

plays ignorance equal to the bad taste which dictated such an attack. However, those who know anything of the Canadian militia can testify that, whenever pitted against the Imperial troops at Halifax or Ottawa on the rifle ranges, the former invariably win; the exchanges of companies from the Canadian regulars and the Berkshire Regiment gave colonists no cause to blush for their countrymen; and, even at gun shifting, we have seen Canadian artillerymen defeat their trained brethren of the British service. The Broad Arrow ought to be, and probably is, ashamed of its silly exhibition of ignorance, calculated, as its article is, to create a feeling of annoyance in every mess room and armoury of the Dominion.

THE PORTLAND'S LIFE PRESERVERS.

*And then was heard the gurgling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.*—Byron.

The Massachusetts State Board of Charity has been investigating the loss of the steamship "Portland," and Dr. Joshua A. Lewis of the Board has returned from Cape Cod to Boston bringing with him a bit of evidence of disregard for human life so cruel as to be almost inconceivable. This dumb witness to the cupidity of man is a section of a so-called life-preserver (!) and the description thereof ought to arouse the anger of every friend and relative of the "Portland's" drowned passengers to a pitch of fury that will result in the most searching enquiry for the makers of these dummy life-buoys, and the conviction of vessel owners who purchase same.

Dr. Lewis is reported as expressing the opinion: "That every soul on board must have known for some time that they were going to destruction. The life preservers and the fact that most of the bodies were clothed is ample evidence of this."

The life preservers! What must be the pain and anguish of mourners for those whom the secret sand has buried on Peaked Hill bars, when reading the following description of the hideous straw mockers at human agony placed on the ill-fated "Portland" for use in case of dire need. If the result of rigid enquiry proves that the life preservers seized upon by these poor lost souls were simply "dummies," supplied at so much per dozen to enable coasting and river steamship owners to conform with the law, the guilty parties should be instantly held on a charge of murder. The melancholy recital of what has been found by the big-hearted members of this Massachusetts Board of Charity who have been searching along the coast of Cape Cod for the bodies of the drowned, is enough to appal the stoutest heart that ever beat. Let us read:

"Dr. Lewis brought with him from Orleans a section of one of the grass life preservers with which the "Portland" was partially equipped. This piece was taken from a life preserver that came ashore from the wreck, and at the time it was taken from the wa-

ter weighed about thirty-five pounds. This section was nothing more than a bundle of reeds. After having been for five days in a steam-heated room and some time in Dr. Lewis' valise, he was able this morning to squeeze water out of it by a mere pressure of the thumb and forefinger."

Can the mind of man conceive of such cupidity, such callous indifference to human suffering, as the manufacture, sale, and purchase of these useless life preservers points to? When the heavy sea and wind increased to a gale, swelling into a hurricane which drove the "Portland" on the dangerous sands, or pounded her to drift wood in the offing, the life-buoys became the last hope of her despairing passengers. What followed can only be imagined by one who, encircled by a life buoy, has floated breast high in a heavy sea until flung ashore by the waves. The poor passengers of the "Portland," in trusting to her life preservers, were truly like the drowning—"clutching at straws." For the recollection of brave and skillful mariners whom we have known, for the sake of friends whom the raging sea has engulfed, we hold the makers and buyers of the life-buoy described by Dr. Lewis guilty of murder.

It is useless to say these coasting steamers are examined by official inspectors of their equipment, and are granted certificates that "all's well" with their boats, engines and life preservers. We have no hesitation in saying that buoys similar to the one found on the shore at Orleans, possibly the last despairing hope of some strong swimmer who may have needed only a slight support in his effort to reach the shore, can be found on many steamers plying on the coast of Nova Scotia and New England, and the governments of Canada and the United States ought, in justice to those who go down to the sea in ships, to unite in a thorough investigation.

During the last session of the Dominion Parliament, the Hon. Mr. Power introduced an excellent bill to the Senate. It exposes the owner and master of a fishing vessel to punishment if they permit a dory to leave her side without food, drinking water, a fog-horn, and a compass. The horrible yearly death list of the Gloucester and Nova Scotia fishing fleets has told piteous tales of the sufferings of fishermen adrift in dories, without food, water, or compass, slowly perishing of thirst, starvation and exposure, or being run down by one of the numerous Atlantic steamers. This necessary Act furnishes protection to the hardy men who face the perils inseparable from fishing in the deep sea or on the Grand Banks. Now, let a Bill be framed making it a very serious crime for the owner and master of any steamship carrying life preservers of the pattern described by Dr. Lewis.

The receivers of the Massachusetts Benefit Life Assn. report that they have examined and passed upon all the death and disability claims presented to them, and have allowed as against the emergency fund, death claims to the number of 298, amounting to \$824,812; and disability claims to the number of 65, amounting to \$59,912.