

modern appliances for solving mechanical and other problems, ought to be able to do the same thing, and so he set about the emulation of the silk worm. By a series of chemical analyses of the cocoon of the silk worm, he learned the exact elements contained and their proportions, and found that he could secure them less laboriously, in greater quantities and at a far less price than the worm does. A simple reaction, he found, would convert the material into threads, which were very strong and could be woven with ease. It is certainly a wonderful discovery, and if the young physician has a good manager, he ought to realize a handsome fortune from his invention.

I have had numerous talks with different sealer owners, and find that with hardly any exception they are all much dissatisfied with the claims as awarded by the Imperial Government; in fact so much so that a protest against the small amounts awarded and the peculiar manner in which they were arrived at is being prepared to send in to Mr. Milne. No one appears to be able to explain or understand them. An item in the *Times* a day or two ago says in effect that the present sum awarded, viz., \$100,234, is for disbursements of the schooners, or approximate losses actually incurred for season 1891, and that on settlement of arbitration sealers are to be paid for what skins might have been taken in Behring Sea, without undue diminution of seal herd, as decided by arbitrators. So that if sealers live long enough, which I seriously question, they have a chance to get their rights. Certainly it takes a Government a long time to make up its mind to do a thing, and then it takes longer to do it. The money for the above indemnity was cabled out to Ottawa on the 6th of this month, the list of awards got to Victoria a few days ago, although all they had to do in Ottawa was to forward it to Victoria, and the money is not here yet. The sealers are seriously considering the advisability of sending a commission to Ottawa to see that the hoodlums do not get hold of it. It is suggested that the Dominion Government, in their usual beautiful liberality, are only making a few dollars on the interest of it, and that it will be forwarded soon.

A year or so ago, the *British Columbia Commercial Journal* strongly urged the advisability of having two dry docks at Esquimalt. I think it was during the time the dock was occupied by a warship, and several steamers were unable to enter, so losing to the city and the Dominion Government a considerable sum. During the winter Victoria is not favored by many warships, the officers no doubt preferring to spend the season in a more congenial climate—so of late there has been little or no occupancy of the docks by these non-payers. But just as soon as a large vessel, with serious damage to her hull, has entered the dock (and expects to occupy it at least two months), along comes Our Gracious Majesty's gun punt with orders from the British Admiralty (tied up in enough red tape to keep the telegraph line at least a week unravelling), to enter the dock at a certain date. It appears, according to

arrangement between the Dominion and Imperial Governments, that the British warships are always to have the use of the dock when required regardless of other engagements. I hardly think Victoria citizens will like the idea of the steamer *Romulus* being ordered out of the dock and sent to Tacoma, as it means a loss of some \$50,000 to the place, and during these not over brisk times everything counts. All this because H.M.S. *Champion* wants to get a clam or two scraped off her bottom so she can glide swiftly through the water in chase of the wily sealer in Behring Sea.

Far be it from me to censure any officer of the fleet, as they are always most courteous in matters of this kind, and I remember well how promptly one of the ships vacated the dock in an unfinished state to permit the steamship *Elder* to enter. The present senior officer has his orders from headquarters no doubt to occupy the dock at a certain time, and unless he gets orders to the contrary, he is in duty bound to do it; but, it is hoped that sufficient influence will be brought to bear on the admiralty in England to get this order revoked and permit the *Romulus* to finish her repairs.

Considering the Imperial and Dominion Governments are shortly to spend considerable money fortifying Esquimalt, would it not be a good time for some agreement to be made between them whereby a new and larger dock could be built alongside the present one, which could be set aside for use of merchantmen, etc., entirely? For as Esquimalt is brought into more naval prominence, and as the province continues to grow, more warships will be seen lying in Esquimalt Harbor, and the time may soon come when the present dock will be entirely wanted by them. It is true another scheme for a marine dry dock is in contemplation at Esquimalt, but it is doubtful if the present movers in it will carry it through. It behooves our two wide awake M. P's and the Board of Trade to take this matter up and try and push it to a successful issue.

PERE GRINATOR.

ON THINGS IN GENERAL.

AS my motto always has been to expose "the wrongs that need resistance," I beg to enter my protest against the elderly gent who goes to the pigeon hole in the post office and buys ten cents worth of stamps and proceeds deliberately to spread out the whole bulk of his correspondence on the little counter before the aforesaid trap door, and keeps half-a-dozen people waiting, while he slowly and thoughtfully licks every stamp and adjusts them on his letters, and then by the time he puts his spectacles away, draws on his gloves and gathers up his umbrella, he allows others the same privilege he has had himself.

Under instructions from the religious editor, I attended Christ Church Cathedral last Sunday evening, being informed by that worthy that the subject was to be the "Confessional," but I was disap-

pointed, for it was all about Balaak and Balaam and Balaam's Ass. It was a long time before since I had been in a Protestant church, and, only that my friend tells me, who was with me, that I was perfectly sober, I should have thought that I had got into the wrong shop, for, I must confess I don't see much difference between the Holy Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church. I was deeply impressed. I shall go again, when Madame Jarley's Wax Works are to be exhibited, which I see are to be brought out under the auspices of this church.

I see the parsons on the Mainland are going in for politics. Well, it may be all right, and I don't say they should not hold decided political opinions, but is it a parson's place to preach them? He must be giving offence, I should say, to a great number of his congregation, no matter which side he takes, and, in my opinion when a parson steps out of his own sphere, he only creates, envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness.

I think every man of common sense in the city who is not interested will agree with Alderman Bragg's motion not to interfere with the aspirations of the Canada Western Hotel Co. in taking their site from them to erect the new post office on. A more unsuitable place it would be impossible to imagine; the mephitic odors arising from the place is enough to kill every official employed in it in a twelve month. Where could there be a better site than the present one? and they could use a corner of the new drill shed while the old building is being pulled down and the new one built.

So we are going to have the Victoria and Sidney Railway after all, in spite of a "Saanich Farmer" and the croakers. I have seen Sydney and also Melbourne. I see they have changed its name to Saanich Town, out of consideration, I suppose, for its namesake in Australia, for there is the danger of them getting mixed up, for they are alike in one respect—they sell whiskey in both places. Well, Sydney puts me in mind of a village I used to live in. Nothing would do us but we must have a railway, and we got it. The train came in twice a week, and it used to be unspeakable delight to us to go down to the station and see the passenger alight and the box of eggs put on board. All business was suspended during the time, the policeman put on his uniform and came down to keep order and then went back to work in his garden until the excitement of the next arrival. From latest advices, I hear the station is used as a stable for the horses that pull the cars.

I don't wonder at the interest taken in canoeing, when I see the valuable prizes offered in Hibben's window to the competitors. One is a magnificent and costly silver cup presented by a well known patron of aquatic exports, and the other a pair of magnificent paddles with the Peterborough Canoe Company's name stamped on them, which in itself is a guarantee of their excellence, to say nothing of their artistic merits. If I should be fortunate enough to be the winner of these articles, I think I could