

to Professor Benjamin Peirce, who was then Superintendent of the Coast Survey, shows, however, his unfailing interest in the bearing of scientific researches on questions of public utility.

TO PROFESSOR PEIRCE, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COAST  
SURVEY.

NAHANT, *September 11, 1867.*

DEAR SIR, — Far from considering your request a tax upon my time, it gives me the greatest pleasure to have an opportunity of laying before you some statements and reflections, which I trust may satisfy you that geology and natural history can be made subservient to the great interests of a civilized community, to a far greater extent than is generally admitted.

The question of the harbor of Boston, for instance, has a geological and zoölogical side, thus far only indirectly considered. In order to ascertain whence the materials are derived which accumulate in the harbor, the shores ought to be studied geologically with a kind of accuracy and minuteness, never required by geological surveys made for economical purposes. The banks of the harbor, wherever it is not rock-bound, consist of drift, which it