

Adjutant and Inspector General's report.

SIR: ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, *October 26, 1814.*

In conformity to your order, and with a view to meet a resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 24th instant, calling for information relative to the destruction of official books and papers by the enemy, on the 24th of August last, I have the honor to inform you that the papers which belonged to this office, and which were destroyed by the conflagration of the enemy, were files of muster-rolls, inspection, garrison, monthly and recruiting returns, up to the year 1813, inclusive. In addition to this, several copies of Stoddard's Artillery, and a few copies of a System of Drum Beating for the use of the army, which had not been distributed, were also lost. The whole loss, however, is of no material consequence.

I have the honor, to be, very respectfully, sir, your obedient humble servant,
JOHN R. BELL, *Assistant Inspector General.*

The honorable JAMES MONROE, *Secretary of War.*

SIR: ORDNANCE OFFICE, WASHINGTON, *October 27, 1814.*

In obedience to a request from your Department, I have the honor to state that, in the late invasion and conflagration of the enemy in this city, no valuable books or papers attached or belonging to this office sustained any loss or injury. A few printed books, of considerable value, and some loose papers of no intrinsic importance, with a small quantity of furniture, stationary, &c., formed the only articles which were destroyed.

Very respectfully, I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,
JOHN MORTON, *Deputy Commissary.*

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *November 14, 1814.*

The acting Secretary of State, in compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives, of the 24th ult., requesting such information as may be in the power of the several Departments to afford, in relation to the destruction of the official books and papers in their Departments, respectively, in consequence of the incursion of the enemy in the month of August, 1814, has the honor to report:

That, when it became apparent from the movements of the enemy, after his debarkation at Benedict, that his destination was the seat of Government, every exertion was made, and every means employed, for the removal of the books and papers of this office, to a place of safety; and, notwithstanding the extreme difficulty in obtaining the means of conveyance, it is believed that every paper and manuscript book of the office, of any importance, including those of the old Government, and all in relation to accounts, were placed in a state of security. That it was not found practicable, however, to preserve, in like manner, the volumes of laws reserved by Congress for future disposition; many of the books belonging to the library of the Department, as well as some letters on file of minor importance from individuals on business mostly disposed of, which were unavoidably left, and shared the fate, it is presumed, of the building in which they were deposited.

All which is respectfully submitted,

JAMES MONROE.

13th CONGRESS.]

No. 375.

[3d SESSION.]

REBUILDING THE CAPITOL, PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS
IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, NOVEMBER 21, 1814.

Mr. LEWIS, from the committee to whom was referred a resolution "to inquire into the expediency of rebuilding or repairing the President's house, Capitol, and public offices, and of the expense necessary for that purpose, and whether the public interest or convenience would be promoted by any change or alteration of the sites of said buildings," made the following report:

That, amongst the first steps deemed necessary in discharge of the duties assigned them, they caused the superintendent of the city to lay before them the reports of several architects and mechanics of reputed skill and character, who had, at his request, examined the remains of the public buildings, all of whom reported, as their opinion, that the walls generally had not been materially damaged, and were not rendered unsafe or insufficient to rebuild on, conformably either to the former plans, or to some variations suggested, or such as may be adopted as improvements in the rebuilding.

These reports were accompanied by estimates of various amounts, forming an average of \$458,000. The whole first cost of these buildings appears to be \$1,215,110 10.

With the view of better understanding the grounds, and probable accuracy of the reports and estimates, the committee attended personally at the Capitol, and examined the state of that building, where, after a conference, and making such inquiries of an architect on the spot as were considered proper, they were induced to believe that the walls of both wings of the Capitol may be safely built on, and that the estimated expense of about \$250,000 for repairing the same was as nearly accurate, and as much to be relied on as could be reasonably expected, or as circumstances either admitted or required.

With the foregoing information, the committee proceeded to a due and general consideration of the subject-matter referred to them, and readily came to the decision that it was expedient, either to repair the late buildings,

or to build others in their stead on different sites; but as it appeared that the latter could not be effected without incurring a great additional expense, so much greater (as the committee conceived) than would be counterbalanced by any "public interest or convenience," to be derived from "a change of sites," they were of opinion that it would be inexpedient to make such change. Connected with this part of the duty prescribed to the committee, it may not be improper that they should state to the House the representations of sundry individuals who allege, and offer to prove, that the designation of the present site by President Washington, who possessed full power, having been always considered by him as part of the permanent plan of the city, they purchased at very advanced prices, and improved lots, on the faith of those designations, near those sites; the supposed permanency whereof has ever since sustained the value of all adjacent and contiguous property; but that, if those sites were now to be altered or abandoned, without some equivalent public establishment being made thereon, they apprehend that this property would become comparatively valueless, during the lifetimes of the present holders at least. The committee, however, desire it to be understood that other views and considerations, having induced their decision on this member of the resolution under which their inquiries were directed, did not enter into the discussion of, or give any opinion on the force and validity of, those considerations.

From the suggestions of the architects consulted, and also from the observations of the committee, they are of opinion that parts of the walls, arches, and columns of the late buildings are in a state requiring a small expense for workmanship and materials, to preserve them from injury by the weather, and from falling down, thereby endangering the vaulting which supports some of the floors, and which, at present, is very little, if at all, weakened by the burning; but as there is no money applicable to the payment of such expense, inconsiderable as it may be, the committee beg leave to suggest the propriety of an appropriation for that object.

The committee think it not irrelative to the object of their inquiries, though it is not specifically enjoined, to state also that the several banks within the District of Columbia, desirous of facilitating an object so interesting to the district, have made a formal and binding offer in writing, to advance on loan to the Government, upon reasonable terms, the sum of \$500,000, to be applied exclusively to the purpose of rebuilding or repairing the President's house, Capitol, or public offices.

Conformably to the foregoing statement the committee ask leave to report a bill.

13th CONGRESS.]

No. 376.

[3d SESSION.]

PURCHASE OF THE LIBRARY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, NOVEMBER 28, 1814.

Mr. GOLDSBOROUGH, from the Joint Library Committee of Congress, reported:

That, in pursuance of the resolution of Congress, passed on the 21st of October last, your committee have received from Mr. Samuel Harrison Smith, agent for Mr. Jefferson, precise terms of sale of his library, in which the number of volumes is stated to be six thousand four hundred and eighty-seven, and the estimated price twenty-three thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars. To these terms your committee have conditionally acceded, and they have contracted with the agent of Mr. Jefferson for the purchase of his library, according to the catalogue and number of volumes stated, at the price before mentioned, subject to the ratification of Congress.

They, therefore, present the following bill to authorize the purchase of the library of Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed, to cause to be paid to the Joint Library Committee of Congress, or their order, the sum of twenty-three thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars in Treasury notes of the issue ordered by the law of the 4th of March, 1814, to be by them applied to the purchase of the library of Thomas Jefferson, late President of the United States, for the use of Congress.

13th CONGRESS.]

No. 377.

[3d SESSION.]

BOOKS AND PAPERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND LIBRARIES OF CONGRESS LOST BY THE CONFLAGRATION IN 1814, AND THE STATE OF THE CONTINGENT FUND.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 12, 1814.

Mr. PEARSON, from the committee to whom were referred the communication of Patrick Magruder, clerk of the House of Representatives, relative to the destruction of the library of Congress, and records and papers appertaining to the office of the House of Representatives, made the following report:

That they have satisfactory evidence that the library of Congress, consisting of volumes agreeably to the catalogue herewith submitted was destroyed by the enemy on the 24th of August last; and, also, the manuscript records, papers, and secret journal of Congress, mentioned in the communication submitted to this committee. In