

R E P O R T

Of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the origin and cause of the Fire at the Grey Nunnery or "Hospice des Sœurs de la Charité," on the Third of May last, and the circumstances attending the same:—

To His Excellency the Right Honorable JAMES, Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, Baron ELGIN, K.T., Governor General of British North America, and Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Island of Prince Edward, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

May it please Your Excellency :

The undersigned Commissioners appointed by His Excellency Lieutenant General ROWAN, late Administrator of the Government of Canada, to inquire into the origin of the Fire which, on the third day of May last, consumed the building known as the "*Grey Nunnery*" or "*Hospice des Sœurs de la Charité*," in St. John Suburb of this City; and which, on the twenty-fourth of March last, was leased by Government, from His Grace the Archbishop of Quebec, for the sittings of the Provincial Parliament, have the honor to report:—

That, having taken the Oath of Office prescribed by law, and obtained the use of the Appeal Office, (Queen's Bench,) in the Court House of this City, for the sittings of the Commission, they, on the eighth day of the said month of May last, commenced their investigation, and continued from day to day thereafter, calling before them such persons as it was believed would be able to establish, by their testimony, the state and condition of the Building immediately preceding the fire, or who might have it in their power to throw some light upon its origin and cause, and the circumstances connected therewith. They also requested by public notice (Appendix B.) all persons who might have any knowledge of the manner in which the fire originated, or who might be in possession of any facts or circumstances calculated to forward the object of the investigation, to appear before them and give their evidence; which notice had, however, no effect in eliciting any additional testimony.

The calamity, into the causes of which the undersigned have been appointed to inquire, having so closely followed the destruction, by fire, of the Parliament Buildings within the walls of this City, they felt that it was their duty to give the fullest scope to their investigation, and to leave no means untried, however remote, which might assist them in discovering how the Fire had originated; whether ascribable to negligence, or to one of those accidents which will sometimes occur, despite of ordinary, and even extraordinary precautions against fire, or to the torch of the incendiary.

The inquiry of the Commission has been more particularly directed to the following points:—

1o. The state of the building on the day of the fire, and at the latest possible moment immediately preceding the discovery that it was on fire.