



William Temple Franklin.
1760-1823.
Modelled by John Flaxman, R.A.
Original, $4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$ inches.



Benjamin Franklin.
1706-1790.
Modelled by Patience Wright.
Original, $3\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

popular temper and proceeded cautiously in their measures of defence. It is an extraordinary tribute to Bentley and Wedgwood that, notwithstanding their well-known political opinions, the President of the Council, Lord Gower, through Sir John Wrottesley, requested Bentley to obtain from Wedgwood his opinion of "How the People stand with respect to raising the Militia in Staffordshire." Wedgwood's answer to Bentley more concisely than his letter to Sir John embodied the following sentiment on this question:

... I verily believe in the present state of affairs no material objection would be made to raising the Militia here, and for my own part as an Individual I should



Marquis de Lafayette.
1757-1834.
Diameter of original, $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches.



Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond.
1735-1806.
Original, $1\frac{1}{8} \times \frac{3}{4}$ inches.

endeavor to promote it as the least evil of three—Being left defenceless—calling in Foreign Troops, or raising a Militia to defend ourselves. The last evil seems to me the least, of the three, & one of them, thanks to our wise & upright Rulers, I believe we must submit to. . . .

All through the War we find evidences of Wedgwood's anxiety to secure pro-American literature for distribution among his neighbors. He thus records to Bentley, in 1776, his appreciation of Price's pamphlet "Observations on Civil Liberty and the Justice and Policy of the War with America":

... I thank you for Dr. Prices most excellent Pamphlet. Those who are neither converted, nor frightened into a better way of thinking by reading this excellent & alarming Book may be given up for hard-

en'd Sinners, beyond the reach of conviction. I sho^d like a few Copies of the next Edition. . . .

In the closing days of 1777 Wedgwood made a substantial contribution to the fund then being raised in England to ameliorate the miseries of the Americans imprisoned in England, a fund which in a short time amounted to nearly £100 for each prisoner. Wedgwood's extraordinary power of forecasting political events was thus evidenced over seven weeks before Lord North introduced his famous conciliatory measures of February 18, 1778, through which he sought to secure peace by the Government's waiver of all power of taxation over America:

. . . Our Anti-Americans now think that the war would be ended in the best manner we could wish, by granting the Americans all they have hitherto asked us for, but acknowledge this is rather to be hoped for than expected. What fools must we have been then to expend so much blood & treasure for something worse than nothing at all. . . .

In letters under date of February 21st, 25th, and March 3rd, 1778, we again note his prediction of the futility of this plan and his indignation at the way Lord North had belittled the causes of the war. It is of still more interest to note that a careful scrutiny of the arguments used in the debates on this question assures us that Wedgwood in the third letter maintained his belief expressed eleven years before (page 684) that the real motive in the governmental attack upon America was the overthrow of Constitutional Liberty in England:

. . . My expectations from the conciliatory motion did not run very high, being firmly persuaded that nothing less than an acknowledg^{mt} of independency would be accepted even as a preliminary, & this I did not expect to be made in St. Stephens, at least 'till, like every other measure, it shall be a year or two too late. When that time comes, we shall make even this offer, & still with

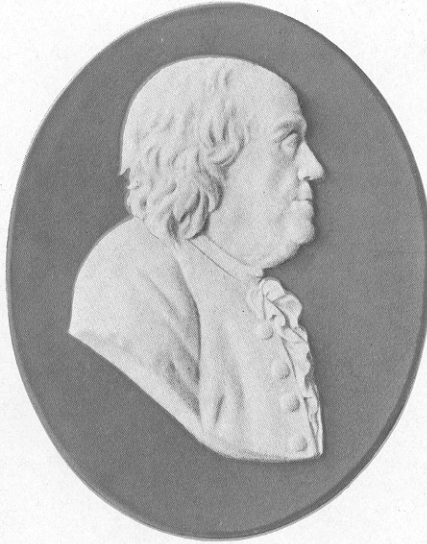
the same success, or I am no prophet. Adieu—God bless you. . . .

. . . I intended to have finish'd with a word or two upon politics, but I am waiting with astonishment & wonder to see how long the H. of Cs & the nation at large can bear such an insult as they have lately receiv'd—After spending 30 millions & sacrificing 20 thousand lives to tell the house the object was a trifle—a something, or nothing worth the trouble of collecting! If this continues to pass quietly as it seems to do at present, we may say the minister as well as the King can do no wrong. . . .

. . . I agree with my dear friend entirely & heartily that somebody should be made to say distinctly what has been the object of the present most wicked & preposterous war with our brethren & best friends. You will see by my last that I had the same ideas upon this subject, & I have not yet seen a paper in the public prints, not a speech in the house that has handled this recantation at all to my satisfaction, nor made that use of it to expose the absurdity, folly & Wickedness of our whole proceedings with America which the ministers confessions & concessions have given ample room for. You will perhaps say that the minister has done all this so fully & effectually himself that he has left no room for his friends in the mi-

nority to assist him. Something of this kind may be the case, but some of the most violent Tories here abuse him most heartily, & kindly offer me their assistance in that line to any extent I please—D - - n him, they say, could not he resign like a man without exposing himself so shabbily, & meanly filching L^d Chatham's plan in order to continue himself in place under the next administration. These people are quite chopfallen & dismay'd, & nothing but half a score Highland, Manchestrian & Liverpool regiments amongst us will raise their malignant spirits again, or enable them to look any man who has not been as mad as themselves in the face. . . .

The bitterness of both partners towards the Government and their views of the political future of Englishmen is thus emphasized in Wedgwood's reply March 19, 1778, to a letter from Bentley announcing the actuality of France's alliance with the United States:



Benjamin Franklin.

1706-1790.

After a Bust by Caffieri.

Original, 2¾ x 2¼ inches.