

steam fog whistle now under contract for this island will probably be in operation early in the ensuing summer, and it is hoped that it will be the means of preventing any similar accidents in future at that dangerous place.

Two wrecks occurred during last season, at Scatterie Island, where the Department also maintains a Humane Establishment, at the main lighthouse, at the east end of the island.

On the 7th May, 1871, the barque *Star of the West*, of Newcastle, England, went ashore on the island during a thick fog, and the captain and crew left the vessel in their boats. The crew were subsequently picked up by a schooner and taken to Cow Bay, with the exception of the captain, who, it appears, had fallen overboard from one of the boats and was drowned. His body was recovered and also taken to Cow Bay. When the matter was reported to the Department, the circumstances connected with the death of the captain appeared to me so unsatisfactory that I immediately directed an official investigation of the case, but before the investigation was held, the men who left the wreck in the life boat with the captain, and who were supposed to be with him when he met with his death, had secreted themselves in a steamer which was about sailing for Liverpool, England, and left the country before their evidence could be obtained. The coroner's jury, however, at Cow Bay, before whom the men were examined, returned a verdict of "accidentally drowned."

Another vessel, the brig *Una*, of Swansea, was wrecked on the south side of Scatterie Island, on the 20th June last, but no lives were lost, as the crew were enabled to land in their boats, and were taken care of at the lighthouse.

A passenger on board the steamer *Empress*, while at the wharf at Annapolis, went overboard in the dark and was drowned. As there were rumours afloat that proper precautions had not been taken by the officers and crew of the steamer for the security and safety of the passengers, I directed an official investigation to be made of the matter, but nothing was elicited at such investigation to prove positively that the officers of the boat were to blame for neglect of duty, although a searching examination of a number of witnesses were made.

No wrecks have occurred at Sable Island during last year, and when there is a powerful light established at each end of the island, with a steam fog alarm attached, it is probable that few if any wrecks will again occur on that dangerous island.

The cost of maintaining the Humane Establishment on Sable Island during last fiscal year was \$8,003 79, but as that expenditure is incurred for the benefit of other shipping as well as Canadian vessels, the British Government contributes an annual subsidy of £400 sterling per annum, equal to \$1,946 66. When the two new lights and steam fog whistles are in full operation on Sable Island, the expenditure for the island will probably be increased some five or six thousand dollars, on account of the heavy expenses connected with the maintenance of steam fog alarms and powerful lights, such as will be established there. If the former operations of the island are entrusted to a practical agriculturist, it is probable that a large portion of the provisions necessary for the support of the staff there will be raised on the island, and somewhat reduce the cost of supporting the staff.