

on the part of both, in the good faith and in the power of Congress and its commissioners to win over the Canadians and to retain possession of Canada. But this turned out as Franklin's one notable diplomatic failure. That diplomacy which had secured the adhesion of all the thirteen colonies and at a later date the active sympathy of France proved powerless to move the passive indifference of the Canadians.

Such was Mesplet's confidence in the ultimate success of the revolt of the thirteen colonies that, after accepting their commission as Canadian printer, he invested not only the whole of his free capital, but the money realized from the sale of part of the stock of books he had on hand, in continental currency; believing, as he claims, these bills to have been "as good as the banks of England or Vienna."² But this was a true case of misplaced confidence, for they turned out to be a total loss, as the greater part of them are entered in his post-mortem inventory as of no value.

By the 18th of March, 1776, Mesplet started from Philadelphia with the whole of his belongings loaded on five waggons. He and his party, which consisted of six persons, arrived at Lake George on the 8th of April, where they had to wait eight days until his goods arrived, and been loaded on the five bateaux, he had secured at his own expense, for crossing Lake George and pursuing his course down Lake Champlain and the Richelieu river. He claims that on account of the portages his expenses were very great, far exceeding the paltry hundred dollars voted by Congress. As this was the time of spring high water his "pilotes" as he calls them, decided to run the rapids to Chambly and thus save him the longer land haul from St. Johns. But, through the fault of these pilots, his bateaux shipped much water in the rapids and were so nearly swamped, that most of his fine paper and books, together with his wife's wearing apparel and some of his own, were irretrievably ruined.² Although he reached Chambly on the 22nd of April he did not get to Montreal until the 6th of May. On his arrival, he, with wife, staff and servant, put up at a tavern, where they remained eleven days, at an expense of \$1.07 each per day, or \$70 in all, while premises were being leased, furnished and fitted up as a printing office. It was therefore not until the 18th of May, just two months after setting out from Philadelphia, that he was ready for business.

Where did this house, fitted up as Montreal's first printing establishment, stand? An imprint gives the address as "près le marché," and a document more fully expresses it as "demeurant en cette ville rue

¹ See appendix D. No. 34.

² *Ibid.* D. No. 34.