Scott D. Seligman. *Three Tough Chinamen*. Hong Kong: Earnshaw Books, 2012; xviii + 288 pp. $19.99 (paper and e-book).

The "three tough Chinamen" in the title of this genial, well-grounded book are the Moy brothers – Moy Jin Kee (Mei Zhenji; 1849-1914), Moy Jin Mun (Mei Zhenwen; 1851-1936), and Jin Fuey Moy (Mei Zhenkui; 1862-1924). They came in the great wave of immigration from Xinning County (now Taishan or Toisan) on the Canton Delta first to San Francisco, and then went their separate ways to New York, Newark, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, and Chicago. They are the heroes, if that is quite the word, of Seligman's story, which is aimed at general readers but of interest to academics as well.

Seligman, who was a successful executive in an American corporation and then in China, immediately warns us that he uses "Chinamen" "advisedly," fully aware that "in current parlance it is considered a derogatory term" and is used only in an "historical context." This fair warning points to the strength of the book, which is to give us a picture of the Moys' rough and tumble immigrant experience which was structured by American racism, the sponsorship of American friends, rivalry and support from fellow Chinese Americans, patronage from the Chinese government, and, most important, by the resourcefulness of the Moys themselves. As Seligman puts it, "they did what they had to do to succeed and prosper" (p. x).

All three Moys became Christian and all learned excellent English. The eldest, Jin Kee, clerked in an import shop in New York's Chinatown, where he established a Methodist mission. He became a celebrity for resisting the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, charging that the land of liberty treated Chinese worse than black slaves: "we are clean, we don't get drunk, mind our own affairs. Can you say as much for the Irish, German, or any other foreigners?" (p. 38). After he was fired for taking merchandise from the shop to sell on his own, he opened businesses in Newark and Chicago, but ended up in Indianapolis, where he prospered as a restaurateur and became a United States citizen in 1897. The Qing government granted him honorary rank, also giving him the title of Mayor of Indianapolis Chinatown, and President Theodore Roosevelt welcomed him to the White House. But he was done in by his enemies. The implausible rumor circulated that these enemies included the Empress Dowager; the plausible one was that they were actually former rivals in Chicago. When he and his wife returned from a trip to China in 1908, Immigration Services kept them in detention for months and they were allowed into the country only through the intercession of his United States senator. In 1911 his citizenship was revoked on the grounds that he had submitted fraudulent papers.

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The second brother, Jin Mun, evidently a winsome and enterprising lad, became Sacramento houseboy for the railroad magnate Leland Stanford. When accused of peculation, Jin Mun took off to the goldfields and was barely saved from anti-Chinese mob attacks. He then became a court interpreter and entrepreneur in the opium business, most likely taking advantage of his official court position to accuse some dealers and protect others. Jin Mun was president of the Six Companies, which at that time was the semi-official representative of the Chinese community in America, and was known as the Mayor of San Francisco Chinatown. He lost much of his fortune in 1929 and died respected if not especially wealthy in 1936.

The most entrepreneurial and energetic of the three was Jin Fuey Moy, the youngest, last to arrive, and the only to write his name American style, family name last. He got his M.D. at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1890 but not before eloping with a white nineteen-year-old girl. The two were promptly arrested but released, and remained loyally married until his death. He practiced medicine and was appointed interpreter for the New York criminal courts, only to be dismissed when he was accused of smuggling Chinese immigrants from Canada (in 1911 he was acquitted of smuggling them from Jamaica). In 1915, he was arrested under the Harrison Act for writing illegal prescriptions of heroin and morphine, but the Supreme Court ruled that the act applied only to manufacture, and nullified the indictment. Nothing daunted, federal prosecutors brought new charges. Jin Fuey again took his case to the Supreme Court, but lost a still-cited landmark case. He spent two years in Atlanta federal prison, where one of his companions was Charles Ponzi, originator of the famous scheme, and died two years after his release.

Seligman researched newspapers and archives and uses a good sampling of the scholarship in Chinese-American history, though not Chinese-language newspaper or archival sources. Earnshaw Books, the enterprising Hong Kong publisher, is to be thanked for including ample endnotes, Chinese characters, a Glossary, and a set of helpful Chronologies, but no bibliography and, regrettably, no index.

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