coffee in 1809.

United States-South American Trade Developed After Civil War

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

"Foreign trade has long arms," said a rancher on the Argentine pampa. "I buy a Chicago windmill to pump water for my cattle, miles of barbed wire to fence my pastures, or a tractor from Detroit; I pay by selling North America a load of hides for tanneries, a cargo of flaxseed for paint factories—or I sell my hogs and cattle to a local packing plant that ships meat to London, and pay in cash."

Such is the essence of world trade.

Briefly sketching the past of the ever-shifting South American trade geography better enables us to understand our own position today.

Portuguese had founded the old town of Olinda, near what is now Recife (Pernambuco) in Brazil, about 100 years before Henry Hudson saw Manhattan island; by the time Massachusetts colony was being formed, they had already built many sugar factories thereabouts. Soon afterward, Dutch traders established Pernambuco, where centuries later the German transatlantic dirigible long tied up.

How gold-hunting Spaniards blazed trails from Panama to Argentina, conquered and sacked Indian settlements, and built their own cities and churches is an oft-told tale.

No less familiar is the record of English exploration, with the adventures of Sebastian Cabot, Sir Francis Drake, Hawkins, and others.

England Takes the Lead

Up to the time of our Civil war, probably no man anywhere imagined what a destiny lay ahead of this continent.

Of course these young nations needed credit, capital, immigration—besides advice—just as did our own land in its youth. As with us, too, it was from Europe these things first came, in return for South America's raw materials.

England, particularly, took the lead. Though she did not send emigrants by hundreds of thousands, as Italy later did, she gave credit, supplied capital and business brains, started ocean ship lines, laid cables, and built railways until by 1900 she dominated the finances and commerce of all South America. Germany, France, and other powers were there too, but England was supreme.

Guano from Peru was coming around the Horn to Baltimore, for use on our Atlantic coast farms, when the Mexicans still owned California. In 1809 Brazil sent us her first coffee, a cargo of 1,522 bags, landed at Salem, Mass., from the ship Marquis de Someruelas. From that first small shipment this trade has grown till now it takes 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 bags of Brazilian coffee to meet our needs.

Foreigners Take Roles.

Like Cecil Rhodes in Africa, certain foreign pioneers played conspicuous roles in South America's early development.

Some were English, some Irish, some from the United States. There was William Wheelwright, a Yankee who founded the historic Pacific Steam Navigation company, built railways, and had monuments raised in his honor. And Henry Meiggs, from California, who "flung the amazing Oroya Railway across the sky-piercing passes of the Peruvian Andes"; and the two Harmans of Virginia, John and Archer, of "Guayaquil to Quito" fame.

In that miraculous rail-laying task, they say fever took one human life for every tie laid through 50 miles of jungle. Both brothers were dead before this job was done—one killed by a landslide; but not before the hardest work was finished and the rails well on their way to lofty, isolated Quito.

Fresh from County Cork, 200 young Irishmen landed in Peru one day in 1850. Among them was William R. Grace. Malaria killed most of the band; other survivors went on to Australia, but Grace stuck.

He started business with a store ship serving Peru's Chincha islands guano fleet and lived to see a passenger fleet of his own swarm over two seas, a fleet that was later to send one of the first ships through the Panama canal and the first under the new Golden Gate bridge at San Francisco.

Panama Canal Opened.

When Grace died, long eventful years after his guano adventure, he had been twice mayor of New York city and had built up an organization which for far-flung diversity of operations was and is without parallel under the American flag.

Opening of the Panama canal speeded up sale and travel between the Americas and saw the Grace operations broaden almost to resemble such historic firms as the East India or Hudson's Bay companies.

Besides its sea and air ships, its two-way barter with South America is a perfect example of how commerce flows. Southbound, its boats may carry food, steel, farm implements, or other machines needed there, and bring back to us anything from tin and nitrate to balsa wood and coffee.

"Since 1862, when we sold our first engine to South America, we have had some odd adventures down that way," said an official of the Baldwin Locomotive works.

"Back in 1878 we built a locomotive, the John Lucas, for the old Camden and Atlantic railway. Somehow it got sold to an American who was mining gold in Dutch Guiana. His mine petered out. Long years afterward, when the jungle guides of a New York architect exploring Dutch Guiana (Surinam) were cutting their way through vines and brush, they came upon an old engine. A plate on it read: 'Baldwin Locomotive Works, Philadelphia, 1878. No. 4287.' It was the old John Lucas!

Rubber's Uses Multiplied.

"In more than 70 years we have sold about 3,000 locomotives to South America; their work has done a lot to build up that continent's wealth."

Most of the world's rubber once came from the Amazon valley. After the discovery of vulcanization, rubber's uses multiplied and demand for it raised prices to $3 a pound. Brazilians made fabulous fortunes almost overnight.

A typical Gaucho soldier in the south of Brazil. Gauchos, herdsmen of the pampas, are noted for their skill in horsemanship and guerrilla warfare.

Then this rubber goose that laid the eggs of gold was slain. Rubber seeds, smuggled out, were used to start new plantations in Malaysia; now they supply most of the world's needs, and Brazil's output has dwindled to a few thousand tons.

However, following studies by the American Rubber commission, a Brazilian subsidiary of the Ford Motor company began operations in 1927 in the Amazon valley, original home of the rubber tree.

Comprising some 2,500,000 acres, the rubber lands lie along the Tapajoz river, a big tributary of the Amazon. At Fordlandia, 110 miles from the Amazon, the first trees were planted in 1929, and this year the first tappings of latex were made.

At Beiterra, about 30 miles above the Tapajoz's mouth, another plantation is being started. This one is laid out in squares, and 25-foot roads run straight through at mile-and-a-half intervals.

Up to July 31, 1937, on both rubber farms more than 12,000 acres have been cleared and planted to 2,200,000 seedlings.

In a nursery about five million more young trees are being grown. The company has built its own town, with water works, sewers, hospital, stores, homes for the United States staff and native workers, a sawmill, dry kilns, electric plant, miles of roads, docks, warehouses, etc. It is also experimenting with a view to growing and marketing other tropical products, such as fibers, nuts, and vegetable oils.