

# SWEAR MURDER WAS ADVOCATED IN TEMPLE

## Sohan Lal Charged With Counselling Murder of Inspector Hopkinson.

## Witnesses Say Accused Man Urged Death of Immigration Officials.

## Bela Singh Comes from Prison to Give Evidence in the Police Court.

## Seditious Papers Are Read—Case to Be Resumed Friday.

That murder was openly advocated in the meetings of the United India League held in the basement of the Sikh Temple on Second Avenue, was the statement made by several witnesses in the Police Court yesterday afternoon when Sohan Lal, secretary of the league, was arraigned for inciting numerous Sikhs to murder immigration officials including Inspector Hopkinson, who was assassinated in the courthouse on Oct. 21. The case was not concluded and will be resumed on Friday.

Bela Singh, who has already been tried for the murder of Bhag Singh in the temple on Sept. 5, and who will again face the same charge, because of the disagreement of the jury, was the principal witness. In picturesque language he told of the open hostility to the immigration officials and to himself, Baboo Singh and Gunga Ram, on the part of a number of Hindus and Sikhs led, he said, by Sohan Lal, and of the alleged agitation on their part to secure the deaths of the officials and the "immigration dogs."

When asked his address, Bela Singh smiled broadly and replied: "At present it is the provincial jail at New Westminster, but later it will be the Dominion Government immigration offices."

During the hearing he said: "I ceased to go to the temple after November of last year, but on the last occasion on which I was there, about the first or second week in that month, Sohan Lal addressed the meeting. He talked a great deal about the British rule in India, and declared: 'We will not succeed until we finish certain men here—Hopkinson, Reid and three or four native dogs.'

The witness added: "We were referred to as 'native dogs.' Every Saturday in the temple they made speeches to kill the 'native dogs,' meaning Baboo Singh, Gunga Ram and also Hernan Singh, who was killed by these revolutionaries."

### Means Life Term in India.

At these Saturday night meetings, the witness declared, a paper published in San Francisco was read. This paper taught sedition and mutiny. "In India," he added, "if a man has one of those papers he is arrested, and if he reads it out at a meeting he is sent to jail for life. It teaches all about putting the white men out of India."

Explaining the teachings of the mutinous paper at further length, Bela Singh declared that among those who believed in its doctrines the person who killed a man for the good of the cause was considered a patriot and a martyr. "Mewa Singh"—and his

that he had secured entry to this country by paying a bribe of \$100. This was strenuously denied.

"You came on the same boat after your visit to India as Bhagwan Singh came on?"

"Yes."

"Bela Singh was on that same boat?"

"Yes."

"Why was Bhagwan Singh deported?"

"I think it was because he had never been here before and he made speeches."

"Wasn't it because he refused to pay \$100 the same as you did?" demanded the lawyer.

"No. I did not pay any money. I had been here before. Bhag Singh made an affidavit that I was here before. He knew me. I came in 1907 and I worked at a mill at Port Haney."

Nina Singh, who was mentioned in the information as one of the persons incited by Sohan Lal to kill Inspector Hopkinson and others, declared that he had heard Sohan Lal read out of a paper at a meeting last December. He had then commented upon the reading, and had remarked that Bhagwan Singh, the priest, had been deported by the immigration authorities by force and that Inspector Hopkinson and Bela Singh were guilty of terrible deeds. "He said," the witness declared, "There are many of us here; can not some of us fix them?"

### Army Surgeon's Evidence.

Raganeuth Singh, M. D., the army surgeon, who came here on the Komagata Maru, said that he had been invited to the meetings of the United India League by Sohan Lal. Early in August of this year he had accompanied Sohan Lal to a meeting. "It was shortly after the declaration of war," the doctor said, "and Sohan Lal told the meeting that the papers in this country were not giving correct information, so he had secured the right news from United States. He talked about the war, and he said: 'This is the nicest time for a revolution in India. In the meantime we should be looking after the men who are giving our information to the authorities, for they are immigration dogs.'"

Sohan Lal, according to the witness, also read a paper on "What will happen when the Komagata Maru reaches India."

### BABOO SINGH COMMITTED

#### Well Known Sikh Charged With Theft Says He Has Honorable Defence.

Baboo Singh, the friend and companion of Bela Singh, and one of the "immigration dogs," whose life has been repeatedly threatened because of his association with Bela Singh in working for the government, was committed yesterday for trial by Magistrate Shaw on a charge of stealing \$300 from a Hindu named Mamall. A charge of forgery was also laid against Baboo, but this was withdrawn.

The alleged theft arose out of a complicated real estate deal in which it is said Baboo Singh acted as an agent in a transaction affecting the estate of a Hindu, Indur, now deceased. It appears that Indur had some lots and the informant, Mamall, was a creditor of Indur to the extent of \$157. Mamall agreed, it is said, to pay \$300 and assume full title to the lots, which were valued at \$450, and at the same time give a receipt for the amount of Indur's debt to him.

Baboo Singh is said to have received the money and did not give a deed to the lots.

Mr. Frank Lyons, who appeared for Baboo Singh, declared that it was through no fault of Baboo Singh's that he was unable to give the title deeds, as the registry office had held up the registration of them. He declared that Baboo Singh had an excellent defence. The case will probably be brought on at the present assizes.

Dr. Raganeuth explained the doctrines of the United India League, and asked if he did not think that home rule for India was a good thing replied: "Not if it is obtained by force." He had been proposed as president of the league here, the witness smilingly told the court, but he had declined the invitation.

During the proceedings and the long argument over citing the names of the person or persons whose death was counselled, and the name of one or more persons incited to murder, Sohan Lal, the accused man, sat in his chair, a picture of nervousness. Constantly he interrupted his counsel, and met with constant rebukes. A small man, with deep set shifty black eyes, and low forehead covered with a thatch of silky black hair, a heavy mustache and a three weeks' growth of hair on his face, Sohan Lal cowered beneath the contemptuous and scornful glances of the witnesses in the box.

The case was adjourned until Friday afternoon, when it is thought it will be concluded. H. Rahim, Kartar Singh, Balwant Singh and Mit Singh are accused of the same offense. They will be tried separately.

## BELA IS ACQUITTED 1914 BY ASSIZE JURY

### Jury, After Four Hours' Deliberation, Accepts Story that He Shot in Self-defence.

After nearly four hours deliberation a jury in the Assizes yesterday afternoon brought in a verdict of "not guilty" in the case of Bela Singh, an agent of the immigration department, who was charged with the murder of Bhag Singh in a shooting affray in the Sikh Temple on the night of Sept. 5. The jury came back for second instructions from the judge before being able to agree upon a verdict.

The defence of Bela Singh was that he fired in self defence, after Bhag Singh had called him an immigration dog, and had seized the sacred sword with which to attack him. He swore that Badan Singh, another Sikh, who was killed at the same time had drawn a revolver and fired at him before he fired the shots which killed Bhag Singh and Badan Singh.

Several Sikh witnesses testified that seditious meetings had been held in the temple by a faction of the Sikhs and Hindus, at which the killing of Superintendent Reid, Inspector Hopkinson, Bela Singh and other Sikhs was advocated. In his charge to the jury, Mr. Justice Morrison pointed out that Bela Singh appeared to have been one of the men who had stood for law and order in the Sikh community, and the fact that two of his friends had been mysteriously made away with, would be reasonable grounds for him considering that his own life was in danger from attack by enemies.

The accused said he had not gone to the temple to cause a quarrel, but as a duty imposed upon him by the Sikh religion to at once repair to the temple and pray for the repose of the soul of his friend, Argan Singh whose funeral he had attended that afternoon.

The accused Bela Singh was not liberated after the trial, as he has still to face the charge of killing Badan Singh.

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The objects of the United India League, the witness stated, were the union of all the religions, different parties and political factions for the expulsion of the white people and the ruling of India by natives.

"So Sohan Lal is against the government?" asked the accused man's counsel, Mr. E. M. N. Woods.

"Yes, and against everyone. In India he is nobody, but here he tries to be a leader."

A copy of one of the alleged seditious papers published in San Francisco was shown to the witness and with the permission of the court he translated it, saying that it was similar to the doctrines promulgated in the meetings at the Sikh Temple. This paper he said had formerly been widely circulated among the Hindu community, but it had now been stopped through the mails.

#### "Call It Spy If You Wish."

"You used to get it?" challenged the defence lawyer.

"No, I never got it through the mails, but I used to read it, for Baboo Singh and Mr. Hopkinson used to get it and I used to translate it, and the translations went to Ottawa and to England."

"What are your duties at the immigration office?"

"I am a secret service man."

"A detective, as it were?"

"Well, yes a detective."

"A spy?"

"Call it that if you wish," calmly responded the witness.

The portion of the paper translated by Bela Singh into Hindustanee and translated from Hindustanee into English by Mrs. Dalton, the official interpreter, was in rhyme. The trend of the article was urging the natives to take up the burden and secure their country for themselves. "You will be afraid of the cannon's roar, so get used to the sound of pistol firing," was one paragraph translated.

Pertab Singh—a brother of Hernan Singh, referred to by Bela Singh as one of the men whose death had been advocated, and whose dead body was picked up on the Kitsilano reserve with a terribly gashed throat last August—preceded Bela Singh in the box.

"I went to the temple the Saturday after the Chajoo Ram case" (last June), the witness said. "Bhag Singh was there, and he said, 'Whoever the immigration dogs are who are here they will tell the big dogs (Inspector Hopkinson and Mr. Reid) they had better go, or I will kill them myself.'"

The witness continued: "Sohan Lal got up and said, 'What Bhag Singh has said I will second.' He referred to Inspector Hopkinson, Mr. Reid, Bela Singh, Baboo Singh and Gunga Ram. 'These men could be killed and all would be well,' he said," the witness added. "They have killed my brother and have thrown his body into the jungle," Pertab Singh concluded.

Mr. Woods, Sohan Lal's counsel, then tried to get the witness to admit

strate Singh and Hindu named Mamall. A charge of forgery was also laid against Baboo, but this was withdrawn.

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