

**The "Scotsman" Disaster.** It is in moments of shipwreck and sudden death that the greatest instances of heroism and self-sacrifice have occurred; but occasionally some such sorrowful, pitiful exhibition of miserable greed and cowardice as that shown by a few ruffians among the crew of the "Scotsman" serves to remind us that even the much vaunted Briton sometimes has the cowardly animal instinct to preserve his life at all hazards. When the revolting and sorry story of the loss of the steamship "La Bourgogne" was told, the world shuddered. Once again a thrill of indignation prompts humanity to cry out for vengeance upon those who have besmirched the good reputation of our sailors. However, British seamen have so frequently shown the better and brighter side of man in the protection and sacred guardianship of women and children in moments of great extremity that we prefer to believe that the wreckers who neglected the suffering passengers of the "Scotsman" for the purpose of plunder were not British seamen, but merely the scum of Liverpool, ruffians whose lives are

*tales of wreck and wrong,  
Of shame and lust and fraud.*

Even allowing something for the proneness of terrified humanity to exaggerate the "moving accidents by flood and field," the dangers they have passed, the story of the disaster to the steamship "Scotsman," is wondrous pitiful, and makes the reader regret that the officers of the ship and her male passengers were unable to protect the women committed to their charge.

#### **Life Assurance Amongst the Chinese.**

The followers of the famous Chinese philosopher Confucius are being made acquainted with the benefits of life insurance. About a year ago THE CHRONICLE referred to the formation of a company, the China Mutual Life, in Shanghai, for the purpose of assuring native Chinese. The promoter of the company, Mr. Wattie, went to China in the service of the Sun Life of Canada, but resigned his position to start the Company above named. Of the success of the enterprise there would seem to be little doubt, although the difficulty in proving death claims is becoming a somewhat serious obstacle to satisfactory business with the countrymen of Ah Sin. The "Financial News" (London, Eng.) in drawing attention to Mr. Wattie's Company says:—

"The great drawback to doing business among the general run of Chinese is the difficulty in proving death claims. It is almost impossible to identify Chinese. They look too much alike. Besides, when a Chinaman becomes seriously ill, and believes that his finish in this life is very near, he persists in going home, perhaps to some perfectly inaccessible village in the interior, to die. Whether he really dies, or hires someone to come back and say so for him—in China you can hire a man to do any mortal matter, even to the laying down of his life for you, with cheapness—it is impossible to ascertain. A European

cannot safely get to the place. Even if he could, the chances are largely in favour of his being unable to find the correct corpse. The Chinese, as we have said, look too much alike. If a Chinaman is sent to investigate, he straightway succumbs to the ready hand of the briber, and returns ready to perjure himself to the gullet if necessary. In China they have a much more human code of ethics than the Ten Commandments call for. The China Mutual Life, with a Chinese directorate whose interest it is, of course, to see that no fraudulent claims are made, should have much less difficulty or loss in that respect than the foreign companies."

The complaint lodged against the ordinary Chinaman that "one looks so much like t'other that you can't tell t'other from which" will be appreciated by Montrealers.

The chattering, child-like and bland inhabitants of Lagachetiere street who, when not being persecuted by idle and vicious vagabonds, vary the monotony of washing the soiled clothes of foreign devils by playing the seductive fan-tan, lookee too muchee likee for the Montreal police, who, after a raid on a Chinese gamblers' resort, are said to refuse bail for the captured because of the difficulty of identifying the prisoners should they once be released.

#### **The Cash Reserves of Banks.**

The revelations of rottenness in the Ville Marie Bank will possibly lead those having business with the chartered banks of Canada to become better acquainted with the Act under which they are incorporated.

It has been suggested to us by a bank manager that depositors now mourning the loss of their savings might have been more cautious in the selection of an institution in which to lodge same if an accurate statement of daily cash reserves could be exhibited in every banking room for the information of any one having money to deposit. The Journal of the Canadian Bankers' Association for October publishes, "in response to suggestions made by Associates," the Currency Laws of Canada. Our correspondent suggests that the public as well as the Associates of the Canadian Bankers' Association require more knowledge of the Bank Act and also other matters. He says that in response to the request of a depositor for information as to the financial condition of the bank receiving his money, the following items from the statement rendered to government should be always available for examination by the customers of a bank:—Deposits payable on demand; Deposits payable after notice; Notes in Circulation; Specie; Dominion Notes. The Returns furnished by the banks to the Department of Finance for the month of August show the totals under these important headings to have been: Specie, \$9,442,296; Dominion Notes, \$18,486,264; Deposits by the public, payable on demand, \$95,264,689; Deposits by the public, payable after notice or on a fixed day, \$168,627,016; Notes in Circulation, \$41,446,399.

Such particulars as these, if recorded in every Can-