

Trinity House, Montreal, for the purpose of laying buoys and attending to the lights in that district. She has been well taken care of and kept in good repair, although she will require very extensive repairs at the end of next season in order to make her available for the service. She is maintained at a very small expense, amounting during last fiscal year to the sum of \$3,951 04, including wages of captain, crew, provisions, fuel, repairs and insurance.

The small steam yacht in the service of the Harbor and River Police at Quebec is the only other steamer under the management of this Department. She is maintained at a small expense and saves much time and labor in conveying the Water Police Force from place to place, and enabling a small number of constables to keep order on the river in the neighborhood of Quebec. She usually carries an engineer, a steersman, and six constables, and cruises about among the shipping during the day, while the boats perform the night work. The cost of her maintenance during last fiscal year was \$1,192 43.

The total cost of maintaining and repairing these five steamers under the management of this Department during last fiscal year was \$78,080 38.

OBSERVATORIES AND METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There are two observatories maintained by the Dominion under the management of this Department, the principal one at Quebec, of which Commander Ashe, R.N., is director, and the other one at St. John, of which Mr. George Hutchinson is director. Both these observatories give the time to the shipping by dropping a time ball at one o'clock p.m., at their respective ports. The time ball observatory at Quebec is situated on the citadel, where it is easily seen, and the one at St. John, N. B., is situated on Fort Howe, but it is proposed to move it to the top of the Custom House Building, where it will be seen better than in its present position.

Commander Ashe, the director of the Quebec Observatory, is a scientific gentleman, and in addition to his duties in connection with the Time Ball, he devotes much of his time, as will be seen by his report in Appendix No. 15, to celestial observations and photography. It is also proposed that Quebec be made a chief station for the purpose of making meteorological observations in connection with the scheme now being matured by Professor Kington, of Toronto; and in that case, the services of Commander Ashe will be available for this purpose as he has already a very fine collection of instruments at his observatory.

The want of a properly organized system of meteorological observations in Canada has long been felt, both by men of science and persons interested in marine pursuits, as from the meteorological data which might be obtained at different stations in the Dominion, extending over a range of several thousands of miles, properly collected, and reduced to tables and charts, much valuable information could be presented to the public relating to the laws of storms, which it is hoped might after some experience be made available for the purpose of indicating approach, and giving timely warning of the impending danger to mariners and others interested, at the principal seaports of the Dominion. In England the system of giving public notice of approaching storms was