

BULONG BITS.

(By "Moonraker.")

Profound regret was caused by the recent tragic death of our late and highly-respected townsman, C. Grigo, whose remains were found in his engine house at the Golden West mine, a property that for some time past had absorbed his attention. The finding of a pannikin containing a few grains of cyanide lent color to the theory that it was a case of suicide. It has since transpired, however, that several pannikins were kept in the engine-room, some containing cyanide and some not, and this has influenced many to the opinion that the deceased made a fatal error by using the wrong vessel to obtain a drink. The suicide theory is discounted to some extent by the fact that Grigo was quite jovial while discussing, a few hours prior to the finding of his remains, his intention in connection with the future working of the mine. Anyway the post mortem revealed that his death was the result of cyanide poisoning, while the jury at the inquest returned an open verdict. The deceased, who was the owner of considerable house property in the district, had, a few years ago, a very rich claim on the Oversight, which yielded him some 4,000oz. of gold, the stone averaging over 20oz. per ton.

Although it requires something more pointed than printers' ink to penetrate the hide of Joseph Davies, manager of the Queen Margaret, his latest brutally savage, dog-in-the-manger action is certainly worth recording. It appears that a couple of ancients with a shaker obtained a few colors of gold in the old alluvial workings on the Queen Margaret lease, which induced them to remain in the same locality for a few days. "Holy Joe," under the impression that the men had something good on, instructed one of his understrappers to order them off the lease. The shaker-men, however, adopted the course of interviewing the "lion in his den," only to be informed by him that they must recompense the company for any gold they won or clear off the ground at once. On the men truthfully replying that they could give nothing, as they were only get-

give nothing, as they were only getting sufficient to buy bread, they were peremptorily ordered to shift off the lease, and did so. The brutality of such treatment is best evidenced by the fact that the men had averaged under one shilling apiece a day while on the lease. As they had obtained nothing for the previous fortnight, however, even this was a consideration to them. By the way, as "Holy Joe" is so keen on compensation for the company what's wrong with him compensating his employers for at least some of the large parcels of gold that (on his own positive assertions) have been commandeered since he has had charge of the mine?

After months of mental agitation on the part of the mayor (R. C. Jones) and the disinterested marionettes who anticipated personal pecuniary gain to result from its advent, a tentacle, which is being constructed to a point 100 miles S.W. from here, in the form of a tram line of the "Octopus" Firewood Co., has lately reached this semi-deserted camp. Thanks to the officiousness of the Mayor, who invariably assumes far more authority than his tin-pot position entitles him to, the boss Octopus was informed long ago that they could have a clear course for their line anywhere in the vicinity of the town. Nevertheless, on the construction party arriving near the western boundary of the town, the brake was abruptly applied, owing to some leaseholders—who had never been consulted in the matter—quite naturally declining to allow the line to pass quite close to their shafts and shallow workings. As an attempt at bluff by the B.O. failed to obtain the desired result, the Co. were eventually granted permission by the Mayor to take the line through the centre of the Municipality, passing between the hospital and Council Chambers. Such is the admiration of Jones for the company (in fact for anybody with boodle) that it is quite possible that he may yet take the responsibility on his own shoulders of courteously requesting the "Octopus" Monopoly to kindly accept the blooming town, lock, stock and barrel as a present. Jones ought to be kept on a chain.

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provement, indeed, they appear to be growing worse every week. Tributors have taken the place of wages men at the Unknown, Fred Woodward's proposition, a few miles out of the town; while the retirement of the tributors from the Queen Margaret—the Co. having since obtained exemption—has had the effect of completely strangling what little hope remained for an early revival. In connection with the Unknown, Woodward has sustained a heavy financial loss. Although he still has a few men on the Great Eastern, there are not wanting signs that his name will shortly go to swell the already long list of disappointed holders of this repeatedly resurrected lump of saltbush.