

revenue, relentlessly pursuing the individual to the very moment of burying him. The by-law regulating the use and management of the Ross Bay cemetery provides that "the following fees shall be charged :

For each grave plot in the two rows adjoining any gravel road.....	\$12.50
For each grave plot in the other rows....	5.00
For each interment in any row.....	7.50
For each interment of a child under ten years old.....	3.75

After these, follow a number of other specified fees. Then comes a definition of the duties of the caretaker, with whose manner of performing his duties it is not my purpose to deal. I may, however, remark that the graves of those who can afford to pay gardeners to attend to them or can look after them themselves bear evidence of the attentions given, while those which are not in this way provided for remind one of the lines

"I passed by his garden and saw the wild briar
And the thorn and the thistle grow broader and
[higher."

This, however, is a divergence from the object of these remarks. My contention, in the first place, is that it is outrageous to charge \$12.50 for the pick of the grave plots, while in the charge of \$7.50 for an interment, an iniquitous and oppressive impost is made. A grave can be dug and filled in at a liberal estimate in from a half to three-quarters of a day by one man. This, at \$3, which is more than the caretaker receives by way of salary, would amount to \$2.25, leaving a profit of \$5.25 made out of that one transaction. But, it may be asked, how are the other works in connection with the cemetery to be paid for? Granting, for the sake of argument, that there is only one interment a day, 25 per cent. of them being children, there is, at the figures provided in the schedule, a revenue close on \$40 a week, out of which we allow the caretaker \$21—more than what, we think, he actually receives—and there is a quarter of a day out of each of six working days to devote to other work. We thus have \$19 as a weekly unnecessary toll upon the dead in interment fees alone, to say nothing of the profits made out of the sale of graves and the revenue derived from exhumations (of which there are many) at \$5 each and certificates of title to plots at \$2.50.

The by-law, it is true, contains the following clause: "In cases of poverty, the Cemetery Committee will consider and decide on applications for the remission of the fees in whole or in part." It would be interesting to know to what extent this is done, though, for my part, I should not care to have a return giving names and that kind of thing submitted to the public, for I am not one of those whose custom it is to brand public officials as dishonest as is the practice of some people. I hold, however, that there is great room for burial reforms and economies in this city; that the present municipal arrangements are, for a variety of reasons, not what they ought to be, and that the proper place to begin is on Douglas street and at Ross Bay. After this, it will be in order for the public to cut down some of the expenses out of which the undertakers and florists

make their handsome returns. As it is, a body cannot be modestly and decently laid away for less than from \$75 to \$100, though why expenses should mount up in this manner there are many who, like myself, cannot understand.

I was sitting in the dining-room of the Hotel Victoria, last Saturday about one o'clock, alternately devouring mine host Patton's excellent fare and the contents of the daily paper. I had only been there a short time when my attention was arrested by the conversation of two guests of the Victoria. They were discussing, in tones loud enough to be heard all over the house, the way in which a newspaper should be conducted. One of them is said to have considerable experience in journalism, having frequently written "personal notices" for himself in the daily papers. The other is a Government street clothier. Knowing their ability to discuss intelligently a subject even so far-reaching as the newspaper business, I listened attentively, and the result of their deliberations I propose to submit to the publishers of THE HOME JOURNAL, that they may profit thereby. But one thought would obtrude itself upon my mind throughout the whole discussion, and that was "Why do not the two persons referred to above devote a little more attention to their own business?" In a future issue, as a slight acknowledgment of their remarks, I shall show one of them how to conduct a shoddy clothing house; the other will receive attention in due time.

I observe, in the morning paper, a report of the discussion which took place between our worthy aldermen respecting the offer of Col. Holmes to permit the band to play in the park on Sundays during the summer months. Personally, I am opposed to Sabbath desecration, but I am liberal enough to permit my neighbors to think otherwise. Even civilized England, the foundation of whose greatness is the bible, has thrown open the doors of her art galleries, museums, etc., to the working-men on Sundays, and such a policy is said to have resulted beneficially to all concerned. The example of older and more enlightened countries with their harmless amusements for the tens of thousands of weary toilers should not be lost sight of. Sunday excursions and picnics have even been indulged in. Gentlemen of the council, if you are serving the majority, and I believe you are, why not settle this question for once and forever by ballot and abide by the result. I believe that such a course would be an eye-opener for many of you and a strong precedent for future councils. The Provincial Government would also confer a boon on many who scarcely know the existence of a museum in their own midst, were they to open the doors on Sunday to men whose time is life and death and who could, with wife and children, look forward to at least one day in the week for entertaining and practical instruction. Place within his reach these opportunities and the attendance will bespeak his warm appreciation of your efforts. Meanwhile, thank the good Colonel and his band for their generous offer. The communication, which at any rate, merits earnest consideration,

should not be treated with an indifference bordering on contempt.

PERE GRINATOR.

VAGRANT'S LETTER HOME.

At the earnest solicitation of many friends in the Old Country to tell them something of Victoria and its prospects, "An Intelligent Vagrant" prints the following:

Victoria is a city of less than 50,000 inhabitants, consisting in part of Chinese, Indians, Italians, some Anglo-Saxons and a great many English dudes, (but, being non-voters, are not thought much of here.) The rest of the population is made up of real estate men, lawyers, politicians, school trustees, aldermen and old-timers, as they are familiarly called, but known in polite society as B. C. Pioneers. It is bounded on the south by the "San Pedro," on the west by the Indian Reserve, on the north by Rock Bay and on the east by Ross Bay suspect station. With regard to buildings, both in size and architecture, it can compare favorably with any city in the world. Notably among these is the Canada Western Hotel, a picture of which can be seen in E. M. Johnson's window, who is also secretary of the company who own this building. Next in importance are the new Provincial Government offices built at an expense of over a \$1,000,000—a photograph of the building can be had for 50 cents and is now on view at the *Colonist* office and Hibben's. Our new post office is a credit to the city also—the picture of it is not out yet. With regard to churches, we can lick creation; we have St. Andrew's Catholic and St. Andrew's Presbyterian, the Methodist Church, and Christ Church, when it is built, is to eclipse them all. There is no ostentation here in religion, the churches are entirely free from debt and live and thrive on the liberality of their flocks. Nothing but harmony and good will reign between the sheep and the shepherd. Societies of all descriptions abound. We have the Sons of England, of Scotland and of Ireland, to say nothing of Foresters, Oddfellows, Masons, Lacrosse, Baseball, Tug of War clubs, etc.; then the ladies, not to be behindhand, array themselves as the Daughters of England, Erin, etc., the latter are called sister lodges. The health of the city is all that can be desired. Small-pox was never heard of, nor do we fear the cholera. This is owing to the fraternal feeling existing between the Dominion and Civic boards of health. There is no such thing as overcrowding in Chinatown, in fact you seldom see more than three or four (score) inhabiting the same house. The sanitary arrangements are all that could be desired. The sewerage is perfect, the only defect at present is the failure of the householders to connect with the main, but this matter will soon be settled by the moral suasion of our city fathers. The founder and projector of this stupendous undertaking is a wise man from the East named McBean. His name should go down to posterity. He is ably seconded by \$300 a month and a man named Mohun. The climate is glorious. We have no mud in summer nor dust in winter—what more could be desired? Last February, we imported some snow from the east, at the