

It was, therefore, to the Mayor's judicious selection of this spot that this important service was performed, and I have strongly to express to your Excellency that Monsieur Caron exerted himself during the whole of the night to the utmost, and, owing to the great extent of the conflagration, was obliged to invest me with full authority to take every step that the circumstances required.

Some houses and a chapel were blown up in the intervening space from where the fire commenced to the spot where it was finally checked, without producing any good effect, except at one spot pointed out to me by Captain Warburton, of the Royal Artillery, who reported that by the blowing up of two houses at the corner of one of the streets leading towards the St. Louis-road, and taking advantage of some open spaces, a stop might be put to the flames in that direction. I immediately directed him to do so; and I am happy to do justice to the intelligence of this young officer, in reporting to your Excellency that the operation was attended with success; and I have to add Lieut. Shakspeare's, of the Royal Artillery, name as equally deserving of praise, both these officers being entrusted with the perilous duty of placing the barrels of gunpowder in the houses frequently within a few yards of the conflagration.

By the blowing up of several houses in rapid succession at the spot where the St. John's suburb extended beyond the St. Louis suburb, taking advantage of some open spaces, and by the clearing away a space betwixt the burning buildings and the upper part of the suburbs of St. Louis, the flames that had raged to this spot with unabated violence were checked at about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 29th June, and this direful visitation suddenly and in an instant subdued into the stillness of exhausted desolation.

A great part of the St. Louis suburbs, the whole of the St. John's suburbs, with very few exceptions, five-sixths of the suburbs of St. Roch, the streets extending along the foot of the Rock to the point where the fire was stopped on the former occasion, present one scene of continuous ruins, having deprived at least 22,000 persons of their houses and homes, entailing on the poorer part of the population of this devoted city inexpressible misery, and sent thousands to wander for shelter and bread, and to depend for relief and consolation on the benevolence and the generosity of a feeling public. It may be permitted to me, under these appalling circumstances, to go a little out of my way, and to beg of your Excellency to use all your influence that some legislative measure should be adopted in the reconstruction of this unfortunate town, that the houses should be built as much as possible with stone or brick, and roofed with some material to resist the flames, and that a line should be drawn round the works, and no houses allowed to be built within that line but of stone or brick, and securely roofed. Besides, almost the whole of these suburbs being constructed of wood, all the intervening spaces betwixt the streets, the gardens, yards, &c., were filled with stacks of deals, connected by wooden palings and every sort of combustible matter heaped together. It therefore ceases to be a matter of surprise that these two dreadful calamities have occurred, and rather to be wondered at that such a dreadful visitation has not taken place before.

The spot where the houses were latterly blown up was at the point where the St. John's suburbs extend beyond the St. Louis, and owing to these houses being rapidly blown up, and by the utmost exertions of the troops in clearing a space, a great part of the St. Louis suburbs, the whole of Clapton-terrace, consisting of villas, and the gentlemen's seats on each side of the St. Louis-road, were saved.

I wish it had fallen to my lot to report to your Excellency the services of the officers and men employed during the progress of both the late lamentable events on occasions more honourable and more congenial to their profession; but it would indeed be unjust if I did not mention the names of Captain Boxer, of the Royal Navy, whose exertions during the whole night, and particularly at the end of the fire, in directing the spaces to be cleared, were of the greatest service; of Lieutenant-colonel Walker, commanding the Royal Artillery; of Major Watson, commanding the 14th Regiment; of Lieutenant-colonel Thorp, commanding the 89th Regiment; and I have also to state that I received every assistance from the suggestions and activity of Lieutenant-colonel Ward and the officers of the Royal Engineers; of Lieutenant-colonel Pritchard, Assistant Adjutant-general; of Captain Ingall, Deputy Adjutant Quartermaster-general; of Town Major Knight; and of my Aide-de-camp, Captain Hope.

The conduct of the non-commissioned officers and men, as I expressed on the occasion of the former conflagration, exceeds any thing I can say in their praise. Though this dreadful misfortune occurred during the night, when the men were frequently scattered in various directions, they were quickly assembled at the sound of the bugle, and never relaxed for an instant in their exertions; and I am happy to add that but one person was killed, one man's legs broken, and three or four contused by the several explosions that took place, and that no pains were spared to get the people out of the way. There have been no casualties amongst the troops.

I directed that the whole of the tents should be pitched near the old French works, and the Splinter Proof Barracks given up for the accommodation and relief of the sufferers, and to be placed at the disposal of the Mayor.

I have, &c.

(signed) J. A. Hope, M. G.

His Excellency Lieutenant-general the Earl of Cathcart,
&c. &c. &c.