

a most careful supervision of the stoves was practised, no fires being allowed to be made, after five o'clock, p.m., whilst at six they were to be extinguished altogether. There is no evidence that these injunctions were violated. The surveillance of the interior of the building was entrusted to Jean Patry, one of the Contractors, in conjunction with the Reverend Ladies of the *Hospice de la Charité*, two or more of whom visited the whole of the building every day, after the departure of the workmen, at noon and at six in the evening; and then again, between eight and nine o'clock at night, the inspection was repeated, one of the Nuns, in their latter visit, carrying an ordinary glass lantern, lighted by a common tallow candle. On these occasions the stoves were examined, the dampers closed, and chips and shavings, when found near them, were removed, and every care seems to have been taken, to avoid the possibility of danger from the stoves in question.

The interior of the building being thus superintended, the outside was guarded by one Pierre Rousseau, who had been specially appointed by order of the Chief Commissioner of Public Works to watch during the night. This night-watch commenced usually at eight o'clock, and was continued until about four in the morning, at which hour the Nuns are in the habit of rising.

The Chief Commissioner of Public Works had, a few days before the fire, directed that water casks should be placed within the building, and that a fire engine should be also kept in the chapel, to be in readiness to meet any accident that might occur. The former direction had, on the third of May, been so far complied with, that a cask of water was lodged in the inside of the Chapel, near the door on Richelieu Street, and another had been placed near the principal entrance on St. Olivier Street. The order to lodge a fire engine in the Chapel had not yet been complied with, in consequence, as it appears, of the fire engine designed for that purpose having been sent to Mr. Louis Lemoine, Mechanician, for repairs, previously to its being placed in the building in question, and these repairs, although pressed by the Government Architect, not having yet been completed; a delay the more to be deplored from the conviction on the minds of the Commissioners, resulting from the evidence, that had such an engine with proper hose been on the spot when the fire was first discovered, it would have been easily mastered and extinguished.

30. It has been established, with a precision seldom attainable in such cases, that the fire originated in the North-easterly part or angle of the apartment designated on the architect's plan D, hereunto annexed, as the "Speaker's room;" which was the second room in the third story on St. Olivier Street, to the Westward of the division-wall between the old and the new building, and in the rear of, and upon a level with, the chapel. The testimony of Rousseau, who, it seems, first discovered the light in the Eastern windows of the chapel, about fifteen or twenty minutes after nine o'clock, is positive upon that point, and his statement, in that particular, is fully confirmed by others. From a pile of boards, on Richelieu Street, he saw, through the large window on the Eastern side of the chapel door, that the fire had commenced in a heap of shavings in the room referred to, and he could even distinguish the broken laths, which the flames had not yet reached, in the burning heap. It was then that he hastened to the door of the Convent to alarm the Nuns, and met the three men, whom he described as coming up the *Côte à Cotton*, crying out "Fire!" The knocking at the Convent door not being immediately replied to, Rousseau hurried along St. Olivier Street, to the central door of the building on fire, intending to force it open; but he found the small door ajar or partly open, (*entre ouverte*,) and, merely pushing it, rushed up stairs to the third story, followed by the three men referred to; and, from the landing of the centre stairs, saw, through the open doors of the Speaker's apartment, the fire blazing along its floor and apparently more violent towards the North-east angle of the room in which were accumulated the shavings, which he