Thomas Point Shoal
Sharps Island } Protection against ice.

March 20th 7

Sir:-

The Committee on Engineering, to which was referred the letter of the Engineer of the 5th Light House District dated February 8th, relative to the condition of the Thomas Point Shoal and Sharps Island Light Houses have had the same under consideration, and respectfully reports that the Committee concurs with the Engineer of the District, that for absolute security, as well as for relief from shocks and vibrations which injure the illuminating apparatus and demoralize the keepers, the structure should be protected from contact with ice by heavy rip-rap. The only alternative to this being an independent ice-breaker like that at Brandywine Shoal - and this would probably prove much the most costly.

The necessary "heavy rip-rap" probably need be applied only around and in advance of the present spur

piles - sufficiently extended however laterally to prevent the ice in masses from acting forcibly against any part of the structure.

With this rip-rap applied, the additions to the iron-work of the structure recommended by Mr Murdock, do not seem to be necessary - but the structure should be restored to its original condition if possible.

The coal and wood room recommended by Mr Murdock does not seem to be indispensable, if all wood cutting be (as it should be) strictly forbidden - wood being furnished in proper dimensions, or coal wholly substituted, which is probably better.

What is said above in reference to Thomas' Point, will apply also to Sharp's Island - as to which the Engineer has made no other recommendation than to express his sense of the necessity of rip rap protection, and to urge the passage of an appropriation of $10.000, for each of the works.

"Without this aid" the Engineer goes on to say, "the

"establishment is in danger of losing two of the most
"valuable of the Chesapeake Bay Stations – stations ab-
"solutely necessary to the safety of the commerce of Baltimore"

These appropriations have not been made – there may be opportunity at the expected extra session to obtain them. In the meantime the Committee recommends that the present Engineer be directed to give his immediate attention to these works, and to report more specifically and without delay what is required to be done in the way of restoration at Sharps Island, and to furnish accurate estimates of the amount of rip-rap really required at each of these works. At present, the Board has no such data before it.

The Engineer should also be directed, in case no specific appropriations are available, to state the least amount of work absolutely necessary to secure the works through the winter.

Very respectfully

The Chairman
of the Lighthouse Board