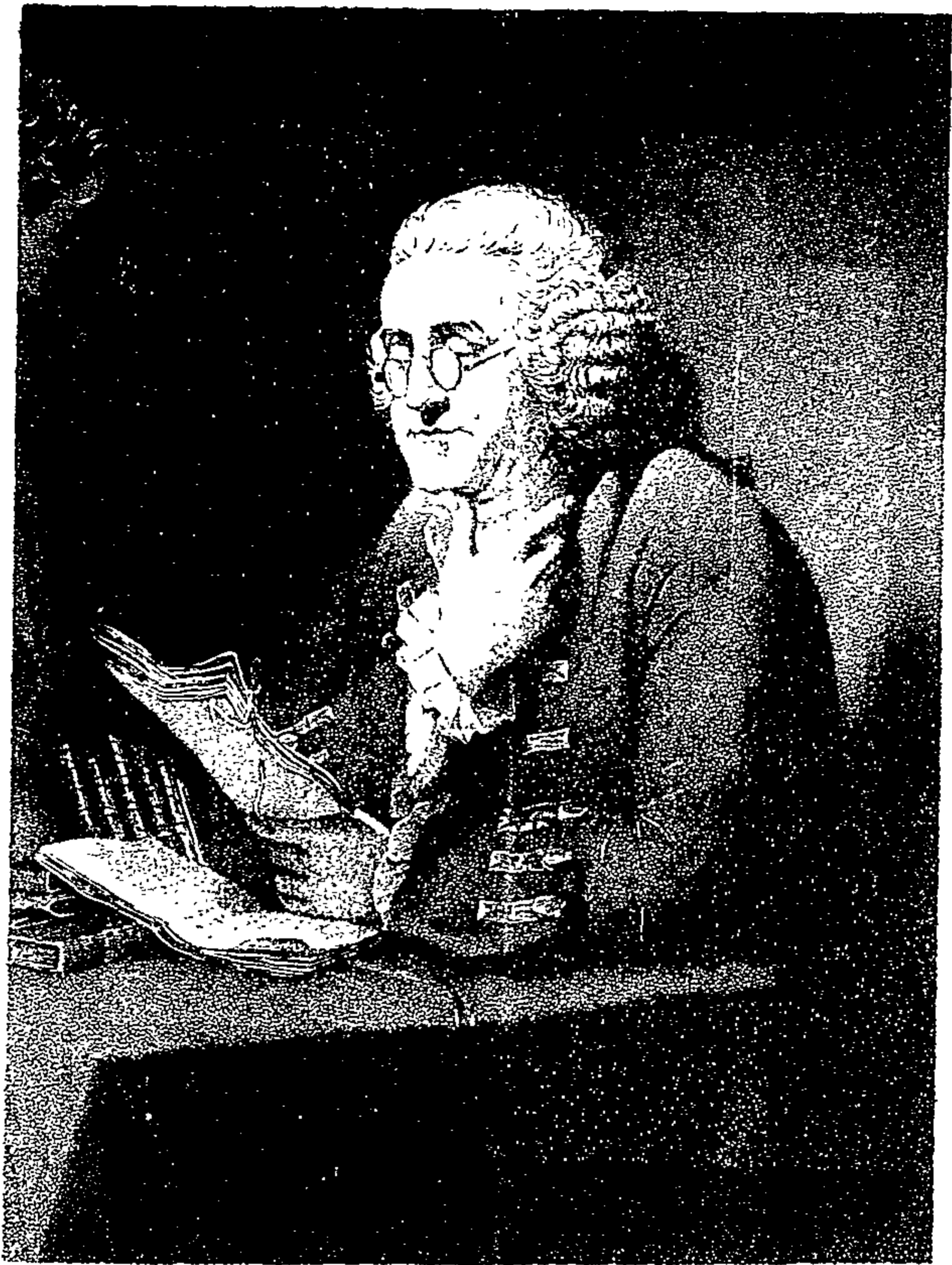


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THE WORKS  
OF  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

VOL. II.



THE  
**WORKS**  
OF  
**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN;**  
CONTAINING  
SEVERAL POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL TRACTS  
NOT INCLUDED IN ANY FORMER EDITION,  
AND  
MANY LETTERS OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE  
NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED;  
WITH  
**NOTES**  
AND  
A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

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BY JARED SPARKS.

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VOLUME II.

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ESSAYS

ON

MORAL SUBJECTS

AND

THE ECONOMY OF LIFE.

ESSAYS  
ON  
RELIGIOUS AND MORAL SUBJECTS  
AND THE  
ECONOMY OF LIFE.

---

ARTICLES OF BELIEF AND ACTS OF RELIGION.\*

PART FIRST.

“Here will I hold. If there’s a power above us,  
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud,  
Through all her works,) He must delight in virtue;  
And that which he delights in must be happy.”

ADDISON’S CATO.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

I BELIEVE there is one supreme, most perfect Being, author and father of the gods themselves.

For I believe that man is not the most perfect being but one, but rather that there are many degrees of beings superior to him.

Also, when I stretch my imagination through and beyond our system of planets, beyond the visible fixed stars themselves, into that space that is every way infinite, and conceive it filled with suns like ours, each with a chorus of worlds for ever moving round him; then this little ball on which we move, seems, even in

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\* This paper bears the date of November 20th, 1728, when the author was twenty-two years old. It purports to be the FIRST PART; but the continuation has never been published.—EDITOR.

my narrow imagination, to be almost nothing, and myself less than nothing, and of no sort of consequence.

When I think thus, I imagine it great vanity in me to suppose, that the *Supremely Perfect* does in the least regard such an inconsiderable nothing as man; more especially, since it is impossible for me to have any clear idea of that which is infinite and incomprehensible, I cannot conceive otherwise, than that he *the Infinite Father* expects or requires no worship or praise from us, but that he is even infinitely above it.

But, since there is in all men something like a natural principle, which inclines them to DEVOTION, or the worship of some unseen power;

And since men are endued with reason superior to all other animals, that we are in our world acquainted with;

Therefore I think it seems required of me, and my duty as a man, to pay divine regards to SOMETHING.

I conceive, then, that the INFINITE has created many beings or gods, vastly superior to man, who can better conceive his perfections than we, and return him a more rational and glorious praise; as, among men, the praise of the ignorant or of children is not regarded by the ingenious painter or architect, who is rather honored and pleased with the approbation of wise men and artists.

It may be these created gods are immortal; or it may be, that, after many ages, they are changed, and others supply their places.

Howbeit, I conceive that each of these is exceeding wise and good, and very powerful; and that each has made for himself one glorious sun, attended with a beautiful and admirable system of planets.

It is that particular wise and good God, who is the author and owner of our system, that I propose for the object of my praise and adoration.

For I conceive that he has in himself some of those passions he has planted in us; and that, since he has given us reason whereby we are capable of observing his wisdom in the creation, he is not above caring for us, being pleased with our praise, and offended when we slight him, or neglect his glory.

I conceive, for many reasons, that he is a *good Being*; and, as I should be happy to have so wise, good, and powerful a Being my friend, let me consider in what manner I shall make myself most acceptable to him.

Next to the praise resulting from and due to his wisdom, I believe he is pleased and delights in the happiness of those he has created; and, since without virtue a man can have no happiness in this world, I firmly believe he delights to see me virtuous, because he is pleased when he sees me happy.

And since he has created many things, which seem purely designed for the delight of man, I believe he is not offended, when he sees his children solace themselves in any manner of pleasant exercises and innocent delights; and I think no pleasure innocent, that is to man hurtful.

I *love* him therefore for his goodness, and I *adore* him for his wisdom.

Let me not fail, then, to praise my God continually, for it is his due, and it is all I can return for his many favors and great goodness to me; and let me resolve to be virtuous, that I may be happy, that I may please him, who is delighted to see me happy. Amen!

#### ADORATION.

PREL. Being mindful, that, before I address the Deity, my soul ought to be calm and serene, free from passion and perturbation, or otherwise elevated

with rational joy and pleasure, I ought to use a countenance that expresses a filial respect, mixed with a kind of smiling, that signifies inward joy, and satisfaction, and admiration.

O wise God, my good Father!

Thou beholdest the sincerity of my heart and of my devotion; grant me a continuance of thy favor!

1. O Creator, O Father! I believe that thou art good, and that thou art *pleased with the pleasure* of thy children.—Praised be thy name for ever!

2. By thy power hast thou made the glorious sun, with his attending worlds; from the energy of thy mighty will, they first received [their prodigious] motion, and by thy wisdom hast thou prescribed the wondrous laws, by which they move.—Praised be thy name for ever!

3. By thy wisdom hast thou formed all things; thou hast created man, bestowing life and reason, and placed him in dignity superior to thy other earthly creatures.—Praised be thy name for ever!

4. Thy wisdom, thy power, and thy goodness are everywhere clearly seen; in the air and in the water, in the heavens and on the earth; thou providest for the various winged fowl, and the innumerable inhabitants of the water; thou givest cold and heat, rain and sunshine, in their season, and to the fruits of the earth their increase.—Praised be thy name for ever!

5. Thou abhorrest in thy creatures treachery and deceit, malice, revenge, [intemperance,] and every other hurtful vice; but thou art a lover of justice and sincerity, of friendship and benevolence, and every virtue; thou art my friend, my father, and my benefactor.—Praised be thy name, O God, for ever! Amen.

[After this, it will not be improper to read part of some such book as Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, or *Blackmore on the Creation*, and the Archbishop of Cambray's *Demonstration of the Being of a God, &c.*, or else spend some minutes in a serious silence, contemplating on those subjects.]

Then sing

MILTON'S HYMN TO THE CREATOR.

“ These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,  
Almighty, thine this universal frame,  
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!  
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,  
Angels, for ye behold him, and with songs  
And choral symphonies, day without night,  
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heaven,  
On earth join all ye creatures to extol  
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.

“ Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,  
If rather thou belong not to the dawn,  
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn  
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere  
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.  
Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,  
Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise  
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,  
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.  
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st,  
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;  
And ye five other wandering fires, that move  
In mystic dance not without song, resound  
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.  
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth  
Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run  
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix  
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change  
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.  
Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise  
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,  
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
In honor to the world's great Author rise;



Whether to deck with clouds the uncolored sky,  
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,  
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.  
 His praise, ye winds that from four quarters blow,  
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,  
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.  
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,  
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.  
 Join voices, all ye living souls; ye birds,  
 That singing, up to heaven gate ascend,  
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise;  
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk  
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;  
 Witness *if I be silent*, morn or even,  
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,  
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise."

[Here follows the reading of some book, or part of a book, discoursing on and exciting to moral virtue.]

#### PETITION.

PREL. Inasmuch as by reason of our ignorance we cannot be certain that many things, which we often hear mentioned in the petitions of men to the Deity, would prove real goods, if they were in our possession, and as I have reason to hope and believe that the goodness of my heavenly Father will not withhold from me a suitable share of temporal blessings, if by a virtuous and holy life I conciliate his favor and kindness; therefore I presume not to ask such things; but rather, humbly, and with a sincere heart, express my earnest desire that he would graciously assist my continual endeavours and resolutions of eschewing vice and embracing virtue; which kind of supplications will at the same time remind me in a solemn manner of my extensive duty.

That I may be preserved from atheism, impiety, and profaneness; and, in my addresses to Thee, carefully avoid irreverence and ostentation, formality and odious hypocrisy, — Help me, O Father!

That I may be loyal to my prince, and faithful to my country, careful for its good, valiant in its defence, and obedient to its laws, abhorring treason as much as tyranny, — Help me, O Father!

That I may to those above me be dutiful, humble, and submissive; avoiding pride, disrespect, and contumacy, — Help me, O Father!

That I may to those below me be gracious, condescending, and forgiving, using clemency, protecting innocent distress, avoiding cruelty, harshness, and oppression, insolence, and unreasonable severity, — Help me, O Father!

That I may refrain from calumny and detraction; that I may abhor and avoid deceit and envy, fraud, flattery, and hatred, malice, lying, and ingratitude, — Help me, O Father!

That I may be sincere in friendship, faithful in trust, and impartial in judgment, watchful against pride, and against anger (that momentary madness), — Help me, O Father!

That I may be just in all my dealings, temperate in my pleasures, full of candor and ingenuousness, humanity and benevolence, — Help me, O Father!

That I may be grateful to my benefactors, and generous to my friends, exercising charity and liberality to the poor, and pity to the miserable, — Help me, O Father!

That I may possess integrity and evenness of mind, resolution in difficulties, and fortitude under affliction; that I may be punctual in performing my promises, peaceable and prudent in my behaviour, — Help me, O Father!

That I may have tenderness for the weak, and reverent respect for the ancient; that I may be kind to

my neighbours, good-natured to my companions, and hospitable to strangers, — Help me, O Father!

That I may be averse to craft and over-reaching, abhor extortion, perjury, and every kind of wickedness, — Help me, O Father!

That I may be honest and open-hearted, gentle, merciful, and good, cheerful in spirit, rejoicing in the good of others, — Help me, O Father!

That I may have a constant regard to honor and probity, that I may possess a perfect innocence and a good conscience, and at length become truly virtuous and magnanimous, — Help me, good God; help me, O Father!

And, forasmuch as ingratitude is one of the most odious of vices, let me not be unmindful gratefully to acknowledge the favors I receive from Heaven.

#### THANKS.

For peace and liberty, for food and raiment, for corn, and wine, and milk, and every kind of healthful nourishment, — Good God, I thank thee!

For the common benefits of air and light; for useful fire and delicious water, — Good God, I thank thee!

For knowledge, and literature, and every useful art; for my friends and their prosperity, and for the fewness of my enemies, — Good God, I thank thee!

For all thy innumerable benefits; for life, and reason, and the use of speech; for health, and joy, and every pleasant hour, — My good God, I thank thee!

puts a seed into the earth is recompensed, perhaps, by receiving forty out of it; and he who draws a fish out of our water, draws up a piece of silver.

Let us (and there is no doubt but we shall) be attentive to these, and then the power of rivals, with all their restraining and prohibiting acts, cannot much hurt us. We are sons of the earth and seas, and, like Antæus in the fable, if, in wrestling with a Hercules, we now and then receive a fall, the touch of our parents will communicate to us fresh strength and vigor to renew the contest.

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## INFORMATION

### TO THOSE WHO WOULD REMOVE TO AMERICA.

MANY persons in Europe, having directly or by letters, expressed to the writer of this, who is well acquainted with North America, their desire of transporting and establishing themselves in that country; but who appear to have formed, through ignorance, mistaken ideas and expectations of what is to be obtained there; he thinks it may be useful, and prevent inconvenient, expensive, and fruitless removals and voyages of improper persons, if he gives some clearer and truer notions of that part of the world, than appear to have hitherto prevailed.

He finds it is imagined by numbers, that the inhabitants of North America are rich, capable of rewarding, and disposed to reward, all sorts of ingenuity; that they are at the same time ignorant of all the sciences, and, consequently, that strangers, possessing talents in the belles-lettres, fine arts, &c., must be highly esteemed,

and so well paid, as to become easily rich themselves; that there are also abundance of profitable offices to be disposed of, which the natives are not qualified to fill; and that, having few persons of family among them, strangers of birth must be greatly respected, and of course easily obtain the best of those offices, which will make all their fortunes; that the governments too, to encourage emigrations from Europe, not only pay the expense of personal transportation, but give lands gratis to strangers, with negroes to work for them, utensils of husbandry, and stocks of cattle. These are all wild imaginations; and those who go to America with expectations founded upon them will surely find themselves disappointed.

The truth is, that though there are in that country few people so miserable as the poor of Europe, there are also very few that in Europe would be called rich; it is rather a general happy mediocrity that prevails. There are few great proprietors of the soil, and few tenants; most people cultivate their own lands, or follow some handicraft or merchandise; very few rich enough to live idly upon their rents or incomes, or to pay the highest prices given in Europe for painting, statues, architecture, and the other works of art, that are more curious than useful. Hence the natural geniuses, that have arisen in America with such talents, have uniformly quitted that country for Europe, where they can be more suitably rewarded. It is true, that letters and mathematical knowledge are in esteem there, but they are at the same time more common than is apprehended; there being already existing nine colleges or universities, viz. four in New England, and one in each of the provinces of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, all furnished with learned professors; besides a number of smaller academies;