

New light stations are generally established on the representations of seafaring men. Members of Parliament representing maritime districts, and possessing local knowledge, have also much influence in the establishment of such stations. When representations have been made to the Minister of Marine, urging the necessity of a new light in some particular locality, an investigation is made by the Department, and the opinion of its practical officers obtained as to the necessity for the proposed light, with reference to the dangers of navigation and the amount of traffic to be served. The Minister then decides as to the merits of the case, and if satisfied that it is necessary and in the public interests, he places it in the list of new lights proposed to be built during the ensuing year, which he submits to Parliament, with his recommendation that the necessary funds be provided; and as soon as the vote has passed, arrangements are at once made for securing a site and proceeding with the work.

Nearly all the leading lights in the lower St. Lawrence, the Gulf and the Straits of Belleisle, which have been established since 1867, had no particular political influence to urge their construction, but were established on the recommendation of ocean steamship proprietors and their most experienced captains, and the Boards of Trade of Montreal and Quebec, who took much interest in this matter.

Prominent among the representatives of the ocean steamship interests, was the late Sir Hugh Allan, one of the principal owners of the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company, who never ceased during his lifetime, to take a deep interest in the question of lighting the lower St. Lawrence and the Straits, and who had much influence as a prominent ship owner with every Minister of Marine, in making recommendations as to the improvement of the route to Europe. The lighthouse and fog-whistle station at Cape Bauld, at the entrance of the Straits of Belleisle, was the last one which he urged on the notice of the Minister, as being necessary to render the lighting of the route efficient, and this station has just been completed and is now in full operation.

The ocean steamship interests are much indebted to the Honorable Peter Mitchell, who was appointed Minister of Marine and Fisheries in 1867, when Confederation took place, and held the office till 1873, for many of the improvements in the lighthouse system of Canada, and for the establishment of a number of new lights in the River and Gulf of Saint Lawrence, as well as in other parts of the Dominion.

The steam fog-whistles in use in Canada may be considered a part of our lighthouse system, and have been found to give good results. They are valued, on some parts of our coast, where fog prevails in the summer and snow storms in the winter, quite as much as the lighthouses. The machine in use is simply a multitubular boiler, with a small engine attached, for opening the valve and regulating the blasts of steam, at stated intervals, as desired. The blast can be distinctly heard, under ordinary circumstances, from four to ten miles distant, according to the state of the atmosphere, but on some particular occasions it has been heard as far as thirty miles distant.