

REPORT.

The Committee named at the Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Town of Three Rivers, held on the 29th November last, to inquire into the extent of the losses caused by the calamitous fire which occurred here on the 15th of November last, as to the position and importance of the part of the Town destroyed by the said fire, and as to the best means of affording assistance to the sufferers thereby, has the honor to make the following report:—

Before entering into the details which the Meeting has instructed the Committee to furnish, it is well briefly to mention the manner in which the deplorable accident occurred. On the 15th November last about 4 o'clock in the morning, the fire was seen to issue from Mrs. Pierre Defosses' house, situated in Notre Dame street, and occupied by Mr. Louis ROBITAILLE, Merchant Tailor. The alarm was immediately given, but at that early hour of the morning it was unfortunately impossible to assemble with the same promptness a sufficient number of persons to render effective assistance in extinguishing the flames as if the accident had occurred in the daytime. However, the people assembled as quickly as could be expected under the circumstances; the firemen, whose zeal and activity never fail, soon arrived at the place with their Engines, but unfortunately the want of water, which was felt for about half an hour after the Engines had arrived, hindered them from setting to work, and in the mean time the flames rapidly gained ground, and the fire having first caught in the adjoining house, it was quickly carried across to the houses on the other side of the street, and in an instant, driven as it was by a North-west wind, it extended to the outbuildings in rear thereof; and as it was impossible to meet the fire at all points, for it was raging in different directions, it continued to Craig street, which it crossed in a moment, and reached the buildings on Water street, St. Antoine street, René street and the South side of Platon street.

Under these circumstances the efforts of the firemen and citizens were necessarily united to endeavour to save the other buildings in Notre Dame street, on the North side of Platon street, and on the South-west side of René street: which was accomplished about ten o'clock in the morning; the part of the Town over which the fire had extended, was then but a heap of ruins, but the danger for the other parts of the Town was then wholly past. The fire had destroyed forty-four houses, amongst which were the four principal Hotels, several shops, and seventy large stores and other buildings of less importance; several of these houses contained two, and some three shops. The fire extended with such rapidity in all directions that very little furniture or merchandise could be saved.

It must be observed that the part of the Town which has thus been laid in ruins was that in which most of the commercial business of this place was transacted, and in consequence the buildings were generally speaking, of great value; and the shops and other business stands were, for the most part, stocked with goods so as to