

THE  
CANADIAN MAGAZINE,  
AND  
LITERARY REPOSITORY.

No. XVI.

OCTOBER, 1824.

VOL. III.

(For the Canadian Magazine.)

AN ACCOUNT OF THE POYAIS\* SCHEME.

Mr. Editor,

In sending you for publication the following details respecting this singular *hoax*, I consider you, in giving it publicity, will be conferring a service on the public at large, and trust it will, both to the present and future generations, operate as a warning to prevent men entering too precipitately on similar pursuits; John Bull is proverbial for the facility with which he can be outwitted, and unparalleled for the avidity with which he will catch at any project however absurd, but reiterated instances of imposition will at last put him upon his guard.

Should it be thought in the following remarks that I have been unjustly severe against the authors of the Poyais scheme, those who blame me will be so candid as bear in mind that my relation is confined to what I have seen or had undoubted proofs of. I describe scenes in which I have been an actor. I detail distresses of which I have borne a part, and it will be admitted on a perusal of what I write that a bare account of this event, will be sufficient for my purpose, of a salutary warning, without exaggeration of description, or fictitious colouring.

Sir Gregor M'Gregor's first idea of forming a settlement on the Poyais coast arose from the following circumstance. After he had

\* Poyais forms a part of that tract of country termed the Musquito shore on the north and eastern sides of Honduras. It is called the Musquito shore partly from the Indians who inhabited it, who were termed the Musquito Tribe, and partly from a bank and cluster of islands which lie near it in Long. 82. 10. W. Lat. 14. 30. N. It was first taken possession of by the English who after occupying it nearly 80 years abandoned it in 1787 and 1788.