

This arrangement of placing in this Department, the construction of lighthouses and such other public works, the administration and maintenance of which are entrusted to it by law, has many advantages, and in my opinion will tend to secure both economy and efficiency in this branch of the public service.

This Department has already agents, superintendents, and other officers in the various sections of Dominion, engaged in the ordinary administration of the Lighthouse and other business of the Department, and the services of such officers can therefore be advantageously utilized in the superintendence of any new works going on in their immediate neighbourhood, and thus frequently obviate the necessity of sending professional engineers to superintend such works at considerable expense to the Government.

The management of the sea-going steamers belonging to the Dominion, being entrusted by law to this Department, also affords great facilities for visiting and supplying with materials such new lighthouses as may be in course of erection at distant places, without incurring much additional expense, as this service can generally be combined with that of visiting and supplying the lighthouses already in operation.

The Report which I am now about to submit to Your Excellency, will refer principally to the operations of the Department, and the expenditure connected therewith, during the financial year, which ended 30th June last, and will give an account of expenditures made by it in that period, both for the maintenance and repairs of the various services under its control, as well as for the construction of such new works as were completed or partially built at the close of the last fiscal year.

Allusion will also be made in this Report to the operations of the calendar year ending this day, but the statements required to be made up and submitted to Your Excellency, to be laid before Parliament, of all the new works under my control, and the amount received and expended on account thereof, since the 1st July last, will come in order at the close of the fiscal year, ending 30th June next.

The calendar year of 1870, has been an extremely boisterous and stormy one, and although the seaboard has not been visited by any tidal wave, such as the one which caused so great damage to the public property under the management of this Department in October, 1869, still very severe storms have been experienced on our coasts at the commencement and towards the close of the year, which have been attended with considerable loss of life and property. During the early part of the year, one of the most serious marine disasters took place in connection with the Dominion, which has happened for many years, attended as it was with great loss of life. On the 25th January last, the Inman Mail Iron Screw Steamer, *City of Boston*, left New York for Halifax with mails, passengers, and freight, and on the 27th of the same month, she arrived at Halifax, where she took on board some more passengers belonging, for the most part, to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and left on the 28th January, 1870, for Liverpool, England, since which time, no intelligence of any kind has been heard of her.

The weather during the fall of 1870 was much more boisterous and stormy than usual, and I much regret to state that the loss of life and property on the seaboard in