Treasury Department,
Fifth Auditor's Office, August 28, 1839.

Sir

The Superintendent of Light houses on the upper part of Lake Michigan, Truman H. Lyon Esq^r has just finished his annual examination of the several Light houses under his care, and, among other information reports the following – viz:

"From my own observation and from all I could learn of the character and habits of M^r J. O. Balch, the Keeper of Grand River Light-house, I was irresistably drove to the conclusion that he had nearly or quite given himself up to habits of intemperance and dissipation, which renders him unfit and unsuitable in every sense of the word for the duties of his station, where above all other places a man of steady habits is most indispensable. I would therefore strongly recommend that M^r Balch be immediately removed from the office of Keeper of the Light house at Grand River, and that M^r Nehemiah Merritt be appointed in his stead. M^r Merritt is now in charge of the Light house, (M^r Balch having leave of absence) and from all I can learn, and from the short acquaintance I have with him, I should think him well qualified to discharge the duties of that office." A letter recommending this change from a number of persons at Grand Haven, is herewith enclosed. My attention was next directed to the condition of the Lighthouse at Chicago.

11. 16

Ex^d

"This Light house appears to be very badly attended by the present Keeper, as every thing connected with it appears in a slovenly manner. Having received last season a full supply of oil, tube glasses, wicks, buff skins and whiting, he is now destitute of most of those articles, and would have been out of oil, had he not taken one cask (landed here) marked for the Racine Light house. The quantity of oil used here, I observe by the returns, is more than double that used at any other Light house in my District. I feel that an important part of my duty would be omitted did I not speak plainly on this subject, under the strongest conviction that the public good requires it, and, inasmuch, as frequent complaints were made

to me while in Chicago by many respectable gentlemen residing there, as well as from many masters of Vessels, that this Light was uniformly badly kept, and that the Keeper trusting all the duties of his appointment to his boys, and wholly neglecting to perform any part of them himself. He appears very unpleasant and uncourteous to strangers, and disliked by most or all his acquaintance. I would therefore, most strongly recommend that he be removed from the Office of Keeper of the Light house at Chicago".

"Mr. John C. Gibson is a man that was highly recommended to me as his successor by Mr. Kercheval, Deputy Collector, and others at Chicago".

Having received directly from Chicago, letters from several gentleman, recommending Mr. Gibson for this Office, I have the honor to enclose them herewith, and to be with great respect &c.

S. Pleasonton

Secretary of the Treasury.

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Treasury Department,
Fifth Auditor's Office, August 29, 1839.

Sir

Three accounts of James W. Breedlove, Superintendent of Light Houses at New Orleans, dated 31st March last, for expenses of building and fitting up the undermentioned Light houses, under appropriations of 3d March 1837, are herewith transmitted for adjustment, viz: One Light house at Pass Manchac, one at Port Pontchartrain, and one at the entrance of the new Canal, on Lake Pontchartrain. I am, &c.

S. Pleasonton

1st Auditor of the Treasury

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Treasury Department,
Fifth Auditor's Office, August 29, 1839.

Sir

Your Statement, under date 11th instant, accompanied by the proposals therein mentioned, is received. You will make the Contract with Mr. Jeremy Hixon, as intimated, to build and fit up the Light house at New Buffalo, the building to be completed by the