In the instructions of Congress, issued February, 1776, appointing commissioners to Canada, it was especially stipulated that a printer should be sent with them to establish a free press in the country. Samuel Chase, one of the commissioners, was detailed to confer with Fleury Mesplet about undertaking this work; and he, without much hesitation, accepted the engagement, as he states in his answers to questions by Congress, "with as much the more pleasure as it was promised me that I would receive every satisfaction and regard that my services would deserve."[1] To this acceptance the only conditions he attached were, that one hundred dollars should be advanced to enable him to cancel his lease, and that his expenses should be paid to Montreal. After this a committee of Congress was appointed, consisting of John Hancock, the president; Mr. Thompson, the secretary, and Benjamin Franklin, to examine as to Mesplet's fitness for such a duty. The examination having proved satisfactory $200 was voted by Congress on the 26th of February "to defray the expence of transporting him, his family and his printing utensils to Canada."[2] This arrangement having been accepted, Mesplet had to hurry up his preparations. He engaged a fellow-countryman, named Alexandre Pochard, whom he styles "Homme de lettres," as editor of the proposed newspaper, two journeymen printers named John Gray and Mr. Hearse, and a servant-man. As Congress provided no money for carrying on the operations of Mesplet's press he, if he were expected to do things right when in Montreal, required a good working capital. So he, being unable to find accommodation elsewhere, again had recourse to his friend Berger, who had saved him from financial embarrassment the previous year. Berger evidently seems to have been a man of means, for, notwithstanding his past advances, he put up £1,000 Pennsylvania currency, equal to $2,666—a goodly capital for a printing office of those days—besides purchasing a supply of new type, 180 reams of paper, and other requisites to the value of $786; over and above these amounts was $560 for money advanced to pay Mesplet's debts, making a total of $4,000 of Berger's capital in the concern. The only condition called for by Berger in his partnership agreement was that it should be on a limited basis with the proviso that he receive ten per cent interest on this amount whether the business proved profitable or not.[3]

All this goes to show Berger's continued and deep personal friendship for Mesplet as well as belief in his ability to carry on successfully a printing and publishing business in Canada; and further, confidence,

[1] See Appendix D No. 35.
[2] *Ibid.* Nos. 29 and 35.
[3] See appendix F No. 53.