

PROSPECTUS



OF A WEEKLY PAPER, TO BE CALLED

THE QUEBEC MERCURY.

Henry

Markham

MORES ET STUDIA ET POPULOS ET PRÆLIA DICAM.

Ving. Georg. IV. 5.

TO be published, in english, for the editor, every Saturday evening, at the new printing office, Quebec, on two quarto sheets, containing eight pages of demy paper, in three columns, with a good type. The last page will be appropriated to advertisements, in case enough should offer to fill it; if not, it will be filled with other matter.

It being the wish of the editor to render this paper as interesting as possible, every assistance that can be acquired from european, american, and other publications, will be procured. To every foreign and domestic occurrence, worth communicating will be added the proceedings and debates of our house of assembly; which will be detailed in as full a manner, as a weekly paper will admit of. Statistical, agricultural, commercial, forensic and philological knowledge; literary and other selections; with, occasionally, original matter, in prose and verse,

THE subscription, to Quebec subscribers, is one guinea, and to country subscribers, five dollars, per annum; payable at the end of the year; to commence from the date of the first paper: which is proposed to be published on the first Saturday of the month of January, in the ensuing year; provided there be a sufficient number of subscribers, at that period, to hold out a prospect of success. The charge, for a single advertisement, not exceeding ten lines, will be the moderate sum of five shillings, for the first insertion; and two shillings and six pence for every subsequent insertion.

ALL communications, intended for this paper, must be sent to the editor, free of postage; at whose house the office of the *Quebec Mercury* is established.

Subscriptions will be received by the following persons.—

THOMAS CARY, the editor, at the *Mercury* Office, N^o 3, Saint Lewis Street. Quebec.
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PERSONS, meaning to subscribe, are requested to come forward as early as possible.

It will, doubtless, be matter of much surprize, when it is asserted, that the utility of knowledge, to the human mind, has, by some, been considered as more than problematical: and the exclamation of happy ignorance! re-echoed, both by tongues and pens. To enter into an elaborate disquisition, to prove the fallacy of such paradoxical reasonings, would be labouring to prove the superiority of light over darkness. The beneficial effects of information, to society, must be generally admitted. If not, it were better to retreat, by retrograde steps, from civilization to savage life; from urbanity to ferocity. But, in a free society, like ours, where the people have so large a share in framing the laws, by which they are to be governed, information is not only a benefit but of absolute necessity. If then the necessity and advantages of information be self evident, it

must be no less evident that nothing more contributes to these advantages than periodical publications, by the very general knowledge they diffuse, at a small expence. This is a truth of which the public appears to be so convinced, that the complaints of the paucity of the existing provincial papers, in point of information, are loud and incessant. This arises from three causes, their being in two languages; the number of advertisements, their great support; and the smallness of the paper.

It may be urged that several other publications, have, at different periods, been issued from the Quebec presses, but that they were always short-lived. It is true, but besides their being in two languages, the necessary attention was wanting to prolong their existence. The causes of their failure being known, it is hoped that future unremitting efforts may produce more permanent effects. To suppose a reluctance in the province to support such an undertaking, in its present advanced state of population, cultivation, trade and wealth, would be to suppose such a want of good sense and reflection as could be attributed to it only by malevolence, blindness, or prejudice.

THE want of such a paper must be sensibly felt, by the new settlers, in the remote parts of the province, who are thrown to such a distance from those sources of information which are to be

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found in towns only. To them this paper ought to be of the first utility. But such a publication, the editor conceives, to be particularly requisite, to enable us to keep pace, in information, with the neighbouring states, whose presses are so numerous and so prolific.

Though, perhaps not absolutely necessary, yet it may not be amiss, to notify here, by way of beacon, that the general principles by which this paper is intended to be influenced, are, a veneration for the british constitution, in all its branches; a perfect submission to and respect for the local laws and government under which we live; a love of social order; and a sympathetic sense of and regard for the feelings of every individual, public and private.

Thus much being premised, the editor of the QUEBEC MERCURY announces his intention that his paper shall be

open to every species of information and intelligence, foreign and domestic; and, as far as general and local circumstances, added to a consideration of the peculiar state of the times, will permit, it will be free to public animadversion, which, it is hoped, will, at all times, be conducted with temper and moderation. As the gilding of a pill is no diminution of the effect of its operation; so the *suaviter in modo* can be no deduction from the strength of a position, argument or conclusion.

It will not, it is conceived, be matter of regret to a soberly and judiciously free people, should this paper be barren of that personal scurrility with which the papers of our neighbours are daily filled: the result of a perpetual strife for power and office, arising from their offices being elective: and the frequency of elections. However ambitious we may be of emulating them in diffusive

knowledge, we need not blush to yield them the palm in unrestrained abuse.

As an english paper, containing so much matter, must necessarily have a tendency to disseminate the english language, through the province, great attention will be paid to grammatical and typographical correctness. And, as such a paper will have no great chance of support from advertisements, it must stand or fall by the gratification it affords the public, in information and amusement. The editor therefore, is aware of what he has to depend on.

To facilitate the general views of this paper, the aid of the public is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

THOMAS CARY
Editor.

Quebec, 19th November, 1804.