

October 1914

1065

urging the

THE

LAWYER WARNED HE IS TO BE KILLED

J. E. Bird Declared He Was Informed He Was Marked by Hindu Assassins.

That Mr. J. Edward Bird, a barrister, who was prominently connected with the fight to admit the Hindus from the Orient on the Komagata Maru has been informed that he is a "marked man," and may be killed, was the statement he made to Magistrate Shaw in court this morning when urging his worship to admit H. Rahim, the Hindu Socialist leader, held on a charge of inciting to murder in connection with the killing of Inspector Hopkinson, out on bail. Bail was not granted, Magistrate Shaw saying that the attorney-general might take the case out of the Police Court and indict Rahim, Sohan Lal and Kartar Singh, who are all held on the same charge, before the grand jury.

Mr. Elder of Mr. Bird's office appeared at an application of a similar nature yesterday, and was told by Mr. J. K. Kennedy that he would take the matter up with Mr. A. D. Taylor, K. C., crown prosecutor, in the Assize Court and ascertain if the attorney-general's department contemplated such a step. This he was unable to do yesterday, and Mr. Bird appeared in person this morning to renew the application.

"This is too serious a matter," Mr. Kennedy declared, "to be taken lightly," when it was suggested that the men were held on one of the wild rumors that are in circulation.

"I may say," he continued, "that long before any of these tragedies we had in our possession an affidavit to the effect that plans had been formed for the killing of Argan Singh, Ram Singh, Bela Singh, Buttan Singh, Inspector Hopkinson and Mr. Reid. Argan Singh is dead, Ram Singh has stood trial for murder, Bela Singh is being held on a murder charge, and Inspector Hopkinson and Buttan Singh are dead. The only man mentioned in that affidavit to whom some harm has not fallen is Mr. Reid."

Counsel for the other Hindus demanded to be shown the affidavit in question, but was refused, Mr. Ken-

neddy saying that he did not think it was incumbent upon him to divulge the name of the person making the statement. "I may say, however, that we had it for some time before any of these killings."

"If a baby in arms," the prosecutor continued, "made an affidavit predicting certain things and those things came true, we would be forced to pay attention to it, and so it is in this case."

"Why," laughed Mr. Bird, "I was telephoned to yesterday that I was a marked man and was going to be killed, but I only laughed, and here I am trying to get the man whom you are holding as inciting the murders out on bail."

Magistrate Shaw informed Mr. Bird that he did not know anything of the charge against the men yet, but would find out whether it was the intention of the attorney-general's department to proceed with it before the grand jury and would consider an application for bail at a later date.

JURY CHARGES HOPKINSON'S DEATH TO MEWA

Strongly urging that the federal and provincial governments adopt measures which will serve to give better protection to the officers of the law, the jury empanelled by Coroner T. W. Jeffs yesterday afternoon to inquire into the death of William C. Hopkinson, who was foully murdered in the provincial court house on Wednesday morning, found that Mewa Singh committed the murder.

The following is the wording of the verdict:

"We find that William C. Hopkinson came to his death from wounds and hemorrhage caused by shots fired by the prisoner, said to be Mewa Singh, and we herewith recommend that both Dominion and provincial authorities formulate some plan for the better protection of those brave officers whose duties call upon them to risk their persons in defence of law and order. We further recommend that special attention be paid to watching Hindoos and other foreigners."

Although from the evidence it was very clear that the prisoner committed the murder, the jury felt disposed to add a rider which would impress upon the authorities the fact that in the Hindoos the police and immigration officials had a difficult class of citizens to deal with.

Sitting in the dock at the police court the accused Hindoo listened attentively to the evidence. In contrast to his actions immediately after the murder, he was in an uncomfortable frame of mind. He was carefully watched by several officers who stood to his actions immediately after the is looking for some opportunity to do away with himself.

When the verdict had been rendered, Mewa Singh was asked if he wished to get a lawyer to look after his interests. After pondering over the matter for a few moments he replied that he did not wish to retain counsel, but that if his friends saw fit to do this he would be pleased. So far his friends have failed to take action in the matter.

Formal medical evidence to the effect that four bullet wounds were found in the body of the deceased was given by the physician conducting the post-mortem examination. The deceased was wounded in the knee, the chest and the back. Death was caused by hemorrhage.

Grappled With Murderer.

The detailed account of the murder was given by James McCann, caretaker of the courthouse, who rushed to the assistance of the deceased, and who snatched the smoking revolvers from the hands of the alleged murderer.

He was on the lawn in front of the courthouse when he heard shots. He rushed upstairs and saw a Hindoo with two revolvers in his hands standing over the body of a white man. He identified the prisoner as the Hindoo who did the shooting. He stated that he at once closed with the Hindoo who turned a weapon on him, pressing it against his vest. He knocked the weapon aside and soon took him prisoner. He took the two guns from his hands. One was a blue-steel weapon with all five chambers discharged, and the other was of the "bulldog" type, which had three loaded chambers.

When he had seized the Hindoo, the latter had said: "I shoot—I go to station."

The next witness was Mr. Richard Polley, 717 Homer street, who is employed at the assize court. He stated that he was eight or ten feet from the deceased when the shots were fired. At first he did not realize what had happened, but he caught sight of the prisoner firing into a white man, who was lying on the floor. The latter managed to regain his feet and was grappling with his assailant. The prisoner fired again and the white man fell to the floor and did not rise again. The witness went up to the Hindoo and demanded the guns, but the latter said, "I give them to the police." Mr. McCann then arrived and closed with the Hindoo.

That he was standing in the corridor between the room for male witnesses and the entrance to the court when he heard the shots, was the statement of Mr. John McIntyre, 1125 Granville street, a witness at the assize court, who was called as the next witness. He saw a Hindoo pointing a gun towards the witness room door. He could not remember how many shots were fired. Next time he looked he saw the Hindoo being led away.

Mr. T. G. Goodman, Central Park, an elevator operator at the court house, was the next witness, but his evidence was of little value. He heard the shots and when he arrived on the scene the deceased was prostrate on the floor, while Mr. McCann was mastering the Hindoo.

Mewa A Fiend.

Similar evidence was given by Mr. Paul Cadwell, Yew street, who was a witness in the assize court. He described the prisoner as a fiend. Each time he shot he jumped into the air waving the revolvers frantically. He was sure Mewa Singh was the man who did the shooting.

That he was entering the courthouse in company with Detectives Crewe and Sunstrun when he heard the shots, was the evidence of Detective Norman McDonald. He saw a number of Hindoos running down the stairs. In company with the other detective he stopped them and then he proceeded upstairs. He met Mr. McCann with the prisoner. He took charge of the prisoner, placing him in a cell. Detective Sam Crewe stated that he also heard the shots and saw the Hindoos rushing for the door. He assisted in stopping them and while the other detectives went upstairs he held five of them in a corner. He had accompanied Detective McDonald with the prisoner to the cell. The prisoner gave the name of Mewa Singh. A doctor had been summoned, and five minutes after the shooting had pronounced Mr. Hopkinson dead.

Coroner Jeffs offered the jury the evidence of the Hindoos who had run downstairs, but the jury refused to hear them. Mr. J. K. Kennedy acted for the Crown, while Mr. W. H. D. Ladner appeared for the department of the Interior, which includes the Immigration Department.

out to convict on the grounds of racial prejudice, his lordship declared, he was guilty of a terrible offence. He hoped that the jury would not be insulted at his having referred to this case. There should be no difference in the evidence in this