

with such conclusions and chronological sequences as I have been able to deduce therefrom.

Fleury Mesplet was born in the Parish of St. Nizier, diocese of Lyon, in France, about the year 1735. His father's name was Jean Baptiste Mesplet, and his mother's Marie Antoinette Capeau. There are four parishes of St. Nizier in the diocese of Lyon, one in the city and three in the country. The latter are known by sub-names, as St. Nizier d'Azergues, St. Nizier de Formas, and St. Nizier sous Charlier. As none of these sub-titles are mentioned, we may conclude that Mesplet's birthplace was in the City of Lyon, where he received a good (common school) education sufficient to fit him for his chosen trade; that afterwards he was apprenticed to that trade, and that in due course he became a capable printer.

As Mesplet did not marry until he began to be about thirty years of age, we may conclude that, it was during his bachelor days, while meeting in secret with others of his own craft, he became saturated with the republican ideas that then prevailed in France; which ideas were believed to be a cure-all for the distress caused by misgovernment. As the church was intimately connected with, or rather formed part of the government, it became involved in the same condemnation; therefore Mesplet, following the lead of his companions, became not only a republican, but an open free thinker; which belief, or rather unbelief clung to him for many years afterwards.

It was, at least, as late as 1765, that he married Marie Mirabeau, then a girl of eighteen, who, although twelve years his junior, proved a good and faithful wife during his wanderings and under his many vicissitudes of fortune. From this union there does not appear to have sprung any children, as none are referred to in his later history.

Some eight years after his marriage his dissatisfaction with the political and commercial outlook in France led him to seek success elsewhere; whether before this he had launched out as a master printer it is so far not known. In any case the incapacity of the government of Louis XVI was such, and the taxation imposed had become so oppressive and repressive as to bring France to the verge of bankruptcy and make it almost impossible for an honest workman to earn a living. Mesplet determined therefore to migrate. Avoiding the French colonies, in which he feared that similar oppression and repression prevailed, he struck out for London and landed there not later than early in 1773, where he set up his press at an address near Covent Garden. From this press was issued "La Louisiane ensanglantée," a book of about 200 pages, written by¹ Chevalier de Champigny. This is the

¹ See appendix A, No. 1.