

is becoming more general, as housekeepers recognize how clean and labour-saving it is when compared with coal; and, if liquid fuel can be successfully used by steamers on long voyages, the stoke-hole of an Atlantic liner will be a comparatively clean, pleasant place of abode for a largely reduced number of stokers.

Altogether, the trial trip of the "Haliotis" is likely to attract the attention of the shipping world.

---

**A Verdict** "To fling whate'er we feel, not fearing, upon the into words," may be a poetical way of **Visual Ray**, advocating freedom of speech; but no person is privileged to say of another that he "sees double," as is shown by the fact that at the recent Belleville assizes a Montreal commercial traveller mulcted a merchant of Madoc in the sum of \$150 for conveying by this charge of a peculiarity in the traveller's organs of sight that he was drunk. Now, we do not know whether this action for slander signifies that "seeing double" is always an indication of intoxication; but it is, however, certain, that when the Madoc merchant, in correcting an order given to the commercial traveller, wrote to the plaintiff's firm that he, the traveller, suffered from duality of vision, the court regarded it as implying that his utterance was strangely thick, and his manner decidedly queer.

The defendant's claim that he did not mean anything more than that the traveller had made a mistake in taking an order was swept aside as a frivolous defence, and the merchant will have to pay up, and look cheerful. The sentence is not a heavy one, and the legal decision may be worth the money if it leads to greater prudence in speech. It is true that we are not permitted to know whether a charge of seeing things future or distant; having the capacity of a seer

*"And Scottish gift of second-sight"*

would be equally slanderous; but we do know that it cost this outspoken merchant \$150 for saying that half of what the commercial traveller saw existed in imagination only.

It seems somewhat unfortunate that the Madoc merchant used the words "seeing double," as expressing his opinion of the condition of this Montreal traveller when soliciting business. A little knowledge of Shakespeare would have enabled the angry merchant to refer to the apparently muddled order as "*the baseless fabric of a vision*." Or he might have followed the example in prudence of speech of the canny Scot, wi' a wee drap in his ee, who, being asked for an opinion upon the gait of Sandy, a drunken companion, preferred to doubt his own eyes, and believe he was seeing double, rather than to cast any reflection upon the circuitous route by which Sandy travelled homeward. The canny Scot hiccoughed his *decession* thus: "Sandy (hic) ye can gae hame (hic); ye walkit pairfectly straight; but who was yon chappie wi' ye."

**Whitaker  
Wanted.**

An English insurance paper published in the city of London thus refers to the recent conflagration by which the city of New Westminster, B. C., was destroyed:—

"A destructive fire occurred at New Westminster, Victoria, Australia, the damage being estimated at £500,000, of which about one-half is covered by insurance. The fire started among some straw in a vacant warehouse, and has reduced the business portion of the town to ruins, thousands of persons being rendered homeless."

No Canadian of an even, composed frame of mind and of a steady temper will permit himself to be disturbed by the deplorable ignorance of our great Dominion, too frequently displayed by Englishmen; but the readers of this "actuarial and statistical journal" may well be pardoned if they demand from its editor some knowledge of the whereabouts of any place where something of importance reported in his paper is located.

However, the people of the Royal City in the Fraser River district of British Columbia who displayed so much courage in a recent fiery ordeal are not likely to suffer any pain of mind by having their disaster credited to another British colony, although they may reasonably express surprise that even the gathering of colonists in London to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, has not enabled every English editor to acquire useful knowledge of the land of the maple leaf, such as would include geographical acquaintanceship with its principal cities. Perhaps British Insurance companies interested in the great fire in question will inform this careless compiler of news where the losses they have sustained occurred.

---

"His friends contend that he is crazy on the subject of fires." Such is the **An Expensive Mania.** excuse now being urged for the extraordinary actions of John Pierman, a member of the local hook and ladder company of Pottstown, Pennsylvania, until lately harassed by a succession of incendiary fires. Pierman, as a fireman, attracted attention in Pottstown by his activity, and for several years past "took delight in running to fires," and had a "mania" for seeing stables and barns ablaze. That he should exhibit activity when the fire alarm called him to duty does not warrant any of the comments now being made upon his nimbleness and agility as being "suspicious conduct;" but, if his friends knew of any weakness of intellect amounting to a well-developed mania, filling this fireman with an excessive or unreasonable desire for seeing red tongues of flame and clouds of smoke enveloping the barns and stables of Pottstown, it is almost regrettable that these sympathizers with poor John Pierman were not indicted with him on the six charges of arson for which he is now confined in the county jail at Morris-town.

When this demented fireman and firebug was ar-