

In which ever of these apartments the fire originated, or to which it may have been first communicated, it was conveyed to the others, upwards or downwards, through a wooden tube leading from the wardrobe through the rooms above to the roof, employed as a cold air tube or foul air ejector, having two openings or registers in each room through which it passed.

The above rooms are shewn, by those who occupied them, to have had little or no fire in them at an early hour of the afternoon of the day immediately preceding the fire, on account of the mildness of the weather; and, when again visited and examined by the messengers in charge of them, at the usual hour for performing that duty, between five and six in the evening, were considered by them quite free from danger from fire. The fire, therefore, would appear to have originated elsewhere than in these rooms, and to have been introduced by some one of the channels of communication therewith.

While the precise spot of the origin of the fire has not been clearly ascertained by the Commissioners, they have the satisfaction of being able to pronounce their unhesitating opinion that the burning was purely the result of accident and not of design, and that the mode of heating the building by hot air from the basement story can, in no way, be considered as having been the direct or indirect cause of the fire.

The chimney, however, alluded to in the depositions of John Martin and others, (Appendix C. Nos. 19, 20, 25, 29, 37, 44.) as having been on fire in the month of November last, and which, on being found defective, was ordered to be repaired, does not appear to have been effectually repaired in the parts in which such repairs are alleged to have been most necessary. If this chimney was as defective as it is represented to have been, and fire had taken in the chimney leading from the apartments of Mr. Keating or Mr.

Dwoir, in the lower part of the building, the same fire might have communicated through the brick work of that part of the chimney between the ceiling of the third story and the false ceiling in the loft, and would probably have remained there a long time, perhaps until it penetrated through into the room occupied by Mr. Doucet, before it would have been discovered, and, thence communicating with the cold air tube in that room, have found its way down to Mr. LeMoine's room. There are, however, now no visible signs of the fire having passed through the brick work of this chimney, nor is it known that any one of the chimneys was on fire on that night.

Under these circumstances, the Commissioners, without venturing on the expression of an opinion as to the origin of the fire, respectfully lay before your Excellency the whole of their proceedings.

In confirmation of the conclusion arrived at by the Commissioners, that the fire was not the result of design, they respectfully refer to the evidence of Mr. Keating, Mr. Curran and Mr. Cardinal, in which it is shewn that every means of ingress into the building was closed on the previous evening; and to that of the sentries, who gave the first alarm; of the Rev. Mr. Drolet, Mr. Charlton and Mr. Funn, in which the difficulty of effecting an entry into the building, after it was on fire, is exhibited.

The apparatus employed for conveying heated air through the building, and to which (even while the inquiry has been pending,) the fire has been most generally attributed by the public and the press, was of such a construction as almost to preclude the possibility of fire being communicated by it. The perfect state in which the furnace and apparatus connected with it were, (Appendix C. Nos. 17, 35, 36, 38.) after the fire, and are still found, affords ample proof that the origin of the fire is not to be traced to that locality.