

AN GEE YUNG'S TRICK.

HOW A COBONER WAS POOLED BY A CHINESE MURDERER.

There is an incident in the history of Fresno County, California, which has never yet been published, but which deserves to be put in print, for it shows how the cunning of Chinese outwitted the most vigilant watchfulness of law officers, and saved from the gallows a condemned criminal. The story reads like a romance, but its truthfulness can be vouched for by many persons. The facts were not known to a white man till very recently, when a Chinese detective divulged them to a lawyer and a reporter.

On the morning of November 27th, 1893, a brutal murder was committed in the Chinese quarter of Fresno. The victim was a Chinese woman. The murderer, Ah Gee Yung, was caught red-handed and covered with the blood of the dead woman. The knife was still in his hand, and, after he had made the first dash to escape, when the officers appeared, he resisted no more and did not deny that he had committed the deed. His only excuse was that the woman had deserted him. The case was plain, the jury found him guilty, and the penalty of death was pronounced. The usual appeals to the Supreme Court were taken, but they availed nothing. Powerful Chinese companies had stood by Ah Gee Yung through all his troubles, and they showed no intention of deserting him as long as there was any hope, and with them, so long as there was life there was hope. First Ah Gee Yung attempted to escape. By what means he secured the keys or where he concealed them from the frequent search of the gaoler is not stated. Yet one day he unlocked his cell door and was passing across the corridor when he was discovered and taken back.

A few days afterwards at dusk, while the gaoler's back was turned for a moment, Ah Gee Yung unbolted two doors and escaped from the gaol. Although he had not thirty seconds the start of the gaoler, yet he had successfully disappeared, and for some time nothing was heard of him. But at length he was discovered in a closet near the gaol, clinging like a bat to the wall back of the door. He was returned to his cell. A search more rigid than ever was made for the key with which he unlocked the doors of the gaol. The wardens and the officers about the building assisted, and not a space within the cell as large as a grain of wheat was left unsearched. His clothes were taken off and his queue was unbraided, but nothing at all was discovered.

The second attempt to escape by unlocking the prison doors was on October 22, 1890. The day of execution was near at hand. The death watch, John Dennis, was placed over him, just outside the door, where every movement could be seen at once. The condemned man lay on his bed and seemed to fall asleep. About 11.30 that night the death watch observed a prolonged silence in the cell, and becoming suspicious, unlocked the door and went in. Ah Gee Yung was apparently dead. The froth on his mouth showed that he had taken poison. Dennis, the guard, shook him, but the Chinaman gave no sign of life. The guard called on the prison officials, and a messenger was sent for Dr. Lewis Leach, the prison physician.

Dr. Leach soon arrived and, with the assistance of Sheriff Hensley, Janitor Smart, John Dennis, the death watch, and Charles Bond, he tried to revive the Chinaman, for the doctor said that life was not extinct. It was pronounced a case of opium poisoning, and as a further proof of this a horn vial was found between the blankets of the bed. It would contain an ounce of opium, but was empty when found. The odour showed that it had contained that drug. All the known antidotes for opium poisoning were used. Three times the doctors pumped the Chinaman's stomach full of water and pumped it empty again. Coffee was given also. At 3 o'clock in the morning life was not extinct and the doctors left him, and thought it possible that the poison had been overcome and that his life would be saved for the gallows. But in an hour the Chinaman was pronounced dead.

Soon after daylight that morning the body was put in a box and sent to the coroner's office. The Chinese were early at the gaol with offers to bury the body as soon as it should be turned over to them. As the burial would be an expense to the county if done by the undertaker, and as the Chinese offered to do it for nothing, there was no objection, and they were told the body would be turned over to them as soon as a coroner's jury had brought in a verdict of the cause of death.

The inquest was held that morning. Dr. Leach said that

death was due to opium poisoning. The jury viewed the body and signed a verdict that Ah Gee Yung came to his death from opium administered by himself. This done, the body was placed in a rough box and turned over to the Chinese, who were waiting at the door. The box was placed in a waggon, and the long procession of the Chinese funeral moved out of town to the Mongolian graveyard, two miles distant. No white man accompanied the funeral, for no one had any interest in the dead murderer. The graveyard was reached, a box was buried, the ceremonies and usual exercises were gone through with, food and papers were left at the grave, as is the custom, and that evening the delega-

were said about it as if it had contained the last remains of the murderer. The waggon containing the body of Ah Gee Yung was driven to a Chinese vegetable garden a few miles in the country and was there opened. In course of time the man whom the physicians and the coroner's jury had pronounced dead was revived, and was none the worse for his narcotic sleep except that he was sick for a day or two, for the experience had been a strain on his nervous system.

He was kept in concealment a few days and was then disguised and put on board the cars for the north. Ah Gee Yung reached Portland, Ore., and there took passage for China, and landed safely in the Flowery Kingdom.



NEW SOUTH WALES REPRESENTATIVE.—See 'Our Illustrations.

- J. H. Helliings.
- G. E. Farmer.
- A. Holmes.
- W. Gumbleton.
- W. J. Gormly.
- J. J. Moloney.
- A. B. Pyke.
- T. Meadham.
- J. Toohar.
- C. Helliings.
- E. Toohar.

tion of tramps who had heard of the burial wandered out to the yard to eat the food left there, and that was the end of Ah Gee Yung, the murderer, it was thought. But it was not so. Fifty people can be found in Fresno who will take an oath that they saw Ah Gee Yung alive after the coroner's jury pronounced him dead.

Finding that the last hope was gone, a Chinese druggist prepared a potion which would stupefy and in a measure suspend life. This was placed in the possession of Ah Gee Yung, to be used as a last resort. After his second failure to escape he drank the drug, and to still further simulate death he blotched his skin with a paint prepared for the purpose, so as to give his face and neck a dark purple, like that observed in a dead person from the blood settling near the surface. As a still further deception an artificial froth was prepared for the mouth like that produced by poison. All worked perfectly according to design.

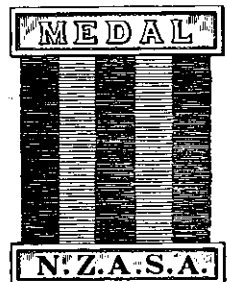
The rough and poorly joined box in which the Chinaman was hauled to the grave admitted enough air to keep him from smothering. No time was lost in reaching the graveyard. No white people followed, but in case they had followed a trick was prepared for the emergency. In the long funeral train there was concealed a second box in general appearance like the first. It was hidden in the bottom of a waggon resembling the waggon in which Ah Gee Yung was carried. In the march to the grave the waggon with the empty box was driven to the front and the other was kept in the background, well concealed beneath drapery. The empty box was buried, and the ceremonies

THE PHONAUTOGRAPH.

A REMARKABLE MACHINE INVENTED BY A CALIFORNIA GENIUS.

A SAN FRANCISCO man has invented a machine which will do away with typewriters, both instruments and operators, if he succeeds in perfecting his invention.

The new machine combines the phonograph and the typewriter, and in looks bears considerable resemblance to a cash register. On the front of the machine are small electric buttons which you press before talking into the mouthpiece projecting from the upper part. This mouthpiece is connected with a revolving cylinder which receives impressions



in a way similar to the Edison phonograph. A travelling needle regulates the position of the impressions on the cylinder according to the size of the paper they are to be reproduced on.

The filled cylinder is placed on rollers in the lower part of the machine. Above the rollers is a supply of paper for receiving the written characters.

There are several mysteries about the working of the new invention. No ink is used, the written characters being produced in a bold, round hand by chemical action. It spells entirely by sound and is unable as yet to cope with the diphthong, the silent letter, the capital, the semi-colon, or figure, but it will receive the sounds of the human voice in any language except Chinese and reproduce them in plain English cigraphy.



CHRISTCHURCH CHAMPION POLO TEAM.—See 'Our Illustrations.