

Although Mesplet complains that most of his paper was destroyed by water, when he ran the rapids between St. Johns and Chambly, and that he had to wait in idleness, for paper ordered from London, until the spring of 1777, we have the titles of three books, one of them a bulky volume of 600 pages, printed during the latter half of 1776. Besides these a number of others are mentioned in the first inventory, some of which were, no doubt, printed during this period.¹

It was early during the latter half of 1776 that the second edition of "*Règlement de la Confrérie*," the first book printed in Montreal, was issued for and on account of the Seminary of St. Sulpice.² A number of copies were found some years ago among the archives of the Notre Dame Street house of that institution, where they had lain ever since they had been printed. Although perfect, they were only bound in wall paper, which goes to confirm Mesplet's claim that his fine paper was destroyed on his way to Montreal. "*Jonatas et David* *Tragédie*," is the title of another work, printed for the Seminary of Montreal.³ As it was to be played by the students of the seminary, we may conclude it was written by one of the members of the order, and as such is the first Canadian dramatic work printed in Canada. It is also claimed to have been the first work printed in Montreal, but this is unlikely, for, as the play would not be given until the long winter evenings, it would not be wanted until late in the year. Therefore the "*Règlement*" still holds priority.

Now, regarding the third of the books printed by Mesplet during his first year in Canada—"Cantiques de Marseille,"⁴ a reprint of a French Hymn Book—which claims on its title page to have been printed at Quebec, and which, as is shown above, Gagnon claimed to have been printed during the visit of 1775. Was it printed at Quebec? We have no other evidence that Mesplet did printing at Quebec. Is it likely that he packed up his presses and type and moved down to Quebec, printed a book of over 600 pages there, and then moved back to Montreal in little more than five months? Does it not seem more probable that the Quebec imprint was used with the view of securing the printing of the Quebec religious institutions? Mesplet believed they would prefer a printer who, by his language, was better qualified to do their work. This view is confirmed by an advertisement on the reverse of one of the preliminary pages by which Mesplet and Berger announced that they were prepared to print religious books for

¹ See appendix B Nos. 8-15.

² Appendix A No. 8.

³ *Ibid* No. 9.

⁴ *Ibid* No. 10.