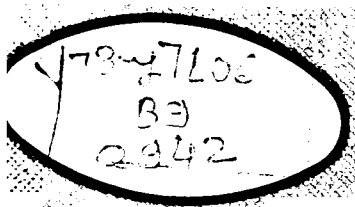


AMERICAN STATESMEN

Edited by

JOHN T. MORSE, JR.



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American Statesmen

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BY

JOHN T. MORSE, JR.

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF JOHN ADAMS," "LIFE OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,"
"LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON," ETC.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.:
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Company.

PREFACE.

JUST as I am reading the last proof-sheet of this volume, its publishers send me a catalogue of their "Books of Biography." In it my eye inopportunely falls upon these discouraging words, quoted from the Hon. John Bigelow, concerning Parton's *Life of Franklin*: "The delightful work of Mr. Parton has left no place in English literature for another biography of this most illustrious of our countrymen." I am much of Mr. Bigelow's opinion. Mr. Parton has given us such an admirable biography, so exhaustive and so remarkably happy in setting the real man vividly before the reader, that I feel that I must give something between a reason and an apology for the existence of this volume. The fact is simply this: without a life of Franklin this series would have appeared as absurdly imperfect as a library of English fiction with Scott or Thackeray absent from the shelves. The volume was a necessity, and since Mr. Parton's work, even if it could be borrowed or stolen, would not fit the space, this little book has been written. No poor genie of oriental magic was ever squeezed into more disproportionately narrow quar-

ters than is Franklin in these four hundred pages ; but again necessity must bear the burden of responsibility.

The edition of Franklin's works referred to in this volume is that of Mr. John Bigelow, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1887-88.

The edition of Bancroft's History of the United States referred to is the earliest octavo edition.

JOHN T. MORSE, JR.

BEVERLY FARMS, *August 9, 1889.*

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