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Voyage of Komagatamaru

OR

INDIA'S SLAVERY ABROAD.

~~Compiled by~~

Baba Gurdit Singh.

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FOREWARD.

In the following pages I have tried to tell my life-history in connection with the voyage of the ill-fated "KOMAGATAMARU". From start to finish it is a sad story, but it is the real story of my life. I can prove, every incident, I have mentioned here. I do not know if I have succeeded in depicting the various incidents, and I owe an apology if I have failed to do so. To start with I have an initial difficulty. I narrated my story in GURMUKHI and some good friends gave it the present shape in English. The idea is mine, but the English rendering is of my friends. I do not know if my real feeing has found proper expression in its—English rendering.

But that as it may, I intend to draw the attention of the superior authorities of the various departments of the Government to the innumerable inequities to which I along with my other comrades were subjected to. If my life story paves the way of repetition of any such single inequity being impossible, on any one in future, I shall die in happiness to know that I had done my duty.

I do feel and fell keenly that it is the intention of the Government to administer "JUSTICE", in its true sense.

In that view of the thing, I think it my duty to point out how subordinate officers misinterpret the orders of the superior authorities, and how in their zeal for doing "DUTY" they become instruments of oppression. If I have said anything hard, about some of the officers, with whom I came in contact, I spoke the plain truth for the mutual benefit of Government and the people. I only hope that both sides will realise their responsibilities and admit their mistakes and make a joint effort for an early realisation of India's ideal, so that Canada or any other country would not dare to insult peaceful Indians in the way they insulted the immigrants of "S. S. KOMAGATAMARU".

BANDEMATARAM.

(BABA) GURDIT SINGH.



CHAPTER I.

India's Slavery Abroad.

THE unfortunate voyage of the steamship "Komagatamaru" to Canada and the incidents arising therefrom make a very important chapter in the present day history of India. The event may be rightly described, with others of varying degrees of importance, as one of the chief eye-openers to India's real situation as also a material contributor to the latter day national efforts for the change of her political condition.

Those who have no status at home are *ipso facto* deprived of any abroad. Small wonder that the Indians resident in British territories outside India, either under economic stress or as dupes of British commercial interests, gradually found their position in those places intolerable as their employers, after having done with them, could not bear to see them settle as decent citizens with their acknowledged moral and intellectual resources and grew anxious to get rid of them as sucked oranges by enacting immigration laws of increasing stringency.

While a contractor in the Malaya States I had the first opportunity to see for myself what an Indian coolie, bound for a British colony to help it in its industrial progress, was like. There I first learnt from a British employer of labour himself that an Indian coolie is not worth even a small fraction of what a horse fetches him. And this, inspite of the fact that the early coolie immigrants were the pitiable victims of the recruiter's machinations and the main props of European industry in the Colonies. The unspeakable wretchedness of these coolies as subsequently witnessed in all the principal centres sent the first iron into my soul and sowed, unconsciously perhaps, the seed of my intention to serve my ill-used countrymen in the British Dominions.

It will interest my readers to be told of my actual experience of the vast difference of treatment between a coolie and a horse considered as the most natural thing under the sun by their European masters. In the Malaya States the Europeans happen to be the owners of many tea and rubber gardens. It is needless to add that they badly need Indian coolies to work these gardens and to place them in riches. But once when I visited these coolies' quarters, I was struck-dumb to find that human beings, helpful in the production of wealth, could thus be denied even a contemptible beast's accomodation and be consigned to the mercy of the common epidemics. To relieve my eyes of this disgusting sight I cast my look at an adjoining marble stable kept

scrupulously clean. After pacing hither and thither for a while I came across a European and I could not resist the temptation of asking him why he did not condescend to grant at least such stable-like accommodation to his garden coolies to save them from sure death., He told me, as if to chastise my manifest foolishness that a horse would bring him Rs. 1500/- whereas a coolie not more than Rs. 40/- or Rs. 50/-. I also learnt on enquiry that the horse cost him Rs. 4/- per day for its fodder and upkeep while a coolie was made to live and keep fit on one anna and six pies a day. So one horse cost as much as 42 human beings. This was my first-hand knowledge of the European estimate of the value of the labour of an Indian as compared with that of a lower animal. I also saw this traffic in Indian blood at Penang. The buyers and sellers were both Madrasis. The coolies here were kept in cells and prevented from stirring out. The purchasers had to go to the cells to make the selection and do the rest of the bargaining. I offered to be a purchaser in order to learn the actual secrets of the prison-house and when I asked the coolies how they came to be such human chattels actually bought and sold, I was informed that it was the brokers, who held licenses from the Government for the purpose, who with false but tempting offers put them into the grip of these human monsters.

It may be mentioned in passing that this sacrifice of flesh and blood to Mammon, in no way less reprehen-

sible than the cannibalism of the savage races, is a legacy of Spain and Portugal to Europe. The big powers gradually felt the inequity of the custom and are said to have met in a conference in 1833 to stop the practice. When slave trade was abolished by an agreement of the European powers, about forty Companies had been engaged in capturing Negroes in Africa and selling them to different countries of the world. Of these, fourteen were English Companies. Negro slave trade beirg closed to them, they turned their attention upon Hindusthan and the helpless labourers of India hence-forth became their victims in the place of the Negroes. The piteous tale of woe of these emigrant coolies abroad will melt thc heart of stones, and is a fit subject for bulky volumes. Suffice it to say that the Englishmen continued the business under the euphemism of "Agreement of Coolies." Even after the above conference 7000 Indian coolies were sent to Maùritius by the East India Company in 1834 and by way of meeting the volley of objections provoked by this outrageous course, a Law was passed in 1837 regularising the transaction under the deceptive title of "Agreement of Coolies". The census of 1911 put the number of Indian coolies outside India at 20,00,000 of whom 7,00,000 were females.

I have dwelt on this coolie-emigration at length as the genesis of the exodus of Indians to British Dominions in search of a living. The Indians had to

go to the British Dominions as coolies in any number to sow for others to reap. But they had no claim to be treated as human beings and when their multiplication led to their domicile in those places they came to be felt as regular thorns on their sides. The most ugly manifestations of this feeling have proved the utter hollowness of the equality-cult of the Western Democracies. Colour-prejudice is almost a disease with them. What to speak of the wage-earning classes of India, even persons of high social standing whose partnership in life is sought by European ladies, fare no better in the matter of securing entry into the lands of their White wives. Here is an instructive story.

Dr. Dantra, a respectable Indian, married an Australian lady and went in for expensive landed properties in Australia in the hope of settling there with his family after retirement from service. But the gentleman was not allowed to enter Australia when he wanted to live there on his properties. A very instructive correspondence in this connection throws some light on the unanimity of opinion amongst all whitemen in the matter of exclusion of Indians from the Dominions, the British Statesmen only urging the use of some clever dodge in place of an open sign of "No Admission." The letter runs thus :—

" Mr. H. W. Hunt, president of one of the Melbourne Theosophical Lodges, and a well-khown

public man, had an intervew on the subject with the Commonwealth Minister for External Affairs who was "sympathetic" he says, but helpless. The Act does not mention colour or race but the Minister stated (according to Mr. Hunt) that the intention was to exclude all coloured races, and he admitted that, if an Indian gentleman who knew European languages presented himself for admission to the Commonwealth, he would be set a dictation test in some language, say Russian, which he did not know. He said further that this hypocritical method of carrying out the purpose was suggested in a despatch by Mr. Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, who pointed out that the Japanese would regard an exclusion on the ground of colour, so stated in an Act of Parliament, as offensive to them as a nation and as imposing upon them a badge of inferiority. Mr. Chamberlain, therfore suggested that the then recently adopted National Act embodying the "dictation test" would meet the difficulty and attain the same end, while being less offensive to Japan and India".

"And how did they keep him out? By a law that unless an Indian can pass a language test he is not to be allowed to go in; and they may set it in any language they like, Modern Greek, Russian, Polish, Roumanian. The Indians are very clever in language but it is hopeless for them to try to pass such a test. The test was made at Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's

suggestion, for he said it would make them less angry than if you said plainly that a coloured man must not come in. It seems to me more hateful because of its hypocrisy".

Thus all the different Colonies have got immigration laws as a standing monuments to their selfishness and colour-prejudice, and the badge of inferiority imposed upon all coloured races and this insult to their national self-respect bind them together with a tie of common indignation. In view of the above facts I shall not be surprised, if in case of any clash of interest between Australia and Japan, the sympathy of British India, whose national honour is at stake, flows towards Japan and all coloured races make a common cause against the arrogant affront of the Whites.

As I was directly concerned with those Immigration laws which adorned the Canadian Statute book from time to time, a short narrative of Indian immigration into Canada is called for.

At the beginning of the 20th Century the Indians were allowed to go to Canada and U.S.A. The stream of Indian immigration began in 1903-4 and by 1910, it was estimated, about 10,000 Indians had landed in these shores. 90% of these persons were Sikhs and of them 80% were retired soldiers. At that time an average labourer could earn there something like Rs. 10/- per diem. As the Indians were generally superior is physical

fitness they could increase their earnings considerably. The Sikhs in this way made money and acquired landed properties &c., the value of which approximately amounted to 2 crores 15 lacs of Rupees in 1908. This prosperity of the Indians was an eyesore to the vagabond Europeans whose earnings were affected by the immigrant coolies (Indians), consequently they left no stone unturned to pack off these millioneers out of the Country.

An European named Genl. Swain declared that no Indian could be allowed to put up in a British Colony and to make money through business. It was apprehended that as the Indians were at that time enjoying equal rights with the Europeans, they would induce their fellow countrymen to migrate to the colonies and carry on business there and enjoy equal rights with the Europeans and thereby they would lower the prestige of the white-races and this would have far reaching effect in weakening the hold of the British Government in India.

A report to that effect was despatched to the India Government which deputed an European C. I. D officer to look in to the matter.

This C.I.D. officer was well up in Hindi language. In 1908, the Canada Government took up the matter in right earnest and passed an order upon the Indians to

leave British Canada and to migrate to far distant British Honduras, another name of which is "Hell". But the Indians replied that they could not go elsewhere leaving behind them properties worth Rs.2,15,00,000/- Reconsidering the matter the Canadian Government thought it wiser to take shelter behind a clever dodge, and a law was passed in 1910 on 9th May, by the Governor General of Canada in Council, by which it was enacted that "from and after the date there of, the landing in Canada shall be and the same is hereby prohibited of any immigrants who have gone to Canada otherwise than by continuous journey from the country of which they are natives or citizens, and upon through-tickets purchased in that country or purchased and prepaid in Canada." There was another provision that "no immigrant of Asiatic origin shall be permitted to enter Canada unless in actual and personal possession in his or her own right of 200 dollars, unless such person is a native or subject of an Asiatic country in regard to which special statutory regulations are in force or with which the Government of Canada has made a special treaty or convention." For its success in keeping off Indian immigrants the Canadian Government relied on two factors *viz.*

1. There was no direct Steam Ship service to Canada from India.

2. No Indian who had not with him 200 dollars equivalent to Rs. 600/- in cash would be able to land in Canada.

The intention was that no Indian would be able to go there for after spending Rs. 450/- for passage he would hardly have Rs. 600/- cash in hand. For in that case he must have possessed altogether more than Rs.1,000/-, a prohibitive sum for most Indians. The latter apparently innocent provision was very cleverly explained to be mercly in the interest of the immigrant adventurer who, for the sake of prudence, should have something to fall back upon so as not to be left stranded on a foreign shore.

Though this law was for all colours and races yet practically it was operative against the Asiatic people alone. As this policy was opposed by the Japanese Government vigorously and as they were even prepared to go to war for it, if necessary, it was modified for them and a treaty was concluded with the Japanese that they would be allowed to send 400 people every year and the above restrictions would be waived in their favour.

Next the Chinese Consul opposed it and threatened the boycott of Canadian goods. So they had to come to terms with China as well and it was agreed upon that

any number of Chinese could come in after paying a tax of Rs. 500/-per head.

The settlement was made with these two countries because they are in a position to answer the affront to their rights and honour.

But what about the Indians who are said to be British subjects protected by their benign govern-ment ? They have no Consul of their own to represent them there. Serfs at home, they are treated no better than helots abroad. What most grievously hurt them was that Indians living in Canada had sent for their wives and children who purchased tickets up to Hongkong (as there was no direct steam ship service to Canada) and thence to Canada. When they were about to land the Canadian Government stopped them with an order to return back to Hongkong. Pause for a moment to imagine the heart-rending scene on the docks. Fathers had come to receive their children, husbands had come to receive their wives but the Canadian Government's brutal order stood between them. To sigh and shed tears in silence was all they could do. Those on board had spent their last farthing to reach Canada where the protection and help of their relations and friends awaited them and the order passed by the Canadian Government threw them into utter destitution. Can anything be more tragic and brutal ?

CHPTER II.

Indian Immigrants in Canada.

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To carry on agitation against this most inequitable discrimination against Indians two societies were formed on the 15th December, 1911 under the names of "United India League" and "Khalsa Dewan Society-Vancouver." They jointly made a deputation to the Canadian Government at Ottawa for redress of these wrongs but in reply they were informed that the Canada Government would communicate the matter to the India Government and let them know the result afterwards. The Indian Government and Canadian Government had joined hands in framing this rule and this talk of referring to the Indian Government was merely a pretext to suppress the agitation for the time being, so no reply from the Indian Government was ever received.

On 22nd February, 1913, they held a meeting and resolved to send a deputation of three representatives *viz*:—(1) Sardar Balwant Singh, (2) Sardar

Nand Singh, (3) Sardar Narain Singh. This deputation first went to Ottawa and then to England. In London on 14th May, 1913, a big meeting was held in Caxton Hall and resolutions were passed for redressing the grievances of the Indians living in Canada and for bringing pressure on the Canadian Government to force them to withdraw the whimsical laws enacted to prevent Indians from landing there. Copies of the resolutions were subseqently sent to the Parliament and to His Majesty George V., the Secretary of State for India in Council and the Government of Canada.

The deputation later on visited India and waited upon the Government of India, approached the Hindu Sabha and other influential public bodies but without any results.

Of these three persons, Balwant Singh was hanged without any reason, of which mention will be made later on.

The year 1913 was a tragic year for India.

(1) The persecutions of the Canadian Government compelled respectable Indians who could not enter Canada to take to manual labour for a living like stone breaking etc on. their way back to India. I was at this time in Malaya where these people met me and narrated their tales of woe.

(2) In this year Mahatma Gandhi with his wife and thousands of Indians courted imprisonment fighting for the rights of Indians in South Africa.

(3) The Government of India demolished the walls of the Sikh Gurudwara at Rakabgunge, New Delhi, and thereby desecrated the holy place.

(4) In the Malay States, without the least show of an excuse, the Government sent to jail about 60 Sikhs and then by force expatriated them to Madras where they were left stranded and penniless; and Madrasi being a language quite foreign to them, they could not maintain themselves by begging even.

These incidents upset my balance of mind and consequently I gave up my contractorship and went to Hongkong in 1913 to witness for myself the real state of things.

At Hongkong a 'sabha' was held in December 1913 and I was asked whether I could do something for my Indian brethren. In my speech I pointed out that the British Government does not take us to be men, so we have to become men first before we can do something. Thousands of deputations will not move the Canadian Government or change the views of Indian Government. There was only one way in which we could vindicate our right of entering Canada and that

would be the easiest one viz. to charter a steam ship of our own and to fulfil the provisions of the existing law we would have to make a direct voyage to Canada. Secondly $ 1,00,000 would have to be a deposited in a Canadian Bank for the sureties of every individual of our community intending to land there so that Canadian Government may not raise any objection on the ground of our financial position. It was worth while to lay out a good deal of money on such an enterprise. I obtained the sanction of my community to make the voyage to Canada and I set about making preparations accordingly. My community promised to subscribe Rs. 30,00,000 when I shall have made one test voyage to Canada. So I took the charge of S. S. Guru Nanak Navigation Co. The proposed voyage would be a test of the sincerity of the Government of Canada in framing the rules. If we complied with all the provisions of the law regulating the immigration of foreigners into Canada, it was up to the Government to permit us to land and prove itself to be just and fair. My scheme was to arrange for four ships, two to ply in the Canada Calcutta Line and two in the Bombay Brazil Line.

The dispute between me and the Government of Canada arose because I wished to help my countrymen to immigrate to the Colony and carry on lawful trade there, and the Government was resolved at any cost to thwart me in this as it was obviously opposed to their policy of exclusion. The venture failed because I got

no help or support from the Indian Government, which joined with the Canadian Government in an unholy alliance to deprive us of our legal rights. The personal injury done to me was so manifestly unjust that they tried their level best to shield it by holding me up as a law breaker and rebel in the eyes of the world. There is no need to cite witnesses to depose for me. I do emphatically assert that I did not violate the regulations laid down by the Canadian Government to make a direct voyage to Canada and I was prepared to deposit, on behalf of my countrymen, whatever sums were required under the law but both the India Government and the Canadian Government stood in my way. In fact both the Governments violated and ignored the laws of their own creation.

I am prepared to establish to the complete satisfaction of all unprejudiced readers that we were in no way responsible for any breach of law. We scrupulously complied with every provision of law and took special care to see that there was no infringment of the rules at any step. The conduct on our part was in all respects lawful and unexceptionable. I daresay every reader will bear me out in this who cares to follow the course of events in a disinterested spirit of enquiry. The tragedy of the Komagatamaru was a glorious moral triumph for forty lakhs of brave and spirited Sikhs who proved to the world the righteousness and justness of their cause and amply demonstrated

to the world the scant regard that the Governments of Canada and India pay to their own laws when these happen to clash with their self interests.

When we approached a firm of Solicitors in Vancouver for taking up our case and offered to pay any amount they chose to name, they declined the offer on the ground that the matter had got "beyond the realm of such legal proceedings" and had become a question of national policy and diplomacy rather than of law. They made it absolutely clear that it was not going to be a "legal fight" at all. The Canadian Government did not take their stand on the legality of their actions and hence the solicitors could not conscientiously take up our case. Their reply runs as follows :—

24th June, 1914.

From M. C. Crassan & Harper,
Vancouver B. C.

Re. S. S. Komagatamaru.

Dear Sir,

Persuant to your request and the request of your committee, we have carefully considered this matter and regret to say that we, after full consideration, must

decline to accept a retainer. We feel that the matter has become of such great moment that it has got beyond the realm of such legal proceedings and has become largely, if not entirely, a question of national policy of vital importance, not only to the Government of this country but also involves conflicting Imperial interests.

In the face of this, it seems to us that it is a question for diplomacy rather than law, and we do not feel that we could conscientiously enter upon a legal fight under these circumstances notwithstanding the fact that you have offered a very generous retainer.

We beg to advise you therefore that we feel compelled to decline the retainer.

Yours truly.

(Sd.) M. C. Crassan & Harper.

We consulted the three foremost Councels of Hongkong to ascertion the legality of the voyage we proposed to make and they unreservedly and unanimously gave the following opinion.

From

C. D. Williamson,
E. J, Grit,
C. E. H. Davis.

9, Queens Road,
Hongkong, 24th March 1914.

To

Gurdit Singh, Esqr.,

Dear Sir,

Referring to your interview with us this afternoon when you enquired whether there were any restriction upon Indians who wish to travel to Vancouver, so far as this colony is concerned, we have to advise you that in our opinion there are no restrictions upon the immigration by Indians from the Colony unless they are under contract of service. (and the intending passengers were under no contract of service.) * * *

The Komagatamaru Enquiry Committee of the Government of India could hardly conceal their chagrin when they were forced to confess (para 6.) "If such a course had been possible under the law, the Colonial Government would have absolutely prohibited the vessel from leaving Hongkong." It is evident from this that the vessel proceeded from Hongkong with full legal authority.

We now invite the attention of the readers to the terms of the Charter contract entered into with the owner of the vessel Komagatamaru through his agent which is reproduced below in full. All the provisions of the

contract, as can be gathered from what follows, were fulfilled and no case could be made out against me as charterer on the ground of non-compliance with the terms of the contract, nor could the boarders of the vessel be debarred from landing in Canada on that score.

The Charter Party is reproduced in full in the next Chapter,

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CHAPTER III.

The Charter Party.

A. BONE,
Ship Broker.

24th March 1914.
Hongkong
Stamp Duty.
24th March 1914.

R. S. Government form of Time Charter Party,
Hongkong.
24th. March 1914

It is this day mutually agreed between A. Bone, Esqr. Hongkong, as Agent for owners of the Goods Steam ship called the Komagatamaru of 3096 tons Gross Register,and 1918 tons Net Register 265 horse power nominal classed German Lloyd 100 A. I. of 4300 tons nett weight and tons cubic capacity or there abouts inclusive of Bunkers, which contain 444 tons ; and Gurdit Singh Esqr., as Time Charterer.

1. That the said A. Bone Esqr. Hongkong, agrees to let and the said Gurdit Singh Esqr., agrees to hire the said Steamship for the term of six calender months, she being then placed at the disposal of the Charterers at Honkong in such dock, or at such wharf or place (where she may always safely lie afloat) as charterers may direct, she being then tight staunch, strong and in every way fitted for the service (and with full equipment of officers, seamen, engineers and firemen for vessel of her tonnage) to be employed in such lawful trades in Asia not North of Vladivostock nor west of Suez, European Asia excluded, including Australia, but excluding Africa with the exception of Mauritius ; including west coast of Canada, United States of North America, Mexico, Central and South America, as Charterers or their Agents shall direct on the following conditions :—

The act of God, the king's enemies, pirates, robbers by land or sea ; restraint of princes, rulers, or people ; loss or damages from machinery, boilers or steam or from explosion, heat or fire on board, in bulk or craft or on shore jettison, baratry; collision, any act, neglect or default whatsoever of pilots ; master, or crew in the management or navigation of the ship and all and every manner of the dangers and accidents of the seas, rivers and canals and of navigation of what ever nature or kind, or mutually accepted.

General Average, if any, to be settled according to York Antwerp Rules, 1890, as construed and governed by British Law.

2. That the owners shall provide and pay for all the oils, paints and dock store, and for all the provisions and wages of the Captain, Officers, Engineers, Firemen and Crew, shall pay for the insurance of the vessel, also for all engine room stores and maintain her in a thoroughly efficient state in hull and machinery for the service. That the Charterer shall provide and pay for all the coals, fuel, port charges, pilotages, agencies, commission and all other charges whatsoever except those before stated.

3. That the Charterer shall pay for the use and hire of the said vessel at the rate of 11,000 Eleven Thousand dollars Honkong currency registered ton per calender month commencing on the date of delivery, say about 27-28th March 1914 and at the same rate for any part of a month's hire to continue from the time specified for terminating the Charter until her delivery to Agents unless lost at Hongkong.

4. Payment to be made in advance monthly to owners' agent at Hongkong in cash as per clause No 33 and in default of such payment as therein specified the owners shall have the faculty of withdrawing the said steamship from the service of the Charterer

without prejudice to any claim, they, the owners may otherwise have on the Charterer in persuance of this Charter.

5. The steamer shall be ready for Charterer at Hongkong on 31st March 1914, or Charterer shall have the option of maintaining or cancelling this Charter. This Charter shall commence 20 hours after notice in writing has been given to Charterer that the steamer is ready to receive cargo with clean swept holders, but the Charter shall not commence before 25th March 1914 unless with the Charterer's consent.

6. That when necessary and recommended by Survey Report, the steamer shall be docked at owner's expense and time so used shall not count under this charter party.

7. That any reasonable quantity of bunker coal on board the steamer at the commencement or termination of this Charter shall be taken over respectively by the Charterer or owners at market price of the port.

8. That the cargo or cargoes shall be loaded or discharged in any dock or at any wharf or place that Charterer may direct where the steamer can always be afloat.

9. That the whole reach and burthen of the ship (not being more than shall reasonably stow and carry),

shall be at the Charterer's disposal, reserving only proper and sufficient space for ship's officers, crew, tackle, apparel, furniture provisions stores and water etc.

10. That the Captain shall prosecute his voyage with the utmost despatch and shall render all customary assistance with ship's crew and boats.

11. That the Captain (although appointed by the owners) shall be under the orders and directions of the Charterer, as regards employment, agency or other arrangements provided the same be within the terms of the Charter and the Charterer hereby agree to indemnify the owners from all consequences or liabilities that may arise from the Captain's signing bills of lading or in otherwise complying with the same, so long as these acts are performed with the consent of the Charterer or their agent, provided that at the time it is in the power of the Captain to consult them.

12. That if the Charterer have reasons to be dissatisfied with the conduct of the Captain, Officers or Engineers the owners shall on receiving particulars of the complaint, investigate the same, and if necessary make a change in the appointment.

13. That the master shall be furnished from time to time all requisite instructions and sailing directions and shall keep a full and correct log of the voyage or

voyages which are to be patent to Charterer or their agents.

14. That in the event of loss of time from deficiencies of men or stores, break down of machinery or damages preventing the working of the vessel for more than 48 working hours, the payment of hire shall cease until she is again in an efficient state to resume her service; but should the vessel be driven into port or anchorage by stress of weather or from any accident to the cargo such detention or loss of time shall be at the Charterer's risk and expenses.

15. Any time used for repairs or any time, which under previous clauses does not count for payment of hire may at the option of the charterer be reckoned as part of the term of this charter party, or in addition to the said term, provided notice be given at the time to the owner's agent.

16. That should the vessel be lost, any hire money paid in advance and not earned (reckoning from the date of loss or being last heard of) shall be returned to the Characterer.

* * * * * *

17. That the vessel is only to be employed in strictly neutral trade, and is not to carry contraband

of war, for trade to or from ports declared under blockade and in the event of the trade stipulated for becoming impossible in consequence of war, blockade, or hostilities this Charter shall forthwith terminate.

18. No goods injurious to the vessel to be shipped during the currency of this charter.

* * * *

19. That the owners shall have a lien upon all cargoes and all sub-freights and passenger money for hire money due under this Charter and Charterer to have a lien on the ship for all monies paid in advance and not earned.

* * * *

20. The net results of any salvage after payment of any award to master and crew, if required, shall be equally divided between owners and Charterer; time so used to count under this Charter.

21. Custom house officials, purser and doctor, watchers and tallymen to be victualled by the steamer at one doller and fifty cents (Hongkong) $ 1.50 per day. Room shall if required be provided for purser and doctor, who shall mess with the master at Charterer's expenses.

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22. Should the officers, engineers or crew of the steamer be required to work in port on Sunday or before six A.M. and after 6 P.M. on week days allowance for work so performed shall be paid to them by the Charterer viz.—engineers and officers at 50 Hongkong cents (or the equivalent) per hour, and steamers crew at the rate of 12 Hongkong cents per hour.

23. That should any dispute arise between the owners and the Charterer the matter in dispute shall be referred to three persons in Hongkong, one to be appointed by each of the party hereto, and the third by the two so chosen, their decision or that of any two of them, shall be final, and for the purposes of enforcing any award. This agreement may be made a rule of court.

24. *Penalty for non-performance* of this contract shall be in accordance with the estimated amount of damages.

25. If required sufficient cash for steamer's disbursements but not exceeding what is necessary, to be advanced to the Captain by the Charterer at the various ports of call free of commission and insurance.

* * * *

26. No charge to be made against the owners of the steamer for agency at any of the ports of call.

27. The steamer to be sufficiently immersed in the master's judgment to be sea worthy for the various passages. No cargo to be carried on deck in the transpacific passenger trade when carrying more than 100 passengers provided always that such number is allowed by the authorities of ports of departure and destination.

28. All expenses due to quarantine to be paid by Charterer and hire to be paid during detention in consequence thereof.

29. All cargo claims to be paid by the Charterer.

30. Charterer shall pay all charges and expenses arising through taking steerage passengers and shall supply all provisions, water, galleys, cooks, fittings and medicines, medical stores, also doctor and purser if required by Charterer—in every respect in accordance with the Hongkong Ordinance and to the satisfaction of the immigration officers, Hongkong, passengers certificate for a full compliment of steerage passengers, for which the measures under the certificate, with the necessary boats and rafts to be provided by the owners. Charterer to pay for immigration license at Hongkong Time used for building, fittings and removing fittings to count under this Charter.

* * * *

31. On re-delivery the vessel to be reconditioned and restored to owners in her original state, fair, wear and tear excepted.

32. Owners guarantee that the vessel can procure a Hongkong passenger certificate.

33. One month's hire to be paid on signing this Charter and another month's hire within one week from commencement of Charter, another two month's hire to be paid at Hongkong within 14 days from date of commencement of charter but not later than the day before steamer's departure from Japan for Canada Afterwards another two months, hire to be paid by Charterer to owners agent at Hongkong at the due date, two months after commencement of Charter.

34. In the event of the steamer being detained or seized on account of Charterer not complying with the laws and regulations of the respective Government, owners will be paid under such detention and until steamer is redelivered in Hongkong.

* * * *

35. While in the transpacific trade and making consecutive voyages to the west coast of America the

steamer is to have at least six days in Hongkong between arrival and departure for the customary cleaning of boilers and general overhaul of engines, such time to count under the charter and payment of hire to continue uninterupted.

36. Any overpaid charter money to be returned to Charterer pro rate according to the time steamer is employed under this charter ; should charter hire not be paid as above stated, owners are aliowed to order steamer to Hongkong on terms as stated in clause 5.

37. Owners shall not be obliged to equip the steamer with wireless telegraphy.

Witness to the Signature (Sd.) GURDIT SINGH,

(Sd.) R. SOLOMON. (Sd.) A. BONE,

For the Owners

by Telegraphed Authority

Dated Kobe, 23rd March 1914.

———:o:———

CHPTER IV.

Canada's Hideous Crime under cover of law.

—:o:—

The report of the Komagatamaru Enquiry Committee (appointed by the Government of India) admits clearly in paragraph 10. line 9 that the ship had accomodation for 533 passengers and that had the hope of getting 500 passengers been fulfilled, I would have got thereby one hundred thousand dollars and huge profits would have accrued. But alas the Committee caring not a whit for truth and fairness purposely ignores to record the well known fact that the Honkong Government arrested me on the eve of our departure to scatter the five hundred passengers by coercion and intimidation. No charge was framed against me nor was I told what I had done to incur Governmental wrath. Obviously this was done to scare away my followers. Woe to those who dare to make such a bold venture !

The Committee further pointed out that out of the hundred thousard dollars ten thousand would have to be expended on coal and other provisions and that after two months many passengers could have been got for the next trip. But the Committee for reasons best known to it under estimated the figures for the income from the cargo frieght which would have far exceeded the expenditure on coal and provisions and this would have fetched me a profit of more than a hundred thousand dollars for each trip. That was why the Hongkong Government inspite of the fact that legal demands made upon the ship had been duly met, having deliberated with my legal advisors paid $125 (according to the Emigration Act, Hongkong) to the "Government Passage Office" and bought 500 pass tickts, upon each one of which was written—one passenger fron Hongkong to Vancouver.

The Committee found the vouchers in my office, yet tried in vain to prove that the pass tickets were counterfeit ones, by alleging that they were white. Vide Report para 7. Everything relating to the ship had been published in the Post Office Gazette and five hundred passengers were ready to embark when all of a sudden the Government arrested me and took possession of my office on 25th March, 1924 although after examining all my papers and finding nothing objectionable, they released me on bail. On the 28th March 1914, I was presented before the Court, but

the Police withdrew the case. Advantage was taken of my arrest and the intending passengers were intimidated to give up the idea of their projected voyage The result was that only one hundred and sixty five passengers remained while pass tickets had been obtained for five hundred passengers. Para 4, of the Committee's report clearly admits that before my arrest multitudes of men were gathering in groups every day to book themselves for the voyage, but as the Government was bent upon ruining my enterprise I was prepared even to return the fares of all those who had already booked passage. But they persisted with the result, that the ship had to wait, for passengers, for six days at Shanghai and for five days at Kobe, Japan. Even then the required number of passengers could not be got. Moreover some of the passengers were not able to pay their fares on the spot, and hundies amounting to $ 24,000, (*vide* Komagatamaru Enquiry Committee Report para 10) had to be accepted. The Hongkong Government is responsible for the loss of a hundred thousand dollars. I served notice upon the Hongkong Government, through my solicitors for the loss incurred as it had detained my ship for a considerable period even after the case against me had been withdrawn. The Chinese and the Japanese people wondered why the Government did not detain other ships that were sailing every day, and why this particular ship, the Komagatamaru, had been held back but these simple folk, unaccustomed to the

wiles of the alien Government, did not know that the ship belonged to the helpless enslaved subjects, and that the same Government which was to administer justice on the matter, was itself responsible for the loss. When persons enquired of me the reason why the ship had been detained, I used to say in reply that Government was only testing our loyalty. Many Sikh, Hindu and Mohammadan gentlemen grew very angry at times, but I always pacified them.

My interview with Mr. Severn, the acting Governor of Hongkong :—

On 3rd April 1914, when we three or four gentlemen were talking with one another on the road side an Englishman was seen hallooing me by my name. As I approached him, he stretched his hands (for a hand shake) out of the Rickshaw in which he was sitting, and asked me, if I recognised him. I was about to say something when he gave out his name as Mr, Severn. Atonce I recollected that he was an Englishman of noble descent, and he was the same man who once held the office of District Magistrate and some other similar posts in the Selangor State, where I had been previously engaged in trade and contractorship. He told me that he was occupying the post of the Colonial Secretary at Hongkong, but was discharging the duties of the Acting Governor as well, as the Governor Mr. May had gone on furlough. The loving words that

were used towards me by Mr. Severn, on this occasion, need not be given here, suffice to say that I still remember them gratefully. After about a quarter of an hour's conversation, the next day (the 4th April 1914) was appointed for our interview. Accordingly the next day, I went to him with some presents worth five or six hundred dollars, to which I drew his attention, but he remarked with some irritation "You are my friend and you are perfectly aware that I never accept nor have I any desire for any presents ; how dare you bring these presents to my presence ?" I felt rather awkward, and replied "Yes, I know it perfectly well but you know I had lately an occasion to reside for some years in Hindustan, and there this practice, condemnable though it is, is so prevalent that it was engrafted on to me, for which I am certainly to be blamed. We then talked together for more than an hour and a half, on miscellaneous matters of which the followfng is relevant to the present case :—

MYSELF :—"Would you please let me know why the ship has been detained though all legal requirements have been complied with ?"

SEVERN I—"Oh yes, I called to the Canadian Government at Ottawa, and to the Indian Authorities telling them that Komagata-maru was carrying Sikhs to Canada, and inquiring of them their opinion on the

point. But six days have elapsed and I have received no reply as yet, and so I have permitted your embarkation. You are therefore at liberty to embark, but can you kindly let me know your object in making this voyage to Canada"?

MYSELF :—"Yes, by all means. My object in launching this project is patent on the surface and may be summed up in one word—the promotion of the material well being of my country. We, the enslaved people of India are in the throes of a fierce economic, and political struggle, poverty has stamped its indelible mark on our Country, famine and starvation stalk like spectres in the land capturing thousands every year as their victims. British Domination in India is another name for the disguised British exploitation of the soil, both of its wealth and intellect. Hardly any effective step is taken by the Government to improve the agriculture and industry of the Country. The people have no opportunity or provisions to be trained in any useful and profitable art or industry. We do therefore stand in need of emigrating to far off lands where the industrious sons of India can

earn by manual labour a competency for themselves and their families and where they may acquire efficiency in the various technical and industrial pursuits which are essential for the economic salvation of the Country. Besides, the visions of men are widened by travel and contact with the citizens of a free country will infuse a spirit of independence and foster yearning for freedom in the minds of the emasculated subjects of alien rule. But my object is purely commercial and economic and is in no way political.

SEVERN :—How many Indians are prepared to undertake this enterprise?

MYSELF :—At present 25,000 persons are ready for it. They have assured me that they would place at my disposal £500,000 for this purpose. This first trip is an experimental one. On my return from Canada, I will equip 4 ships, and take them from Calcutta to Canada and from Bombay to Brazil, and a regular service would thus be commenced.

SEVERN :—"What would you do if the Canadians do not allow you to land?"

MYSELF :—"Well, we have already thought about it. First of all we know that the Canadian Law which prohibited immigrants to land have been annulled in the court of the Chief Justice, Mr. Hunter, on 24th November 1915 and moreover, we being British Subjects are in every way entitled to land. However, if the Canadian Government should persist in objecting to our landing we would not mind, for we shall be free to take our ship to Brazil in South America. That country is free and requires to be peopled earnings there are in no case lower than in Canada, and the Country is most suitable for trading purposes for many of the Indian commodities can be exchanged there very profitably. But it is your duty, too, to help us to land in Canada."

SEVERN :—"Oh yes, I shall write to the Canadian Government to allow you to land, and I will also write to the Government of India for it is its duty as well to help you."

MYSELF :—"I would also try to influence the Government of India through "The Chief Khalsa Dewn' to take steps for the protection of our rights as British Subjects.

SEVERN :—"Would you, if necessary, employ the same principle of passive resistance which Mr. Gandhi now a days employs in Africa?

MYSELF :—"Oh yes, certainly in the like manner, for Mr. Gandhi's weapon of passive resistance is effective and the only weapon for the otherwise unarmed and poor Indians, and we approve of his methods."

Towards the close of the interview, I asked "Well Sir, what.do you think about it ?" The Immigration act of Canada required us to embark from Calcutta to Canada. But you know, we have our own ship : we can go to Calcutta, take more passengers from that place and then leave for Canada. That would be rather profitable for us. But what do you think, would the commencing of our voyage from Calcutta be advantageous to the Canadian Government or would our starting from Honkong suit them better?"

Mr. Severn laughed a little and replied, "In my opinion it does not matter the least for the Canadian Government if you start either form Calcutta or from Honkong, for such restrictions have been done away with now."

The ship left the port the very day *i. e.* on 4th April 1914 after we had suffered so enormously owing

to the unjust and hostile conduct of the Honkong Government which was directly responsible for purposely injuring our concern. No nation in the world, barring the British, deems it an offence to carry on trade within legal limits. The documents mentioned above amply testify to the fact that the object of the voyage was perfectly lawful and the organisers did not infringe any section of law,

Innumerable difficulties and obstacles were placed in our way, by the Authorities of the Nation that govern us, at Shanghai and Kobe details of which and the journey on the high seas, I am compelled to leave out owing to the fear that the size of the book will increase.

On 21st May 1914, the ship arrived at Victoria. The Officers with a squadron of steamboats hemmed in the ship. The doctors certified that the ship was quite clean and the passengers healthy. According to the law, there remained nothing to impede the progress of the ship to Vancouver. Harbour regulations require each and every ship to obtain a clearance paper from the Authorities before it is allowed to leave any harbour. The clearance papers give the number of passengers in the ship, her tonnage, and her draft of water and are shown at the destination, so that the officers there may be able to detect any loss of life that might have occured during the voyage or may find out any irregularity that might

have taken place. When the ship was making ready to proceed to Vancouver, the authorities demanded the clearance papers, in order to have a look at it. It was the duty of the Captain to present it but he said that it was lost. The Authorities were now preparing to order the ship to sail back to Japan. A telegram to the same effect was despatched to the Central Government in Ottawa. In fact it was a matter of little significance, for I told them that I could procure at my own expense a copy of the clearance paper through telegraph, from Yokohama, Japan. But inspite of my offer the authorities remained obdurately stern. However in the meantime Sardar Daljit Singh, my private secretary, found out the clearance papers hidden somewhere. It might be, the Captain had forgotten where he had placed the paper. However, the officer's first attack proved futile, and the ship arrived at Vancouver during the dark on the 22nd May 1914. Instead of allowing me or my subordinates to deliver at the harbour master's office a true and full report of the ship immediately, we were rather regarded as outcasts with the right of landing refused to us.

It is necessary to state here the usual procedure that is followed on the arrival of any ship and what was actually done in our case.

When the health officers had certified and the full report of the ship had been delivered by the agent

consignee, master, or person incharge of the ship at the Harbour Master's office or at the harbour Commissioner's office, the passengers ought to have been allowed to land, and kept under official supervision in a Government building, especially provided for the country while thet rest were to have been deported back in the return trip of the same vessel. Such was the procedure usually followed in the case of other vessels as will appear from section 14 of the by-laws of the Corporation of the Harbour Commissioner's of Vancouver B. C, 1914, the text of which is quoted below.

"The Agent, consignee, master or person incharge of every vessel arriving in the harbour shall without delay and before she breaks bulk, make and cause to be delivered at the Harbour Master's office a true and correct report in writing, signed and certified by him, of the arrival of the vessel, of her tonnage, and of her draft of water and shall pay all dues in respect of the vessel and of her cargo to the Harbour Master, or any person authorside by a resolution of the Commissioner's to receive the same; and shall also then pay all arreas of dues, and all penalties then due to the said corporation in respect of the vessel, or of her cargo on any previous voyage thereof."

Note :—Contrary to the requirements of this by-law, neither I nor any other person acting on my

behalf, was allowed to deliver the report of the ship at the Harbour Master's office.

The Commissioner of the Harbour or his Agents may from year to year allot for the use of any regular line of vessels trading to the Harbour of Vancouver, space or any position of the wharves, piers or vacant ground then under their jurisdiction, and the Harbour Master, or such other officer as is thereto authorised by the Commissioner ; may, on behalf of the Commissioner and under their directions, allot to the vessels "space or any position of the wharves piers or vacant ground," and the Harbour Master may "permit the erection thereon of temporary buildings and plinth and, he may, acting as aforesaid, allot any part of the same for the piling thereon of firewood or other lumber, or of other articles," the whole subject to such rate of charges and for such period as is from time to time fixed by the Commissioner ; and such allotment shall be in writing. Upon the expiry of the term of such allotment, the space so allotted shall forthwith be cleared of all buildings, goods or materials of any kind and by the person to whom the same may have been allotted.

According to Sec. 18. (a) "The Harbour Master shall assign to each vessel arriving at the harbour the berth it shall occupy giving precedence when practicabe, to a vessel with cargo over a vessel with ballast or taking in cargo."

* * *

And may change such berth from time to time as he sees fit, and such assignment of a berth may be made by a verbal notice to the agent, consignee, master or person incharge of the vessel, on each trip of the vessel, and no such vessel shall take up or occupy a berth in the harbour unless such berth has been allotted to the agent of the vessel or has been assigned to her by the harbour master; provided, however.

(b) That it shall be the duty of the Harbour Master to assign berth at any wharf or pier constituting private property in the Harbour to vessels owner posessed or Chartered by or consigned to, proprietors of said wharf or pier, and no other vessel shall be assigned berth at such wharf or pier; except when there shall be a sufficient berth at the said wharf or pier not then occupied by a vessel owner, Chartered by or consigned to the proprietors of said wharf or pier and then the harbour master may, at his direction, assign berth to another vessel at such then unoccupied space or any private wharf or pier, until such time as the space shall be required for berthing a vessel owned, charted by or consigned to the proprietors or such wharf or pier, when it shall be the duty of the Harbour Master to cause the vessel then occupying the said consignee, master, or person incharge of the ship at the harbour master's office or at the harbour Commissioner's office, the passengers ought to have

been allowed to land, and kept under official supervision in a Government building, especially provided for the purpose, where due selection should have been made of those who were to be permitted to remain in the country while the rest were to have been deported back in the return trip of the same vessel. Such was the procedure usually followed in the case of other vessels as will appear from section 14 of the by-laws of the Corporation of the Harbour Commissioner's of Vancouver B. C, 1914, the text of which is quoted below.

"The Agent, consignee, master or person incharge of every vessel arriving in the harbour shall without delay and before she breaks bulk, make a cause to be delivered at the harbour master's office a true and correct report in writing, signed and certified by him, of the arrival of the vessel, of her tonnage, and of her draft of water and shall pay all dues in respect of the vessel and of her cargo to the harbour master, or any person authorised by a resolution of the Commissioner's to receive the same; and shall also then pay all arrears of dues, and all penalties then due to the said corporation in respect of the vessel, or of her cargo on any previous voyage thereof.

Berth to be removed to some other locations "loading or unloading from vessels or rafts in the harbour shall commence soon as possible and shall be

carried on with dilligence to the satisfaction of the harbour master,

NOTE :—What to speak of commencing unloading with diligence, we were not even allowed to unload. Since none of the passengers on board were permitted to go ashore, the supply of provisions and water ran short. It was after a long and protected communication with the Immigration Department that Inspector Hopkinson came to see me and wanted to converse with me confidentially. At first he had showed an inclimation to approach me through some passengers, but then he decided to take me direct into his confidence. He told me that the Canadian Government would regard no expenditure as too heavy to prevent our landing, that he was well acquainted with Indians and he had been deputed there by the Indian Government to advise the Immigra tion department as to the customs and manners of the Indians and finally that he had been sent to me by Mr. Reed, Agent to the said Department, to have a frank talk with me as one gentleman with another so that I might come to terms with them, otherwise the law would not stand in any good stead. After prolonged discussion Mr. Hopkinson consented to accept a sum of £2,000 as bribe to lead us out of the tangle. Mr. Hopkinson held out that this was the only way open to us for effecting our landing and I agreed to relieve the sufferings of the passengers. I was to hand over

to him an earnest of £1,000 (gold), the remainder to be paid when all my passengers had landed. Unfortunately the settlement could not be effected as Mr, Hopkinson wanted me to swear by the Guru Granth Sahib that I would not mention this to anybody. I told him plainly that it was not for me to swear by the Guru and that the £2,000 sterling were to be paid from the chest of the Sri Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Company, and the fact therefore, could not be concealed from the rest of the community. This upset Mr. Hopkinson and he left me with the threat :—"I will see you." This incident became the stumbling block in our way. I was quite prepared to pay the sum as I told my fellow passengers but I could not agree to keep it a secret for all time to come. The Komagatamaru Enquiry Committee have repeatedly charged me of defrauding the passengers, who however had approved of my conduct and they firmly believed that I was acting in good faith in the service of the country and my people. My fellow passengers tried to persuade Mr. Hopkinson to accept the money without demanding any oath but he declined to do so saying that in the first instance I had proceeded wrongly and secondly the secrecy of the arrangement had been violated and it was possible that the Indian Committee on the main land might get scent of it and a charge of bribery might be laid at the door of himself and the Immigration Department. The good that came out of this rupture was that attempts at creating split between

me and the passengers failed. This distinguished the last ray of hope of the passengers' landing. We were prisoners in the hands of the Immigration department ; all our correspondence and purchase of provisions were effected through them. Our plight was worse than that of a wretched bird in the hands of an infuriated bird hunter. At last we were obliged to enter into correspondence for succour with the officers of the said department, copies of which are appended hereafter.

It is recorded in para 14 of the Report of the "Komagatamaru" Enquity Committee that the vessel reached Vancouvar on May 23rd 1914. The port officials prohibited all passengers except a few to land, for they failed, in their opinion, to fulfil the conditions laid down by the reglations of the Dominions of Canada. Consequently only a few persons, including Dr. Raghu Nath and Bhan Singh, a student, were allowed to land I should very much like to know from the Enquiry Committee why Raghunath's wife and child were not mentioned in this connection and why have they not specified what particular conditions of the Canadian immigration laws were not fulfiled by the other passengers which this Raghunath with his wife and child and Bhan Singh did.

At this stage I should like to draw attention to the Canadian regulations and to the procedure followed

by the Canadian Officials. According to these resolutions, (mentioned in para 3 of the B. C. Report) any person travelling direct from his home to Canada and having $200 in his possession was entitled to land ; but the following classes of persons were exempted from the said restrictions :—

Preachers, Traders, Students, Tourists,
Government Officials.

It is evident that the Dominion Officials defied their own laws as established by the decision of chief Justice Hunter announced on 24th November 1913 wherein he had set aside the said regulations but these were applied against us, quite arbitrarily, in order to prevent us from landing. Even granting that the Canadian Officials had any Justification for considering the said regulations in vogue they could on no account have prohibited the landing of the above mentioned five classes of passengers and the vessel carried no less than 50 persons who should be counted as preachers (Granthis, Maulvis), students and traders. I was myself a ship merchant who had to load and unload cargo and, according to the charter contract, had to pay customs and other duties and purchas provision and victuals. I had every right to land. The Dominion Government was not within the bound of law and equity to prohibit me to do so. I challenge it now as I did then, that I want to see the law by which I was thus,

to all intents and purposes, kept imprisoned on the waters for nearly two months at Vancouver and more than two months on the journey which caused me the heavy loss of about 80,00,000 of rupees. Were the Government of India to prohibit any Japanese subject from landing on the shores of our country and were they to persecute him or the subjects of any other power in the world as we were persecuted on the shores of the British Dominion of Canada the world would have witnessed an awful calamity of a terrible war. But the alien Government protects us in no way and holds our lives at a pins fee. I shall fully establish the wrongs done to me when later on I shall relate some incidents and present certain documents, for the return of which I have asked the Government of India. For the present it will suffice to mention that the utmost the Government of Canada could do was to prosecute me in a court of law for any breach of law for which I might have been responssible and to get me sentensed. They did not do so, evidently because I had violated no law. My only fault was that I had not ministered to the greed of Mr. Hopkinson and he thought it his duty to carry out the threat he had flung at me. Neither I nor any of my men were allowed to go on shore though Mr. Hopkinson knew well enough that I was under obligation to pay up an instalment of $22,000 to the owners of the ship before June 4th, 1914 and that I could not do so unless I went to the shore and to a bank. Further that in the event of the non-payment of the instalment, the

owners of the vessels according to the charter agreement would be entitled to forfeit the sums paid previously by me and to take possession of the ship and take it wherever they pleased. The Government of Canada wanted to make the whole thing appear like a farce to the outside world after having defrauded our rights and having debarred me from entering in to Canada. Thus they could have said that they were not harsh to the Indians but we could not pay our liabilities for which we were dispossessed of the ship by the owners. We did our best to meet this contingency and our Indian brethern of Vancouver rushed with thousands of rupees for our help. Most of them were Sikhs. Their business and Land proprietor-ship exceeded 7 million dollars (Rupees two crorers). They wanted to offer the whole of this amount in charity to the "Sri Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Co." but the most difficult of all questions was that of my own landing because a widely travelled, experienced and honest man was required to carry out this great mercantile project which the Government of Canada wanted to ruin. To thwart the end they restrained me from landing by resorting to force and fraud. No friend of mine was given access to me, neither could I send any of my own men to them. Mr. Bird, an Advocate wanted to see me on 4th June 1914 01 professional duty but he was not allowed to do so. That he was so held up can be proved from the papers now in possession of the Government.

It is necessary to state here that we corresponded with Mr. Reed, the head Immigration Officers ; Khalsa Committee, Gurdwara, Vancouver ; (through telegram etc.) the Government at Ottawa, the Government of India, British Parliament, His Majesty George V the Emperor ; the Maharajas of Nabha and Patiala ; the Chief Khalsa Dewan Amritsar ; the Hindu Sabha and various other bodies. It is almost impossible to get all the correspondence because the papers in our office were seized by the Police when we were forced to leave Komagatamaru at the point of bayonets. They were never returned to us afterwards and must be in the possession of the Governments of Punjab and Bengal. The correspondence with the Khalsa Gurdwara Committee, Vancouver, also, could not be recovered because the officers of the Khalsa Committee were shot dead, presumably at the instigation of the authorities by Bela Singh a C. I. Dinformer, and the office papers somehow mysteriously disappeaed. We could however procure copies of some of the correspondence, though incomplete, from the office of our legal advisors which will throw a flood of light on the actual course of events and are reproduced below in proper places. If "the History of our voyage" spoken of in para 17 of the Komagatamaru Enquiry Committee be returned to me by the Government fuller light may be thrown upon the subject. On page 60 of the judgment sheet in the case against Sardar Balwant Singh which (case) was

disposed of by the Special Commissioner, Gopal Das Bhandari of Amritsar—this report is referred to as having been filed in the case. Sardar Balwant Singh was sent to the gallows in 1917, at Lahore, his gravest fault being the supplying of provisions for his fellow countrymen on board the Komagatamaru Steamship.

I have got copies of documents in my possession to prove that we engaged a lawyer as soon as our ship arrived. Had it been our intention to go against law we would well have spared ourselves the fees that we paid for legal advice, and aiso the money that we spent on telegrams etc. amounting to thousands of rupees.

We proceeded legally through our Solicitors, the reply to whose letter from the Immigration Department is reproduced below.

Immigration Branch,
Department of the Interior Canada

Vancouver B. C.
May 23rd 1913.

I. R./E. C.

To. Messrs Macvall, Bird Macdonald & Darning,
Barristers etc.

Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Gurdit Singh etc. All on
Board S. S Komagatamaru.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your communication of date. When Boards of Enquiry are being held, you will be notified.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) Malcolm, R. I. Reed.

Note :—It is evident from this letter that, I served the following notice on the authorities protesting against my illegal detention and holding them responsible for the damages I suffered thereby.

Vancouvar, B. C.

23rd May 1924.

Sir,

I hereby give you notice that if you do not let me go ashore you will be held responsible for the damages which I have to suffer. You know that I am a merchant and there is no law to prevent the merchants to go on shore. I have to buy necessary provisions for the steamer.

You can detain the passengers, not me, you are respnosible for the damages.

(Sd.) Gurdit Singh,
Charterer S. S. Komagatamaru.

As a merchant and Charterer of a ship I was immune from the disabilities attaching to an "immigrant" and hence could not, under any circumstances, be debarred from landing according to the clearly stated terms of the law. I now draw the kind attention of the readers to the following excerpts from the Canadian Immigration Act

Excerpts from the Canadian Immigration Act.

* * * * * *

(g) "Immigrant" means a person who enters Canada with intention of acquiring Canadian domicile, or for the purposes of this every person entering Canada shall be presumed to be an Immigrant unless belonging to one of the following classes of persons, herein after called "Non-Immigrant Classes :—

(i) Canadian Citizens, and persons, who have Canadian domicile.

(ii) Diplomatic and Consular Officers and all accredited representatives and officials of British or Foreign Government, their suites families and guests coming to Canada to reside or to discharge any official duty or to through transit.

(iii) Officers and men with their wives and families belonging to or connected with his Majesty's regular naval and military forces.

(iv) Tourists and travellers merely passing through Canada to another country.

(v) Students entering Canada for the purposes of attendance, and while in actual attendance, at any University or College authorised by statute or by charter to confer degrees or at any high school or collegiate institute recognised as such for the purpose of this act by the Minister.

(vi) Members of dramatic, musical, artistic, athletic or spectacular organisations entering Canada temporarily for the purpose of giving public performances or exhibitions of an entertaining or instructive nature, and actors and artists; lecturers, musicians, priests and ministers of religion, professors of colleges or other educational institutions, and commercial travellers entering Canada for the temporary exercise of their respective callings."

In fragrant defiance of Sec. vi of the Immigration Act. quoted above the authorities kept me a prisoner on board the ship. This is not all. The act provides for the release under a bond with approved security or deposit of money in lien thereof of any persons detained under this act. The Gurdwara Committee were prepared to stand security for the passengers of Komagatamaru and offered to put their entire resources exceeding two crores of rupees at our disposal for deposit but our prayer for release under this section was peremptorily. See 33 of the Immigration act reads as follows :—.

From—Immigration Act. 33 paras 11 and 12.

(11) Pending the final disposition of the case of any person detained or taken into custody for any cause under this act he may be released under a bond, which bond may be in the form F. in the schedule to this act, with security approved by the officer-in-charge in lien of a bond, and to an amount approved by such officers ; upon condition that such persons shall appeal before a board of enquiry of officers acting as such at any port of entry named by the officer incharge, and at such time as shall be named for examination in regard to the cause or complaint on account of which he has been detained or taken into custody.

Dominion Immigration Agent and Inspector,
Vancouver, June 15th 1914.

To the Secretary,
Governor General,
Ottawa.

Yours 17th Gurdit Singh gratefully acknowledged. As Counsel for Gurdit Singh Immigrants Komagata-maru declare that statement that clients are allowed consult their solicitors only partially true. Have interviewed Gurdit Singh only once. Am not allowed to go on board nor him to come on land. Every difficulty thrown in my way of communication. Proceedings being delayed and obstructed. Desire your interventions.

J. Edward Bird.

Vancouver, B. C.
July 7th 1914.

R. L. Reid, Esqr., K. C.,
Canada Life Building, Vancouver.

Dear Sir,

Re. Komagatamaru.

I went on board this moring through the kind offices of your Mr. Ladner, and had a full discussion with Gurdit Singh and his passengers and after polling them most carefully have received written instructions not only from Gurdit Singh but signed by a Committee appointed by the passengers agreeing to dispense with

Board of Enquiry. All they now wish is permission to land the cargo and take on freight for the Orient.

As desired by you, I shall put in another letter certain propositions which I desire you to consider, but in the meantime, as I promised, I now send you herewith the original letter of Messrs Wilkinson and Grist, Barristers, 9, Omen's Road, Hongkong which has led Gurdit Singh to come to Canada and he has come into Canada in the utmost good faith, believing he had a right to land his passengers, and assuring them on the opinions of these barristers, men of standing in practice in Hongkong, that there will be no difficulty to him.

I write this letter as a ground that the Depot should now treat Gurdit Singh and his passengers with the utmost consideration. He has not come here, as it has been freely canvassed, in defiance of the laws of Canada, but believing as a British subject that he and his passengers were entitled as of right to come into Canada.

I also would respectfully point out that Colonial Secretary at Hongkong cabled to the Governor General in Council at Ottawa and to the Indian authorities at London on or about the 24th March last stating that the Komagatamaru was proposing to sail on the 28th with a ship load of Hindu passengers for Canada. The Governor at Hongkong actually held up the ship until the 4th day of April, refusing to give her clearance until

he heard from Canada and not hearing from Canada on the 4th April, through the Colonial Secretary Mr. Severn, who is a personal friend of Mr. Gurdit Singh provided for the clearance of the ship for Vancouver.

These things should, I believe, put an entirely different light on the matter, and I respectfully urge that you impress the situation upon your principals. The Hindus in Vancouver and on board the ship are demonstrating, in my belief, that they have come here, as previously stated by me, as good citizens, making only what they believed was their right, and not in defiance of law and order.

I would also respectfully put to you that had I been given free access to Gurdit Singh and rights of consultation with him previously, those matters that I now am prepared to evidence to you by correspondence with the Colonial Secretary and otherwise would have been open to your department for consideration and discussion.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) J. E. Bird.

Note—

Readers kind attention is drawn to a letter printed on pages 18 and 19 which also puts light on the matter.

Shriman Bhai Bhag Singh Ji.

Sat Sri Akal.

We cannot fully thank you for your kindness which you have done us by paying the instalment. We hope you will try your best for the landing of the passengers in the same way. Now pray, do not waste money on lawyers in this way, but oblige him to try for an early landing of Baba Gurdit Singh Ji. Everything will be alright then. We will be in loss till Baba Ji is a prisoner in this way. So try for Baba Ji's landing with all your heart first of all. Do inform us about the actuity of the lawyer in this respect.

Sd. Daljit Singh.

Macneill, Bird, Macdonald & Darling,
Metropolitan Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

20th June 1914.

Messrs Bowser, Reid and Walbridge,
Barristers,
Canada Life Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Komagatamaru.

Pursuant to my conversation with your Mr. R. L. Reid and your Mr. W. H. D. Landner, I beg to advise you that I am now prepared to make an offer similar to that made by Mr. Reid to me, and that at the start the Hindu Committee who were instructing me on behalf of the Immigrants on board the Komagatamaru were not prepared to accept, and I now make the following propositions for the purpose of enabling the hearing of decision of the applications of these men on board the ship to be disposed of at the earliest possible date. If the Immigration Authorities will facilitate the bringing on of a fair, reasonable case before the board of enquiry, not involving any question either of previous domicile or lease. Out of one or more cases that will test the validity of the orders in Counsel relied upon by the Immigrants entering Canada, I am prepared to take a habeas corpus immediately for the purpose of testing

same, except proforma dismissal of the application before a single Judge and immediately appeal to the Court of Appeal now sitting at Victoria, providing your department will secure through the Attorney General of the Province, or otherwise, the continued sitting of the present Court of Appeal to hear the matter specially and at once, security for costs to be waved, no attempt to be made to prejudice the application of the other Hindus for entry into Canada, and no Boards of Enquiry to be proceeded with, unless desired by your department, in the meantime and until the decision of the test case.

It is understood, as stated by Mr. Reid, that all the other cases are not necessary to be bound by the decision of the one case, but that all the other cases will be retained in status quo until the test case is decided.

Moreover, our clients ask that pending the decision of this case, no harbour dues or Government charges in connection with Komagatamaru shall be imposed. This offer is made really at the instigation in the first place, of your office, who made attentive suggestion of a similar proposition sometime ago.

I put this in writing for you at the earliest opportunity and request you to be good enough, if possible, to have a reply for me on Monday morning.

Yours truly,
Sd. J. E. Bowser,

Mac Neil, Bird, Macdonald and Darling
Matropolitan Building,
Vancouvar, B. C.
20th June 1914.

To

Messrs Bowrs, Reid and Wallbridge,
Canada Life Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sir,

Re :—Komagatamaru.

I have just read my letter of this morning herein to the Committee and they point out to me that I admitted in the same to call your attention to the fact that the positions made about a week ago by Mr. Gurdit Singh, wherein he agreed to supply a detention-shed for the men on land, thus relieving the ship from being tied up idle in the harbour pending the decision of the port is still unanswered. They respectfully urged upon your department and answer thereto.

So that matter might not be delayed, I called up your Mr. Lander this morning to remind him that my former communication asking this suggestion, which at the time appeared to your Mr. Lander and to us as very reasonable was yet unanswered although acknowledged in due course by your firm.

You will learn this morning that C. Gardner Johnson on behalf of the owners have received payment in full of harbour due to date and now the present Charterers of the Komagatamaru are Bhag Singh and H. Rahim of this city.

Yours truly,
Sd. J. E. Bird.

70, Bada Amritasar June 20–14.

Khalsa Dewan Vancouver, B. C. Telegram received am petitioning Government.

SIC. Dewan

133 R. A, Q. 21 1215 P.
Ottawa, June 25th.

J Edward Bird Esqr.,
Vancouver.

Your Telegram 23rd instant. Immigration officials inform me suitable arrangements were communicated to you for purpose of seeing clients.

R. L. Barden.

Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge,
Canada Life Assurance,
Vancouver, B. C.
June 25th 1914,

J. Edward Bird Esqr.,
C/o. Messrs Macneill, Bird, Macdonald & Darling.
Barristers Etc.
Metropoliton Building,
City.

Dear Sir,

Re. Komagatamaru.

Yours of the 25th instant at hand and contents noted. It appears to be impossible to get you or your clients to remain fixed on one line of action for any length of time last night on the lines of my letter of yesterday morning, unless instructed to the contrary by the department at Ottawa.

I have instructed Mr. Malcolm J. R. Reid to have the two men selected at the office at 11. 30. If you are ready to go on with the Board of Enquiry it will be held at once on the men selected by you, otherwise all parties shall be at liberty to proceed as they see fit.

Yours truly,
R. L. Reid.

R/C. M. D.

Note.

But the Committee of Enquiry did significantly ignore to put on record some of the incontrovertible facts which I do briefly mention below and which shall as sight lights adumbrate the hidden alleys of the designing and arbitrary diplomatic stratgems of the Canadian Authorities.

To convince of the integrity of our purpose we did not scruple to give a bonafide assurance in a letter addressed to Mr. Reid, the agent of the Dominion Government that no seditious docoument objectionable or prohibitary articles would be brought on board from the shore. A copy of the notice can be found in the file of the papers seized and taken away from the ship and now in the hands of the Indian Government. Mention of it is also made in the history of voyage of our ship from which the Committee of Enquiry openly drew confirmation.

It is important to mention here, that since the time the Charter party transferred in the name of a committee of two I remained no longer responsible for supplying water provisions medicines etc. to the passengers of the steamship. In reality from the date the S. S. Komagatamaru arrived at the port of Vancouver, the port authorities had treated me like a prisoner along with the passengers and deprived me of all rights of a tradesman. I could not go on

the shore and bring necessary things for the staff and the passengers. The Charterers too, were helpless for they were not permitted by the authorities to come near the steamship inspite of the fact that they had paid all the money due from them to the port authorities or the agents to the owner of the steamship. Moreover, according to the rules and regulations of the Immigration Act the responsibility for providing provisions did not lie on their shoulders. Under the circumtances it was the duty of the port authorities to see to the needs of the passengers and make arrangements accordingly. But the Canadian Government, on the other hand, anxious to get rid of thc Indian element from the Canadian soil, was bent upon teaching a good lesson to the passengers of the Komagatamaru who had taken courage in coming over there.

By this time the food and .water on board the ship had exhausted. The passengers were hungry and thirsty. For the last few days they had had no draught of water to quench their thirst. The Japanese sailors of the S. S. Komagatamaru were allowed to go on the shore, who daily brought a cask of water for their own use. If any passenger begged them for a cup of water, they bluntly refused.

One day a child of ours named Fouja Singh son of Sundar Singh actually fainted due to thirst.

His mother began to weep. It was a heart rending scene. I hastened to the cabin of the Captain of the steamer and brought a bottle of beer. As soon as a few spoons of it were put in to his mouth, the child began to regain senses. But the Japanese felt very much offended at my bringing the bottle of beer from their Captain's cabin. Another incident of the same sort made our relations with the Japanese still worse. When on the evening of the same day they brought their barrel of water as usual, the passengers being mad with thirst, lost all control over themselves and not restraining their feeling of temptation, began to plunder the water. Oh, it was an awful sight to see. They fell upon it just as a hungry wolf pounces upon his prey, Some tried to take water in their cups, some licked the split water and others moistened their lips by soaking cloth. Those who were successful in filling up their tumblers had hardly time to pore them down their throats when the water was snatched away by stranger hands. Many in this struggle fell one over the other in heaps. The religious and caste prejudices were forgotten in the heat of fury. Everybody considered his own life more precious than the other and was anxious to save it.

At this loot of water from the hands of the Japanese sailors, the Captain who himself was a Jap flew into anger. He at once reported the matter to Mr. Hosi the Japanse Counsel at Vancouver.

Mr. Hosi by wireless messages, at once called the Japanse men-of-war, from the pacific waters. In two days time, we found ourselves surrounded by them.

At the same time Mr. Hosi took the Canadian Authority to task for the insult of the Japanese at the Canadian Port and held them responsible for our action.

This threat of another power was sufficient for the Canadian Government to bring it to senses and they offered as much ammunition and every sort of other help as the Japanse required for our chastisement. A week disunited and ruled nation is always in the wrong.

But our men at the port, also approached to Mr. Hosi and bringing him on the S. S. Komagatamaru explained to him the whole situation. That gentleman was fully satisfied and held us in the right at our action, under the circumtances. He sent back his men of war.

The news about this happening spread like fire and papers of all shades of opinion severally criticized the Government. Upon this the Authorities issued a communiqu to the effect that any one willing to supply water could do so. This we were allowed

Now 103 tons of water for 360 passengers and forty sailors, at the rate of 15 ton per day, for drinking bathing and other purpose could last for one week. "But from 27th June to 19th July no more water was allowed us. On the 19th July the S. S. Komagatamarn was ordered to leave the port without water and another provisions.

I undertake to do all I can to assist the S. S. Komagatamaru taking a profitable cargo for return trip the Honkong, and to use my best endeavours to secure consent of Customs Officials or other port officers that may be necessary to allow H. Rahim and Bagh Singh to have access to the S. S. Komagatamaru for all legitimate business purposes.

G. Grander Jonsons,
Agent for S. S. Komagatamaru.

5th July 1914.

To

J. E. Bird, Espr.,
Vancouver, B. C.

Sir,

I sent you a very important registered letter on 3rd instant through the Immigration Department. But I am not certain weather you have got that or not, as I have not got the receipt of the same back as yet. Today I again thinking it very necessary and important am sending the copy of that for your consideration. This is a golden chance for you to take action against Immigration Depot, I hope that you will read it carefully and take an immediate action on it. The letter runs thus :—

"I beg to inform you that to-day (3rd) Immigration officers on duty brought four Indians to our ship, so that they may see their friends on board. I knew fully well that those men are on the side of the Immigration Depot. The Immigration Depot wants to make any case against us.

They called their relatives without my permission in launch and took our men's signatures which we do not know what they were for.

My Secretary asked Mr. Harnam Singh the Immigration man to show the signatures which he

took from his relatives, but he refused and gave them to the Immigration Interpreter.

I am sure that they have played a trick to use against us but I, at once, took up the gang way and told the Immigration Officer unless you show the signature I will never allow the men to come on ship.

Our other passengers are never allowed to see their friends who come often and are treated badly.

You know fully well that you were hardly given permission to see me and talk with me a very little, but you are never allowed my signature except through Immigration Depot,

Now our other passengers threaten me that if I allow the men to come on board they will certainly kill me.

It is a fact that my death will be by the hands of the passengers and that is on the shoulders of the Immigration Depot who has not given me any chance to go ashore as yet for my safety.

I now lastly advise you that you may please arrange to release me on bail and to take my statement before Court.

I further add that Mr. Hopkinson enrages my passengers against me.

Yours trnly
Sd. Gurdit Singh,
Charterer, Komagatamaru.

Mac Neil, Bird, Macdonald and Darling,
901–912, Metropolitan Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

July 6th 1915.

R. L. Reid, Esqr,, K. C.
Canada life Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sir,

Re. Komagatamaru.

On behalf of Gurdit Singh, and on his behalf only, I respectfully urge a reply at once to my letter written to you on Friday. I am in receipt of a letter from him this morning, which would indicate that he has not received my answer, and that apparently the

Immigration Depot are holding up communications between him and myself. With this I hope you will not concur.

I feel that an article that appears in this morning's "Sun" is inspired from the Immigration Depot Vancouver, as many of the phrases used in that articles are in familiar use at the Board of Enquiry.

It appears to me that the situation is extremely serious Gurdit Singh is not afforded any protection and actually claims that Immigration officers have been conspiring in a manner that his life is at present in danger from the passengers on board the ship. Now if in view of the fact that no protection is afforded him he takes steps for his own protection by keeping conspirators off his ship. I do not see that anybody can complain concerning his action, specially in lieu of the silence of the Immigration Depot since my letter of Friday last.

Yours truly,
Sd. J. Edward Bird.

6th July 1914.

Messrs. G Gardner Johnson & Co.
Agents of the Owners of the Komagatamaru,
522, Seymour Street,
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sirs,

I beg herewith to forward you copy of letter I have written to Mr. R. L. Reid, K. C. Solicitor. for the Immigration Department which shows the position of the charterers, Messrs Bhag Singh and H. Rahim. You will understand that the charterers have nothing what ever to do with the alleged troubles of board the Komagatamaru, reported in the local paper.

We also desire in case the Munshi Singh's case now before the Court of Appeal, is decided against Munshi Singh's cotention this morning, that Hindus on board the ship shall be taken off immediately for deportation, as the charterers do not propose to be responsible for keeping these men on board, or provisioning, or supplying them thereafter. A Committee of the local Hindus is prepared to go on board at any time and do their utmost to persuade Gurdit Singh and the passengers on board to lower their gang way, always on the understanding that they are not further deprived of their rights, as charterers. You will understand that so long as they

are kept out of these rights they respectfully refuse to interfere. Will you please give the Captain the instructions of the charterers contained in this letter.

Yours truly,
Sd. J. Edward Bird.

Y. A. Hosi, Espr., July 6th 1914.
Japanese Consul.
37-539 Pander Street, West,
Vancouver.

Dear Sir,

I beg respectfully to hand you copy of letter written to C. Gardner Johnson & Co. Agent of a certain Japanese Company, the owners of the Komagatamaru and copy of letter written to R. L. Reid, K. C. Solicitor for the Immigration Department. These letters set forth clearly the position of the charterers.

You will understand that the charterers are not party to any unlawful acts. If such are taking place on board the ship, of which the charterers have no

knowledge, as they have not been allowed the liberty of enjoying their charter rights.

The charterers have given formal notice to the Customs Office, to the Immigration Department and to the Agent of the owners that the ship is not to be cleared without their sanction or concurrence. If, therefore, you are in any way as the representative of your Government, concerned in this situation, I would respectfully urge you to assist the charterers to obtain possession of their boat unencumbered by the presence of passengers who are unable to pay their return passage. The present charterers have nothing whatever to do with the bringing of the Hindus on board the Komagatamaru, to Vancouver and the business and of the proposition undertaken by those men as charterers is entirely distinct from their personal interest as members of the Hindu Community in Vancouver. They therefore respectfully urge your assistance in this matter, as they desire to forthwith load cargo for Oriental ports.

Yours truly,

J. E. B./W. Sd. J. Edward Bird.

July 6th 1214.

J. Edward Bird. Esqr.,
901, Metropolitan Building,
837, Hastings Street,
City.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your valued favour of even date with enclosures and beg to thank you for the kind information you give me on the present situation of the charterers of the Japanese steamer Komagatamaru.

I should say that, as long as the interests of the Japanese owners of the steamer which Mr. Gardner Johnson at present is mainly looking after is not impared unduly I am not quite satisfied and it seems that the present condition is not such that I should worry about in any way.

Yours truly,
Sd. Y. A, Hosi.

July 7th 1914.

J. E. Bird.

We hereby instruct you to waive Board of Enquiry for all on board Komagatamaru ask you to negotiate for return of Komagatamaru to Honkong under either plans discussed or under any arrangement you may make

Sd. Gurdit Singh.

The following Committee sign for passengers after full explanation to them.

	K. M.
Harnam Singh, 1.	Amar Singh
Harnam Singh, 2.	Sundar Singh,
Nabh Kamal Singh.	Bir Singh

Witness :

I hereby certify that this comprises whole Committee.

Daljit Singh

I, Dr. Raghunath Singh do not agree, as I belong to non-Immigrant Class.

Raghunath Singh.

Vancouver, B. C.
July 7th 1914.

R. L. Reid, Esqr., K. C.
Canada life Building,
Vancouver.

Sir,

Before consulting the Charterers of the Komagatamaru H. Rahim and Bhag Singh, I am prepared to make the following propositions and recommend it for acceptance namely :—

First : —That the "Komagatamaru" be permitted to proceed immediately without inconvenience, as any other ship in Vancouver harbour, to unload her

with immediately and that in the meantime bonds be accepted by your Department that none of the passengers on board the Komagatamaru shall escape and that all shall answer the Roll Call and sail with the Komagatamaru on her leaving for Honkong. These bonds be to your satisfaction and to the reasonable ability of the Hindus in Vancouver to furnish same. The charterers under these circumstances cannot of course, consent to take these men back without payment of their passage, and as this cannot apprently be secured from many of the men on board, the situation may result in considerable difficulty.

Second:—As an alternative proposition and in view particularly of the development as explained to you in my recent letter, showing that Gurdit Singh and his men came here in good faith. The charterers are prepared to order the ship to sail tomorrow for Honkong or so soon as she can be provisioned and watered for this purpose, providing your Department will pay the passage of these men back to Honkong.

advanced. I leave on the midnight boat for Victoria, and shall be extremely obliged if you could let me know in the afternoon what you could do.

I desire to ask that Mr. Gurdit Singh's infant son six years of age, be permitted to land with his father on route to England to be clear of Canada within two weeks from the date of loading.

Yours truly,
Sd, J. E. Bird.

July 7th 1914.

MacNeil, Bird, MacDonald & Darling,
901-912, Metropolitan Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

to load at the wharves or wherever the cargo is available on board the Komagatamaru at once. They undertake that every safeguard which your department may nominate will be rigidly adhered to and that they will themselves, if necessary insist in the safeguarding and the preventing of the men on board the Komagatamaru from escaping. They want to load the ship as quickly as possible and allow her to leave the port. You will understand clearly, however that the charterers are under no obligation whatever to feed or supply water to the Immigrants on board the Komagatamaru and do not propose to do so. That is for Mr. Gurdit Singh, the old charterer, who is under contract with them, to make provision for then. Unless he does so, the new charterers Rahim and Bhag Singh, refuse absolutely to victual or supply the ship for her return trip.

Your early reply will oblige.

Yours truly,

J. E, B/W. Sd. J. Edward Bird.

MacNeill, MacDonald & Darling,
Offices : 901-912, Metropolitan Building,
Vancouver B. C.
July 10th·1914.

For attention of J. E. Bird.
Messrs H. Rahim and Bhag Singh,
Sikh Temple,
1869, Second Avenue,
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sir,

Re : Komagatamaru.

After Mr. MacNeil and the writer have considered the charter party, we should point out to you that section 9 contains the following :—words 9.....That the Cargo or Cargoes shall be laden and or discharged in any dock or at any wharf or place that the charterers may direct, where the steamer can always safely be afloat.

Under this you will see that you must secure some dock or wharf or make some arrangement therefore and then give the owners notice to bring this ship alongside. This they will not be able to do. In any arrangement therefore, you make for a wharf, we would only arrange to pay therefore in

get this advanatage, and we trust that, you will attend to it once.

Yours truly,
Sd. MacNeil, Bird, MacDonald &
Darling, J. Edward Bird.

The Immigration Agent,
Vancouver, B. C.
No. 74. 11th July 1914

Sir,

We the undersigned members of the Committee of S. S. Komagatamaru, beg to draw your attention that on account of the ship being dirty, the flies and rats are becoming more and more daily, which would be the cause of serious sickness. For want of good food and exercise, some men are very sick. If th sate of things continues any longer we all shall lose our health. For more than three months we are shut up in the ship and our health is going weaker and weaker

The Immigration Agent,
Vancouver, B. C.

No. 73. 11th july 1914.

Sir,

We the undersigned representatives of the passengers of S. S. Komagatamaru have the honour to request you humbly that we are in lack of the following articles. Please arrange to send them very soon. Kindly note that the flour you sent us on 9th was not worth eating. We never use such kind of flour, please send W. W. flour of V. Mark.

Flour	Acid Jam
Sugar	Vinegar
Onion	Matches
Ginger,	Lamp Oil
Red pepper	Vegetables
Butter,	Hair Oil
Milk,	Washing Soap
Rice,	Soap
Mungri Dal	Candles
Mash Dal	Lipton's Te

Copy for the information of
J. Edward Bird Esqr., 2329.
Barrister, Vancouver, City,
B. C.

11th July 1014.

R. J. R/E. C.
Captain Yamatto,
S. S. Komagatamaru.
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sir,

I have not yet received any reply to my communication with reference to food and water, as intimated in my letters. The Governor is holding you responsible for provisioning for the ship and also the sanitary condition of same.

I now beg to transcribe for your information, letters received by me this morning and must ask you to attend to this matter at once.

Sd. R. J. Reid.

Vancouver B. C.
July 15th 1914.

Messrs C. Gardner Johnson & Co.
Agents,
Komagatamaru,
522 Seamore Street,
Vancouver B. C.

Dear Sirs,

Messrs. Rahim and Bhag Singh have instructed us to let you know that they desire to get on board the Komagatamaru or arrange to have work done in the nature of extra accommodation for passengers whom they are now contracting to take back to India on board the Komagatamaru. They are selling passage accommodation as they propose to sail early. They desire to have such facilities or make arrangements to have the work done as will be possible under the circumstances. Can you assist them along this line ?

It will facilitate matters very much if you can.

Yours truly,
Mac Neil, Bird, Macdonald & Darling,
per J. E. Bird.

Malcom R. J. Reid, Esqr.,
Dominion Immigration Agent,
Vancouver B. C. 15th July 1914.

Dear Sir,

I am this afternoon in receipt of a letter from Mr. Bird Solicitor for Messrs Rahim and Bhag Singh, assignees of charter of S. S. Komagatamaru a copy of which I close, and if you will be kind enough to allow these two charterers to go on board I shall be exceedingly obliged.

Your doing so will in my opinion facilitate the departure of the vessel.

Yours very truly,
(Sd.) Gardner Johnson,
Agent,
S. S. Komagatamaru.

C. Gardner Johnsan & Co.
Cor. Pender and Sycamder Street,
Vancouver B. C,
15th July 1914.

J. Edward Bird, Esqr.,
Messrs MacNeill, Bird, Macdonald & Darling,
837, Hastings Street, W.
Vancouver B. C.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt this afternoon of your letter of even date asking that Rahim and Bhag Singh obtain permission to go on board the Komagatamaru. You will notice on reading the enclosed copy of letter I have addressed to Mr. M. J. R. Reid Chief Immigration Officer, that I have solicited this permission. When I receive reply I will immediaaely communicate with you. I am taking this opportunity of asking you if you will request your clients Rahim and Bhag Singh to send me a cheque for the water they ordered by letter dated 26th June last, and which I delivered next day, that is 100 tons @$ 2.00 per ton $ 200 00. For this I shall be much obliged.

Yours very truly,
G. Gardner Johnson, Agent,
S. S. KOMAGATAMARU.

Vancouver B. C.
July 16th 1914.

R. L. Reid, Esqr., K. C.
Canada Lief Builiding,
Vancouver.

Dear Sir,

Re : Komagatamaru

On behalf of the charters, Messrs Rahim and Bhag Singh we respectfully demand of the Immigration Depot that they take the passengers now on board of the ship, so as to let the charterers to go about their business of loading thei cargo and taking their passengers on board and preparing the ship for its return Journey. Thep have sold tickets and are now advertising for and seeking passengers for the return trip, and desire to prepare and fix up accommodation properly for the return voyage. They are prepared to take the passengers now on board on the return trip to Hongkong providing their passage money is paid by the Immigration Depot.

If the Immigration Department will pay the difference in cost of transacting business by lighters from the ship in the fareway, the charterers will endeavour to obtain cargo in this manner and seek to get the consent of the shippers who are contemplating sending freight by the Komagatamaru.

Shal' be glad if you will let us have your answer hereto and oblige.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) MacNeil, Bird, MacDonald
and Darling.
per J. E. Bird.

G. Gardner Johnson Esqr.,
Agent,
S. S. Komagatamaru,
Vancouver.

Dear Sir,

I have this morning received your favour of the 15th instant with encloures as stated.

I am now, as I always have been, anxious to do all in my power to facilitate any person rightly concerned in the affairs of the Komagatamaru in any proper and reasonable request. I am quite ready to bring Captain Yamamato of S. S. Komagatamaru ashore any time that Rahim and Bhag Singh wish to see him. In view, however, of the fact that the report I have received from my officers and the letters I have

received from Daljit Singh, Gurdit Singh and a Committee of five who seemed to have taken things into their own hands on board the vessel, are of an extra-ordinary nature and seem to indicate that the going on board at the present time of Rahim and Bhag Singh might be productive of difficulty and trouble. I think the course I suggest is wisest one under the circumstances. Let me hear from you as to this. I think it would be wise, however, at this juncture, in connection with Mr. Bird's suggestion as to his clients' proposed action to take other passengers back to India by the Komagatamaru that the putting on board of other passengers might be in contravention of the law as to passengers accommodation.

I am advised that the passengers on board at the time are fully as many as the ship can accommodate. I need not dilate on this feature, as you are fully aware of the statutory regulations in this regard.

Yours truly,

Malcoln J. Reid,
Dominion Immigration,
Agent and Inspector,

Vancouver, Canada.
17th July 1914.

For attention of Mr. Reid.
Messrs Mac Neil Bird Macdonald & Darling,
Winch Building
Vancouver.

Dear Sirs,

S. S. Komagatamaru.

We have to acknowledge receipt of your favour of 15th instant in reference to Messrs. Rahim and Bhag Singh obtaining permission to go on board the above vessel.

We wrote Mr. Reid, the Dominion Immigration Agent here, asking him to give us this authority, as it would in our opinion, facilitate the depature of the vessel. We are in receipt of his reply, a copy of which we enclose, from which you will note that he will not agree to this.

In connection with the last paragraph of Mr Reid's letter we beg to advise that Rahim has just called in at our office and states, that the vessel has

a Hongkong passenger certificate for 570 passengers We have not seen this certificate but pass along the information for what it is worth.

Yours very truly,

G. Gardner Johnson & Co,

The Canadian Goverment has always been very particular to carry out conditions as laid down in sections 24 and 25 of By Law of the Corporation of Harbour Commissioners which is given in full below here. But these sections were laid aside where our ship was concerned. Why this was done.? Because England never wanted Indians particularly Sikhs to learn trade because if Sikhs became merchants then who will supply recruits for the British Army in India ?

SECTION 24.—No vessel shall leave the Harbour until the Agent, consignee, master or person incharge thereof has made and delivered to the Harbour master a full and correct report in writing signed and certified by him of her cargo and also her drop of water. Nor until all dues on the vessel, and on her cargo, and all penalties incurred in respect of the vessel or by the

master or person incharge of the vessel and all costs and charges with which the vessel or the master or person incharge thereof is chargeable towards the Commissioner have been fully paid.

SECTION 25. All rates dues or penalties in respect to any vessel or cargo shall be paid or secured to the satisfaction of the Commissioner before such a vessel or cargo leaves the harbour, and indefault thereof the Harbour Master may cause such cargo or vessel to seize and held therefore and may require the Collector of Customs to refuse clearance papers to such a vessel.

In my opinion the tragic tragedy of Budge Budge which resulted in the death of 40 persons is in close connection with the most important event at Vancouver which the reader will find in the following pages :-

To show the world of the most unjustifiable methods used by the Canadian Authorities the following story will clearly bring to light the brutal iron hand which they used to send us back without food or water.

It is necessary to relate the conversation that took place between me and certain officers of the Immigration Department a day or two earlier to the date on which the motor boat fully manned by Police paid us a visit,

As we objected to the Captain obeying the orders of the Canadian Government to put the ship under steam the officer asked me "Why do you interfere in starting the steamer for the backward journey ?"

Myself :—How can we permit that when there is nothing on Board the ship for eating or drinking ? Why don't you supply us with the foodstuffs ?

Officer :—That is your look out and not of the Government ?

Myself :—Very well, say it is mine. Will you then allow me to land in order to fetch the foodstuffs ?

Officer :—The Government willl not permit you to land.

Myself :—In that case allow two of my men to go ashore.

Officer :—That too cannot be permitted.

Myself :—Then please allow some of our country men from ashore to visit us and we will give them instructions to purchase necessaries for us.

And this very reasonable request too was refused. The intention of the Canadian Authorities appeared to

starve us. We were nothing less than prisoners and I remarked at the time that as you treat us nothing better than prisoners—it is the duty of the Government to feed us.

We were poor Indians seeking to enter Canada to earn our livelihood and we thought we had every right to enter there as India as well as Canada were under the British Crown. When even the slum dweller of London could freely move to India as well as Canada why should not we ? We are insulted, we are dishonoured we are disgraced in all parts of the wourld because we have no Government that will feel for indignities inflicted on us. Let any one dare to insult the subject of "The Rising Sun" and you will see 1914-1918 repeat again.

When nothing could persuade us to go back to Asia without food the Government resorted to use force, the most cowardly thing to do against starving defenceless people. A large steam boat "Sea Lion" came from ashore containing several scores of armed Police. My men were alert as owing to hunger they could not sleep. Though I protested they compelled me to agree to their request and locked me and my infant son in the cabin in order to be out of harms way. The government has spent, speech, ink and paper to blacken my reputation but during the voage my people showed

me most remarkable devotion, love and willingness to do anything asked by me. I was able to keep the whole situation before my eyes through the sky hole. When the boat approached near we objected to their tying it to our ship, also asked their business. But who would listen to poor unprotected Indians lest government officials of the English autocratic type. Some of the Police started tying the rope while some of them fired at the passengers without the slightest warning. Fortunately they were able to duck and ran down stairs to fetch coal and give a fight with them. Imagine a people dare to fight with coal against Whites, armed with upto-date guns. It was a sight to make me proud to think of the blood from which we sprang. Indian bravery still lives though it has been cruelly trampled under foot by our self appointed masters. During the time my people were downstairs the Police were able to tie the rope. Attempts were made to unloosen or cut the rope but it was impossible as the Police levelled a hose with boiling water at them.

At this time I was able to notice that among the Police bullies was one that will not be forgotten. He was that accursed traitor who thirsted for the blood of his own countrymen, the infamous quack Doctor that we carried with us on our journey to Canada. He was trying to locate me and when he about to fire his gun was pulled by another soldier and

thus there was one less murder to the account which was already black enough.

By now there were enough coal on board and the passengers devided into three parties and paying no heed to the boiling water began to throw the coal at the occupants of the motor Launch. The Police replied with pistol shots which were unable to harm us as our Boat was higher and we were able to hide ourselves. The Police had a severe beating with the coals thrown at them and retreated to the front of the ship. They were panic stricken and their united weight nearly sank the launch by the head. One of my men saw the plight of the Police and to save them from drowning cut the rope thus setting free of the Launch. The presence of mind of this good man saved the Police from certain death. The Police had of course to admit a defeat and they steamed off, Here, I must record that I have never come across an instance in History where Police with guns and pistols could not fight unarmed and defenceless people.

In this "fight" one of my people had a pistol bullet graze his forehead and pass through his turban and two or three other persons were slightly hurt. We agree with Enquiry Committee that several Police men had small cuts and wounds. Several of these were caused, I presume, by the broken glass from the ship at which they fired. The Enquiry committee has tried to disguise

the real facts and the "tar" has been applied to our side only.

No partial man of any nationality will lay the blame of this "fight" at the door of the passengers of Komagatamaru. The Government of Canada is solely to be blamed. Their evil intention to send 360 Indians back without food or water and starve them on the high seas failed owing to the courage displayed by my men. Had they been forced to sail they would have sailed to certain horrible death either through starva- or at the hands of the Japanese crew who were armed at the expense of His Majesty King George the Fifth's Canadian Government. A quarrel on the high seas with the Japanese could never have been avoided. Passengers would have tried to take the provisions of the Japanese crew which they could not have spared. Result—fight and shooting.

The news of this collition with the Police spread like wild fire. News were scattered all over the world. The white race took it as an insult to be pelted with coals by black people. England was informed, who sanctioned the use of force to send us back. We cried laudest at the doors of England; Viceroy, Patiala, Nabha and the living corpse of a society called Chief Khalsa Dewan but none hearkened to our vails of misseries. But now because a few white skinned men had a handful of coals pelted at them the whole white

race glared at us with their furiousity. England ordered to send us out under warships and warship "Rainbow" and one more man of war were detailed for this enterprise.

One warship stood on each side of Komagatamaru. 30,000 Militia men were ready. Thousands flocked to the city to watch the destruction of 360 almost starved to death Indians. Europeans are found of excitement and this excitement was a hundred times more exciting than a Spanish bull fight.

It can only be imagined that there was only one race in Vancouver who were moving about with sad and gloomy faces. They were our own country men. How many times the thought struck me to the effect that "will the Indians bear to see their countrymen doomed to death before their eyes and yet raise no hand in revenge"?

We now had only two alternatives before us either to submit and go back without food or water and die of starvation or at the hands of the Japanese or defy the commands of Canada and die with the guns of the warship at the door of Canada. The above two ways of dying were freely and fully discussed among the 360 passengers and it was agreed to die where they were before the thousands of sight seers than dying on the high seas a torturous death.

The warships were preparing for action and on the other hand we were preparing for death. It was a grand scene on a blue stage with thousands of spectators. On behalf of the Government the commander sent the message "Leave our shores, you uninvited Indians or we fire." Our reply to this command was that if Canada will allow us to provision the ship we will, go otherwise, "Fire away. We prefer death here than on the high seas." We were threatened. We were bullied. We, too, were like a tiger at bay. No brave man fears death when he is face to face with it.

Among this commotion we called a general meeting to discuss the manner in which to meet our impending danger. Every one of us were prepared to die but wanted to face the tragedy fighting. It was agreed that it was an impossibility to fight and win against such fearful odds but when the Canadian sailors board the Komagatamaru, to face them with stricks, bars, coals and even pepper. It was also agreed to engage with them as soon as we were attacked first and when we could fight no longer to descend to the boilers where the coal is heaped. Naturally it was expected that the victorious sailors would follow us and when once we are all below to pour oil over the coals and set fire to the steamer in which we would be burnt and very likely with us will also be cremated some of the white soldiers. Thus Komagatamaru will for ever blacken

the History of Canada and to a certain extent will also show the blackguardy rule of Great Britain.

No one will hesitate to believe the intention of the Canadian Government to murder us as the Japanese told us that they would soon be abandoning the steamer and some of them showed sympathy towards us for the sad fate that awaited us. It is a well known fact that the Canadian Government had planned to remove the Japanese crew, make a target of Komagatamaru of their cannons and pay an indemnity to Japan for the loss of the steamer.

One thing only and that too very touching to the heart saved Komagatamaru, saved us and I dare say saved the city of Vancouver and the British Nation from a deed which would have gone into History as the blackest deed committed by England. This is how all these things came to pass. From our prison ship we could clearly percieve a hillock-like rising of ground. From this place many a time our countrymen came to have a look at us and our prison. Unnoticed by the Authorities we could and did communicate by semaphore signalling to our people ashore. Through this method we were able to learn that our brethren were feeling for our miseries but were unable to do anything for us. On this particular day when we were so near to God, when there were thousands watching for the "sight" when we could clearly perceive the nearness of

our Noble Leader and Commander Guru Gobind Singh, when there was no fear of death on us, came a man and signalled to us and enquired how things stood. Our signaller replied, "Our last farewell to all the sons of India. We shall be no more when the next sun arises. We die contented as we know that this deed of today will make the sons of poor Mother India to realise their position overseas and before long something will be done which will be quite enough revenge for our deaths. Fare well and Sat Siri Akal."

Our countryman signalled back saying to expect him back within an hour and saying this he was seen running towards the city. Punctual to the moment he was at his post and gave us the message which filled our heart with pride but to me it gave a serious thinking. His message was that the people of Hindusthan residing at Vancouver has passed the resolution to the effect that they are helpless to render any help to us but would not let go unavenged our deaths. Duties have been alloted to each man and that as soon as Komagatamaru is on fire so will be the City of Vancouver and all in it. That will be the reply of mother India to Komagatamaru murders. Wishing us on behalf of all Indians his very cordial last farewell he departed.

Naturally my men were happy to see that they would be revenged. But I was distressed and deter-

mined to stop the burning of Vancouver. The destruction of Vancouver at the hands of Indians, would to certain extent clear the Canadians Authorities and would have given the impression to the world that we actually came to "invade" Canada. I called together the most sensible men among the passengers and handing them the telescope asked them to have a look at the city which by now was just like a beehive. "Could you bear the burning of innocent children, women and old men in that city" I enquired. It will be inhuman that for our sake that beautiful city with its innocent people, who, who knows, might have come to sympathise, be put to the unmerciful flames? Our names and our memory will be cursed instead honoured. Let us abanddon our resolution to put Komagatamaru to fire and thus there will be no signal to our friends on shore to apply the "match" to Vancouver." In this strain I appealed to my men who God bless them agreed to my proposal and we now patiently waited for the Canadian troops to come aboard and deal with us as they pleased.

Fortunately for all some how the intention of the Indians to burn the city leaked out to the Government and they had to "Count ten" before they attacked us. Suddenly the attitude of the officials was changed and they courteously asked us what is that we want so that their 'lawful' orders be obeyed. We replied at once that originally we wanted provisions and written ins-

tructions from the new charterers to sail away back as set in the contract but now we would only yield if the Vancouver Indian Committee is permitted to visit and consult with us. At last the Government had to climb down and accept our demand. Accordingly the authorities approached the committee who gave them the answer that unless the steamer is provisioned and the starving people are fed they were not prepared to go on Board. To this, too, the "benevolent" government consented and the committee brought rations for us who had had no proper feed for the last six days.

We had a long heart to heart talk with our brethren and I only need mention that we were informed that the steamer would be provisioned for the return voyage Government will pay for the return passage to the new Charters when the steamer is out of the Canadian waters and we were advised to go back to Hongkong.

The steamer was fully provisioned on the 22nd of July 1914 and Komagatamaru was under steam the next day.

For two months we suffered all sorts of miseries at the hands of the Canadian Authorities but we showed them that Indians could and are able to put passive resistance by which they defied Canada.

We were followed on each side of Komagatamaru by H. M. S. Warship "Rainbow" and another warship up to the end of Canadian waters.

That was the Guard of Honour!

To suport the events on the previous pages I append copies of letters exchanged between the Immigration Department and our solicitors.

No impartial reader will hesitate to realise the shallow and narrow minded policy adopted by the Canadian Authorities in their dealings with us.

Vancouver, B. C.
July 20th 1224.

Malcolm R. J. Keid, Esqr.,
Dominion Immigration Agent & Inspector,
Vancouver B. C.

Dear Sir,

Regarding steamship Komagatamaru, a representative of the local Hindus waited upon you this morning in order to lay before you proposals which when put into practice would in their opinion (we also fully concur with it,) bring about the amicable, speedy

settlement of the critical question arising out of the presence of the Komagatamaru along with its passengers in the Harbour of Vancouver. We are sure that you agree in putting a stop if possible to occurrences of Saturday night. If there are any means by which the prestige of the Canadian Government, remains unimpaired and the objects of the officials are attained without any impediment in their way, then in such a case all efforts should be made to meet these objects.

We therefore present the following for your consideration. Under the circumstances, we think the charterers are entitled:—

1. That they be allowed to unload their cargo on land.

2. That they be allowed to land on board their ship those local Hindus who intend to leave for India.

3. That they be allowed to land fresh cargo from this place.

4. That the costs incurred for having had to renew the charter at the time when the Immigration Depot was busy holding its Committee of Enquiry under the Immigration Act should be fully compensated.

Bearing this all in mind, and having regard to all the difficulties, and with a view to avoid hatered from the bottom of our hearts, we submit the following proposals for your consideration :—

1. Let the Government, send the deported Hindus to their Country in some other vessel ; Let it allow the Agent of the ship to unload their cargo and take in fresh one ; Let it allow the charterers to carry back passengers bound for Hongkong or for India and let it pay back all sums incurred on the renewal of the charter when the ship was detained in the Harbour.

2. Let the Government pay to the Agents of the Charterers in the case of Hindus leaving Vancouver for India, so that they (the Agents) might defray the boarding expenditure of the passengers, or in another case, let the Government pay dollars 25,000.00 for the boarding expenses of all passengers up to Hongkong. We believe any of the afore-mentioned proposals would suit you.

If you would like to talk personally over the matter, the writer would be glad to do so.

It had come to our notice that the deported Hindus of the Komagatamaru are about starving. You might remember when the provisions were last supplied to those on board the ship and might well estimate how

far the existing of the provisions would last. The information supplied to us seems to be correct. Let it be known to you that the afore mentioned proposals have been made on behalf of the local Hindus without having had any talk with any inmate of the ship. If you think proper the representatives of the local Hindus be allowed to go and advise those on board to give their assent to the decision arrived at between you who represent the Government and the local Committee of the Hindus

Yours faithfully,
Sd. MacNeill, Bird
Mcdonald and Darling
per A. N. McNeill.

and Darling.
per A. N. MacNeill

A. H. M.-W.
Copy.

Dominion Trust Building
402, Pander Street, West
Vancouver, B. C.
July 20th 1914.

Messrs. MacNeill, Bird Macdonald and Darling,
Barristers etc.
Metropolitan Building.
City.

Attention Mr. MacNeill.
Dear Sirs,

Re: Komagatamaru.

A copy of yours of the 20th instant to N. R. J. Reid regarding S; S. Komagatamaru has been handed to me for attention. As I understand the matter, the Hindus on board the ship came to this country deliberately intending to force their presence upon a people who do not wish them, through some hoped for defect in or technical objection to laws made with the approval of the country at large. After having come to British Columbia and after delay occasioned solely by them, the matter is heard by the Court of appeal and decision given under which Boards of Enquiry are held

and orders of the department made. They do not see fit to obey the orders of the Government but mutiny and take control of the ship. On an attempt being made by the Police to enforce the ordinary rights of the Captain over his ship, they resist and deliberately assault and greviously injure them. They then made the proposals set out in your letters in which you concur.

The Government although not under the obgligation to do so has fed them during the last three weeks and out of the charity has been willing to provision them for the return journey to Hongkong. If they are on the verge of starvation it is their own fault. As soon as they signify that they are willing to obey the law the Government will, not doubt, adhere to its offer to supply provjsions as mentioned above.

I shall however sumbit your letters to Headquarter and wlll return you such answer as may be directed.

Yours truly,

R. L. R.-G. M. D. R. L. Reid.

COPY.

MacNeill, Bird, Macdonald and Darling,
Metropolitan Building,
Vancouver, B. C.

July 21st 1214.

Komagatamaru Affairs Committee,
C/o, Sikh Temple.
1866, 2nd Avenue, West City.

Sirs,

In reply to the communcations which at the request of Mr. Rahim I sent to the Immigration Officers and their solicitors yesterday, I late yesterday afternoon received a telephone communcation from Mr. R. L. Reid K. C. the solicitor for the Immigration Department in which he stated that the Government would be prepared to take all the Komagatamaru passengers back to Hongkong by the "Empress of Japan" and would at once turn over the Komagatamaru to the holders of the Charter and all difficulties be ended in this way. It is imperative that an immediate answer be given to this suggestion.

Yours truly,
Sd. A. N. MacNeill

A. H. M.-W.

COPY.

MacNeill, Bird, Macdonald and Darling,
Metropolitan Buildings.

Vancouver B. C.
July 21st 1914.

Messrs Bowser, Reid and Wallbridge,
Barristers,

Dominion Trust Buildings,
Vanconver.

Attention of Mr. R. L. Reid K. C.

Dear Sir,

Re. Komagatamaru.

I have yours of the 20th instant in this matter. I do not think that good purpose would be answered at the present time by a discussion as to what led up to the present situation, or whether the writer concurs in the letter of yesterday's date or not. It appears to the writer although not having personal knowledge of the situation until very lately, that the facts are not altogether as stated in your letter However I have submitted to the Hindu Committee the terms of your telephone communications of yesterday evening. Up to the present writing I have not received a reply, further

than to state that the matter is under consideration, that it was impossible to get the Committee together to discuss the whole question, but that an early reply may be expected.

In the meantime I am instructed to inform you that the Hindu Committee are prepared to supply provisions for their immediate needs of their starving countrymen now on board the Komagatamaru. As you know these men have now been without food for some four or five days. The whole question appears to resolve itself into one of a financial nature, and I hope you will concur with me that it would be an ever lasting pisgrace that any blood should be shed in connection with such a sordid cause.

Mr. Rahim has just seen the writer and points out that as his Committee have had no means of communication directly with the people on board, they are desirous of being allowed to go on board, the Komagatamaru for the purpose of discussing the situation with their fellow countrymen and obtaining their views with the object of arriving to some amicable arrangements. The writer trusts that this course will not be considered objectionable under all the circumstances. I think you will see that the men on board should have some opportunity of obtaining the views and advice of their countrymen here who know the situation. It would appear to me that the road of peace lies this way.

Yours trully,
Sd. A. H. Macneill
Immigration Branch,
Department of the Interior, Canada,
Vanoouver B. C.
21st July 1914.

Dear MacNeill :—

I understand from you that one of the difficulties in the way of the Komagatamaru leaving the port is that the assignees and others believe they are entitled to a repayment of the money advanced by them in good faith to the owners in the belief that they would be repaid by the value of the Cargo.' As a member of the Government I shall wire to the Prime Minister asking that these claims should be thoughtfully looked into by an Imperial Commissioner and will urge that full and sympathetic consideration be given to all those who deserve generous treatment.

I must point out, however that this is conditional on the passengers now on the Komagatamaru adopting a peaceable attitude refraining from violence and conforming to the law by the giving to the Captain control of his ship immediately and agreeing to peaceable return to the port from whence they came. May I add that it is necessary that a decision should be reached at once.

Yours very truly,
Sd. M. Burrell
Minister of Agriculture

A. H. MacNeill, Esqr.,
Vancouvor, B.c.

Copy.

Immigration Branch,
Department of the Interior, Canada
Vancouver, July 21st 1914.

A. H. MacNeill, Esqr.,
C/o, Messrs MacNeill, Bird Macdonald & Darling,
Barristers,
City.

Dear Sir,

Re. S. S. Komagatamaru,

At your request we arranged for the taking off to the Komagatamaru of certain Hindus in an attempt for them to persuade their countrymen on board the vessel to recede from their present position of opposition to the master of the vessel.

After this offer was communicated to you some Hindus came to the immigration Shed stating that Sohan Lal one of the influential Hindus in the City refused to go, but they were ready to go themselves. That at one time they were not ready and neither would H. Rahim nor any other of the Hindus proceed out to the Komagatamaru. Following that you were communicated with and promised to get in touch with the Hindus who are instructing you. Your telephone message to Mr. Ladner to the effect that you have now gotten H. Rahim on the phone that H. Rahim was procuring the immediate attention of the Hindus

but that before any answer to the demand of the authorities should be required, food should first be put on the boat and then several hours delay be given for the purpose of considering their position. It has been very fully explained to the Hindus that food will be placed on board. We have no objection at all to food being taken out and on the other hand welcome any action along that line. In this connection however you will remember we have food here that is available for this purpose.

If your Committee of Hindus advising you in good faith, wish to carry out their offer to go on the Komagatamaru, we will take them out at once. They to arrive here at the Immigration Office to take such a reasonable quantity of food as may be required from the store of food now in the possession of the Immigration Officials. But this letter must be acted on by 1-30 O' clock. The Government is being put to great expense and its order have been defied, and this is obsolutely the last word in this connection.

Yours very truly,
Malcolm R. L. Reid, Dominion
Immigration.
Agent and Inspector.

These pages are to be the end of the first portion of this book. No doubt the reader by himself will judge how far we were to be blamed in the matter. To assist a little in coming to the conclusion as to the blame I

append these lines and ask the kind reader to be the partial judge.

First I would draw the readers' attention to a letter of 20th July 1914, from our Lawyer to Mr. Reid in which it is stated that the passengers were starving. A reply to this letter is sent in which it is said that if we were on the "verge of starvation it is their own fault." When the steamer was in this condition the authorities ordered the ship to leave port. Would it not have been pure insanity for us to agree to leave port in this condition? Had we gone, was it not to certain death? We did the only thing that was for us to do and I must say any body would have done the same thing placed in our place. We refused to leave the port. For this they called us "Mutineers." And our refusal to go without food was "Mutiny" against Canada.

We never admitted and never would that we were in the wrong in resisting Canada's unlawful orders but take it for a moment that we were. Was the Government of Canada justified in sending the Komagatamaru back without provisioning it? No civilised Government would do that even if we were a ship load of criminals. To order us back on a 45 days journey on the seas without food was sending us to certain horrible deaths either by starvation or at the hands of the Japanese crew who were supplied with arms by the Canadian Government. The arming of the Japanese crew is

admitted by the Enquiry Committee in para. 18 the last portion of which reads, that "the Captain of the ship was advised by the Canadian Authorities to purchase fire arms to enable the officers and crew to protect themselves against possible attacks from the passengers."

There is a law that the Harbour Authorities are to certify that every ship that leaves the port is properly provisioned and sea worthy in all other respects but in our case this law was set aside and we were ordered to leave the port when we were already without food for several days. When we refused to obey this inhuman order our action was described as "Mutinous." My men of course refused to go in such circumstances. I ask what would any one situated as we were—have done if not disobey the order?

On the other hand a gesture from us would have reduced the city of Vancover to ashes but such gesture was never given. Through us India pitied and saved the innocent children and women of Vancouver!

II

Humiliated and dishonoured we were sent back. There existed in our breasts a ray of hope that when once in India and the real facts are layed before the Indian Government—we would be redressed. But fate was holding a different cup for us at Budge Budge. Little

we knew that like wild beasts we would be hunted and shot on the very soil of our mother land with no one to raise a voice for and on our behalf. No one expected that "living corpse" of a society at Amritsar to denounce us that we were no Sikh. My band of course was not prepared to lick official boots and in this respect we were not on the same footing as the Chief Khalsa Dewan.

The Enquiry Committee which was appointed to "whitewash" the doings of the Canadian Authorities and the officials at Budge Budge did their duty and recorded things that were far from facts.

They state in para. 3 of their Report that it was an attempt to "evade" the immigration law of Canada. There is not the slightest truth in this statement. We never intended to "evade" the law but took advantage of the law. In the para. quoted above it is recorded that "an examination of the law and of these later orders make it clear that in addition to the general restriction imposed upon all immigrants into the Dominion every Asiatic immigrant before he is allowed to enter Canada has to satisfy the Authorities, save in particular cases, that he is in possession of 200 Canadian Dollars and has travelled by continuous journey from his native country to Canada on a through ticket."

We chartered a steamer in order to comply with the provision of the above law. We were in every respect able to pass a "muster." But the reader will easily discern that this section was paticularly directed against

Indians. No Indian steamship company plied direct with Canadian ports, and it was never dreampt that there ever will be. The siren of Komagatamaru was a surprise for Canada and they had no lawful means to stop our admission except unlawfully and unlawfully they refused admission in which our Indian Government seconded the motion,

Even now though the law has been strengthened and there seem no loopholes to give me a chance to evade yet I am prepared to take immigrants to Canada complying with the law in every respect. Before a year is out I will be able to pour into Canada at least a lakh of persons but the pure fact is that we are not wanted there. The law is only a pretence.

Canadian Honesty.

I would draw the reader's attention to the letter from Mr. Burrell to our lawyer dated the 21st July 1914. In this letter Mr, Burrell undertakes on behalf of the Canadian Government to pay to the new charterers the cost of transportation as soon as the steamer leaves Canadian waters.

How Canada kept her plighted word. How in place of bread, stones were given. For this and other details I pray the reader to read part two of this volume.

Those who expected to get payment from Canada for their out lay lost their lives and serveral had to flee the country for dear life. All this comes in part two.

PART II.

Bloodshed In Canada.

Statement :—

VANCOUVER.

The hardship suffered by the passengers of the S. S. Komagatamaru and the cruel, illegal and inhuman treatment meted out to them by the Canadian Government is narrated here below. Though all papers of correspondence relating to the Vancouver incident were confiscated by the Indian Government yet an attempt has been made to describe the different events as vividly as possible.

STAFF NOT ALLOWED TO LAND.

1. I together with the staff of the ship were illegally treated as a prisioner and not allowed to land by the Immigration Department which under the law it could not do vide Immigration Act Sec. 2 paras f. & g. On the other hand we had every right to land without further delay under Section 33 paras 3 of the same Act. When all our requests for landing became fruit-

less we drew the attention of the authorities to Sec. 33 paras 11, 12, and agreed to give security but no heed was paid to this too. The reader is referred to correspondence dated the 23rd May 1914 to 20th June 1914 given in the first part.

THE PASSENGERS NOT ALLOWLD TO LAND.

2. The passengers were not taken to the shed of the port nor the Charterer was permitted to make some arrangement for their lodging and all this is indirect contravention to the Immigration Act. Sec. 2 para 5. They were also refused to land even on furnishing security as provided by Section 21, 31, 33 paragraphs 3, 4 and Section 60, 61, 62, 63 of the same Act.

For reference see letters as given in Part 1.

STEAMER NOT ALLOWED TO LOAD AND UNLOAD CARGO.

3. The Steamer was not permitted to load or unload cargo, as was the practice with other ships. First the passengers were allowed to land and afterward they could dispose of their cargo and load new one for the return of voyage. As a rule the passengers cannot remain in the ship on the port for more than 24 hours vide Section 60 of Immigration Act.

For reference see By-laws of the Corporation of the Commissioner of Vancouver, B. C, 1914 Sec. 17, 18

and 40. See also letters from me to Immigration Agent Mr. Reid, dated 23rd May 1914 and 2nd June 1914. Letter from me to Gorden Johnson & Co., dated 24th May 1914, letter from Captain Yama Motto to Immigration Agent, Mr. Reid dated 30th June 1914, letters from Mr. Bird, Barrister to Immigration Agent, Mr. Reid dated 5th June 1914 and and 20th June 1914.

4. The obstruction put in the way of the Charterer to pay the last instalment due at Vancouver to the Agent of the owner of the S. S. Komagatamaru on 4th June 1914 or 11th June 1914, according to the Charter party.

The Charterer and his friends were neither allowed to land at the port nor hold any communication in writing or otherwise with their legal advisor to pay the last instalment due to the Agent to the owner of the S. S. Komagatamaru on 4th June 1914 or 11th June 1914 at Vancouver. The clear intention of the authority at Vancouver was to this effect that the owner of the S. S. Komagatamaru on the Charterer failing to pay the instalment would take the S. S. Komagatamaru back and the whole responsibility of the intricate problem would be shifted from the Vancouver authorities upon the head of the Chartcrer who would also suffer other losses as a result of this. The Charterer by some means managed to send the information to the port to his *Sikh* friends about his trouble in this respect. But when his Sikh friends

at the port went to the Agent to pay the amount he (agent) declined to take the money from them on the plea that he would only accept it from the Charterer personally. This strange and ridiculous attitude of him naturally caused suspicions in the minds of the Charterer and his friends; that it was due at the instigation of the Vancouver. authorities. Consequently it took a long time over the matter and in the end the Charterer was obliged to relinquish his claims as a Charterer in favour of Bhai Bhag Singh and Mr. N. Rahim on 20th June 1914.

The loss incurred on this account is very great.

THE STEAMSHIP KOMAGATAMARU NOT ALLOWED TO PROCEED NOR THE CHARTERER WAS PERMITTED TO GO TO EUROPE.

5. When the crew found themselves as prisioners in the S. S. at Vancouver the Charterer applied for clearance papers for Brazil which were refused on the grounds that the vessel was not provided with wireless. The Charterer begged leave to make this arrangement, but to his utter disappointment the authorities did not see their way to permit him to go on land. The full account about this matter is given in History of the S. S. as referred in Para 17 of Komagatamaru enquiry Commission Report. The Charterer then requested the authority to allow him to return to India by some other steamship but this request was

also refused. For reference please see Mr. Bird's letter to Mr. Reid, Agent (Immigration) dated 5th June 1914, and as a last resort the charterer wanted to go to Europe, but all attempts in this respect were quite fruitless. Please see Mr. Bird's letter to Mr. Reid Immigration Agent dated 7th July 1914.

Now all this action of the Vancouver authorities was illegal and against Section 2 para G. A. of the law and regulations of Canada respecting Immigration and Immigrants.

THE LEGAL ADVISOR NOT ALLOWED TO GO ON THE SHIP.

6. When the passengers of the S. S. were not allowed to land and other obstructions were put in their way they wanted to consult the legal advisors with a view to constitutionally proceed in the Court of law to convince the authorities that they had every right to land. But all their attempts were in vain. At last the Sikh Committee at Vancouver approached the authorities for the purpose. The legal advisors Mr. Bird and others were allowed to talk with the Manager of the S. S. Komagatamaru but from a distance, for they remained in the launch and could not fully get the information they required by going on the S. S. Komagatamaru, so this nominal permission was no permission in the real sense. The complete correspondence in this respect is given in letters summrised below:—

(1) From Mr. Reid to Mr. Bird dated 23rd May 1914.

(2) From Mr. Reid to Mr. Bird dated 30th May 1914.

(3) From Mr. Gurdit Singh to Mr. Bird dated 3rd June 1914.

(4) From Mr, Bird to Mr. Reid dated 5th June 1914.

(5) Telegram From Mr. Bird to Governor Ottawa dated 19th June 1914.

(6) And reply to the above telegram dated 25th June 1914.

(7) From Mr. Reid to Mr. Bird dated 25th June 1914.

(8) From Mr. Bird to Mr. Reid dated 7th June 1914.

7. The charter party having been transferred in the name of a Committee of two persons, the Government's last attempt to send the ship back failed. The port authorities tried another method to achieve the same object. They proposed that two persons be picked up from among the passengers, whose case of elegibility or otherwise about landing on the shore be referred to a court, the decision of which to be considered as an acid test whether all the passengers of the

S. S. Komagatamaru had the necessary qualifications to land on the Canadian Soil or not. To this the passengers did not agree. They contended that individual case of every passenger be decided on its own merit. And all such passengers who had legally every right to land must be permitted to do so. But this reasonable demand was rejected, and quite against the wish of the passengers, the port authorities selected one person named Munshi Singh whom the Canadian C. I. D. knew to be the fittest person for its own purposes and submitted his case before the court. It was decided by the Court that Munshi Singh was not eligible, according to the rules and regulations, to land. Upon this plea the Government held that all passengers could not land though under Section 16 of Immigration Act every passenger has every right to prove that he possesses all qualifications to land as required by the rules. Thus the Court decision of the particular case of Munshi Singh was applied to all and consequently the rest of the passengers were not allowed to land and warrants of deportation of the crew and the pessenger were issued.

8. DURING THE STAY OF THE S. S. KOMAGATAMARU AT THE PORT NO WATER OR OTHER PROVISIONS WERE ALLOWED TO THE PASSENGERS.

Whatever they had ran short. They were ordered on the other hand to leave the port and go back

without necessary articles of food, water and medicine. The descriptive narratives about some important events connected with this subject will be found on other pages. For reference the attention is drawn to the following correspondence:—

(1) Letter from me to Mr. Reid dated 2nd June 1914.

(2) Letter from Daljit Singh to Mr. Reid dated 2nd June 1914.

(3) Letter from Daljit Singh to Mr. Reid dated 3rd June 1914.

(4) Letter from Daljit Singh to Mr. Reid dated 3rd June 1914.

(5) Letter from the Captain S. S. Komagatamaru to Mr. Reid dated 3rd June 1914.

(6) Letter from me and S. Daljit Singh to Khalsa Committee dated 7th June 1914.

(7) Letter from Daljit Singh to Mit Singh dated 7th June 1914.

(8) Letter from Daljit Singh to the Khalsa Committee dated 4th June 1914.

(9) Letter from passengers to Mr. Reid dated 14th June 1914.

(10) From Gordon Johnson to Mr. Bird dated 15th July 1914.

11. Letter from Mr. Reid to Mr. Bird, Vakil dated 20th July 1914.

12. Letter from our Advocate to Mr. Reid dated 20th July 1914.

13. Letter from our Advocate to Mr. Reid dated 21st July 1914.

14. Letter from Mr. Reid to our Advocate dated 21st July 1914.

15. The following lines from the Komagatamaru Commission report Para admits the facts:—

"On arrival at Vancouver they were refused admission and waited there for a period of two months making fruitless efforts to secure permission to land.

During the period they suffered great hardships and were for a time in actual want of food.

Finally they were directed to return having spent about a Lakh and a half of rupees on the voyage."

The question arises as to who was responsible to supply provision etc., to the passengers of the S. S. Komagatamaru. The Charterer according to Section 44 of the Immigration Act, is, in the first place responsible. But due to reasons already described I was put in such a position that it was impossible for me to do this. I was neither allowed to land, nor make shed for the passengers, nor deposit security for them. In short

every obstruction was put in my way to do anything in the matter. I was quite helpless. Had port authorities acceded to my request and acted as required by Sec. 21, para 3 and 31, para 11 of 33, p. c. 269 of the Immigration Act then no trouble of this sort would arisen at all. If it be held that the committee of two in whose name the Charter Party was transferred ought to have seen to this, then from their letter to Mr. Reid dated 7th July 1914 it is clear that they could not be held responsible.

Thus the entire responsibility falls on the head of the Canadian Government. The Government by issuing warrants of deportation against the passengers, must also provide medical aid to the passengers as laid down in para 2, 3 of Section 34, para 5 of Section 42 and Section 80 of the Immigration Act.

Paras 2 and 3 of Section 34.

2. If in the opinion of the Superintendent of Immigration or of the officer-in-charge, the transportation company which brought such persons to Canada failed to exercise proper vigilence or care in so doing, then the cost of his hospital treatment and medical treatment and maintainance shall be paid by such transportation company and otherwise the cost thereof shall be collected from such persons and if that be not possible then the cost thereof shall be paid by the department of the interior.

3. The Superintendent of Immigration or Officer-in-charge may, whenever it so cousidered necessary or advisable for the proper care of such persons, direct that a suitable attendent or some one upon whom such person is dependent or some one who is dependent on such person as the case may be shall be kept with such persons during his medical treatment on board-ship or at an immigrant station or hospital or in case of deportation from any place within Canada shall accompany such person to his port of embarkation from Canada, and the cost thereof shall be paid by the said transportation company. Whenever in the opinion of the Superintentent of Immigration it has failed to exercise proper vigilance or care aforesaid, and otherwise the cost thereof shall be collected from such person and if that is not possible then the cost thereo shall be paid by the department of the interior.

Para 5 Section 42.

In any case where deportation of the head of a family and dependent members of the family may be deported at the same time and in any case where deportation of a dependent member of a family is ordered on account of having become a public charge, and in the opinion of the minister such circumnstance is due to wilful neglect or non-support by the head or other members of the family morally bound to support such dependent members then all members of the family must be deported at the same time.

Such deportation shall be at the cost of the persons so deported and if that be not possible then the cost of such deportation shall be paid by the department of the interior.

Section 80. All expenses incurred in administering this Act and carrying out the provisions thereof and of affording help and advice to Immigrants and aiding, visiting and relieving destitute immigrants, procuring medical assistance and otherwise attending to the objects of immigration shall be paid out of any monies granted by the Parliament for any such purpose and under such regulations or under such orders in Council, if any, as are made for the distribution and application of such monies.

Had the Government not refused us the provisions which we urgently required for the maintenance of our lives we were quite ready to leave the port and come back to Hongkong. The letter reproduced herebelow justifies our position and expresses the true attitude of the Canadian Government.

July 7th 1914.

J. E. Bird,

We hereby instruct you to wave Board of inquiry for all on board Komagatamaru and to negotiate for return of Komagatamaru, Hongkong under either plans discussed or under any arrangement you may make.

(*Sd.*) *Gurdit Singh.*

The following Committee signed for passengers after full explanation to them.

Witnesses:—

1. *Harnam Singh.*
2. *Amar Singh.*
3. *Harnam Singh.*
4. *Sunder Singh.*
5. *Nabh Kamal Singh.*
6. *Bir Singh.*

I hereby certify that this comprises whole Committee.

Daljit Singh.

I, Doctor Raghunath Singh do not agree, as I belong to non-Immigrant class.

Raghunath Singh.

On the 23rd July 1914 the steamship left Vancouver port for Yokohama (Japan). I leave the woeful tale of the 80 passengers of the steamship here and give a description of what happened with our Indian brothren in Canada, who suffering untold

miseries are so closely connected with our cause that the Komagatamaru story will be incomplete without mentioning them. Many true *Sikhs* like Bhai Bhag Singh were shot to death in the broad day light in the presence of hundreds, congregated in the *Sikh* temple, by the Agents of the Interior, more noble souls like Bhai Sewa Singh were sent to gallows; some rolled in Jails and the rest had to flee for their lives.

As already has been mentioned, the Indians at the Vancouver port formed a Committee of their own with a view to help the passengers of our ship and create facilities for their landing at the port. For this purpose they had engaged legal advisors before S. S. reached there on the morning of 23rd May 1914. But unfortunately there were traitors of Bela Singh's type among them whose evil designs not only stood in our way, but actually helped the cause of the Government against us. Such people were either paid by the port authorities as informers or were directly employed by the C. I. D. At first they made certain attempts at my life, but having been unsuccessful in this, they were able to put certain obstructions in the way of our paying the instalment of dollars twenty two thousand due to the Agent of the owner of the steamship. This necessitated me to relinquish my claim as Charterer in favour of Bhai Bhag Singh and Mr. Rahim two members of the Indian Committee at Vancouver. But the

new Charterers as already has been described were not allowed to come near the steamship.

On 19th July the port authorities ordered us to leave the port. But the S. S. could not sail without the permission of new Charterers; and at the same time there were no provisions and water on board which the passengers urgently required. The authorities, without listening to the reasonable demands of the passengers, wanted to send them by force; but they would not go. The result of all this was the affray of 19th July already narrated. The Government realising the seriousness of the situation, which once put the city of Vancouver in danger, began to negotiate with the Charterers. After material discussion it was agreed that the the steamship he vacated for the Charterers and the passengers on board be sent to Hongkong back by the S. S. "Empress of Japan" on Government cost. But due to want of accommodation in his ship the Captain of the S. S. "Empress of Japan" refused to take the passengers of the Komagatamaru. There was no other steamship available for their transport, The authorities again consulted the new Charterers on the point, who now put their demands they had already made in their letter dated 7th July. It was thus finally settled that (i) the amount asked by the Charterers in their letter, be given when the passengers would peacefully leave the Canadian coast (ii) and the passengers be sent by the Komagatamaru after supplying them

the necessary provisions at the Government expense. The legal Advisor of the Charterers took upon themselves the responsibility and stood as surety on behalf of the Government for the money to be paid to the Charterers.

The Charterers in good faith to the terms of the settlement permitted us to leave the port, and enjoined on us to either extend the term of the Charter Party or purchase the ship, and get the Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Co., now chiefly to be financed and controlled by the Charterers registered.

On 5th August the charterers sent Bhai Sudh Singh with powers of Attorney to take charge of the ship at the Hongkong Port where it was due on 25th August 1914. But due to reasons, known to the Hongkong Government the steamship was prohibited from entering the Hongkong. Port. Had the steamship reached there on 25th August 1914 as arranged there were full 38 days for which the Charterers could use the ship for the term of Charter Party expired on 3rd October 1914.

On 13th August. the Charterers asked the Government to pay them the amount due to them as settled. But the authorities, fearing that again the Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Co. managed by the Charterers, would bring passengers directly from Calcutta, whom under the law they could not refuse entry into Canada.

contemplated to stop the activities of the Charterers if possible break up the Indian Committee at Vancouver, whose representatives the charterers were.

To attain this object, the Interior department and C. I. D. utilized the services of Bela Singh and other bad characters of his type. Bela Singh was originally a resident of Janian village in the district of Hoshiarpore and his Sinister motives and evil methods were well known to his countrymen. The members of the Committee got a scent of this danger from that quarter and asked their legal advisors to help them to get licences for some arms to defend their lives, The advocates did not take a serious notice of their request and put off the matter, The things actually came to such pass that one day Bela Singh brought his loaded revolvers in the temple, while a Sikh prayer meeting was being held in honour of a dead compatriot. Just at the time when final prayer was finished and the congregration bowed their heads before the holy *Granth* the bullets of Bela Singh's revolvers entering through their backs passed through the hearts of Bhai Bhag Singh and Sardar Batan Singh, who fell dead on the spot and other Sikhs were also wounded. The culprit was caught hold of red handed and handed over to the Police. Mr. Hopkinson whose agent Bela Singh was, got him released on bail. He confessed his guilt in the open court but said that he had done that in self defence. The court acquitted him making remarks in the judg-

ment that such a daring deed, in the presence of such a great gathering, could only be done in self-defence. The judge ignored the main evidence as to why Bela Singh had gone there with loaded revolvers, when the rest were sitting in the temple unarmed. And mourning the death of a comrade.

How it is that this traitor Bela Singh dared to go into such an assembly if the knew there was danger for his life? Could he escape from such a large crowd if they had the motive to take his life? It was a plot engineered by the Police to break the Indians' unity in the city of Vancouver who were daring enough to show their sympathy to Komagatamaru passengers in defiance to the Whitemen's wishes.

Bhai Sewa Singh was one who felt most indignant at the most dastardly deed done by Bela Singh at the instigation of the Canadian C. I. D. As the Court failed in its duty to punish this murderer and instead praised it as a heroic deed some Sikhs took the matter into their hands and vowed to revenge on the wire puller (Inspector Hopkinson who made Bela Singh as the cat's paw and among this noble band was Sewa Singh.)

Many schemes were considered as to the best method of revenging on Hopkinson and at last it was decided that Sewa Singh should endear himself to Hopkinson by acting as his informer against the

Indians. Many days passed in this way but no chance came across to do away with this bloody European. One day early in the morning Sewa Singh decided to wait no longer and with loaded revolver went to Hopkinson's house to finish with him. He found him shaving before a large mirror. Sewa Singh thought that was the best chance and took out his revolver but his action was noticed by Hopkinson in the mirror who turning quickly round caught hold of Sewa Singh's hand. Sewa Singh started laughing and with the presence of mind said, "Don't be excited. I I am handing the revolver to you and ask you to shoot me. My countrymen hate me and openly accuse me of being in your pay while you never offer me the job so often promised. What is the use of living under such circumstances ? So I came to ask you the favour to end me and my sorrows". The Inspeetor was deceived and Sewa Singh's presence of mind saved him.

Next day in the open Court among a huge crowd Sewa Singh killed Hopkinson, who felling shrieked that it was a cowardly deed to which Sewa Singh retorted that cowards deserve cowardly deaths. To the panic stricken Court Sewa Singh addressed in a calm clear voice, "Have no fear. I shall harm no one. I have revenged my brothers who were killed at this coward's instigation. I have shown you that it is quite easy to kill in a crowd. That the murderer

Bela Singh was no hero, as praised in this Court. Death has no stings for me and the noble spirits of Bhai Bhag Singh and Bhai Batan Singh becon me whose deaths I avenged".

Joyfully with a steady step this noble man climbed the scaffold and thus died one of India's noble sons the like of whom it is hard to replace.

The rest of the Vancouver Sikh Committee had to flee to save their lives from the ruthless Canadian Aut' orities. Bela Singh having escaped punishment after murdering so many innocents, they thought their lives to be in danger from such persons.. Instead of dying in Canada a useless death this band preferred to die on the Altar of mother India.

Their whole object was to revenge for deeds committed by the pawns of the British Canadian Government.

If the Court or any one deems the episodes related above as false or distorted, I challenge the Government to institute legal proceedings against me and I stand prepared to substantiate the black and barbarious dealings of the Canadian Government to the very letter in any impartial Court.

To support and make clear the above passages I append some of the letters below. From these the criminal dodging of the Government of Canada in the matter of evading the payment and letter of Mr. A. M.

MacNeill to Mr. Burrell clearly shows that the Vancouver Committee was actutlly in danger of their lives and in self defence wanted to possess firearms. They were persuaded not to insist on firearms and the result was their being shot by that murderer who was in the C. I. D. or Immigration Department as he admitted in an open Court. Now read the letters:—

VANCOUVER, B. C.

13th August 1914.

The Hon'ble Martin Burrell,

Minister of Agriculture,

Ottawa, Ontario

Re: Komagatamaru.

Dear Sir,

I would appreciate very much if you would take immediate action on our arrangements as to repaying local Hindus their outlay in this matter. As verbally explained this money was subscribed by a large number of men and owing to business conditions here many of those men are now out of employment and in need of money. Will you kindly take steps in accordance with our arrangements so that this money will be available for the local men as quickly as possible.

(Sd.) A. N. MACNEILL.

2231 W. N. K. 52. 3 46 p. m., 15,

Ottawa, Ontario.

15th, August 1914.

A. N. MacNeill, K. C.,
Vancouver, B. C.

Re. Claim as referred to Prime Minister has copy of my letter to you of July 21st and you may rely on its terms being lived up to will expidiate in every possible way but the urgent matters connected with war conditions are absolutely absorbing Government attention and time at present moment.

(Sd.) M. Burrel.

———

[Copy of night telegram.]

Vancouver, B. S.

11th September 1914.

The Hon'ble Martin Burrell,
Minister of Agriculture,
Ottawa (Ontario),
Re. Komagatamaru,

Have you any news for me? Local Hindus are very insistant.

(Sd.) A. N. MacNeill.

———

Ottawa (Ontario)

12th September, 1914.

N. MacNeill,

Vancouver B. C.

At Prime Minister's request discussed this matter with acting Minister of the Interior, and we are now making arrangement for appointment of Commissioner and will expediate matter as much as possible.

[Copy.]

The Hon'ble Martin Burrell,

Member of Agriculture,

Ottawa Ontario,

My dear Mr. Burrell,

I am sure you will pardon the number of telegrams I have been sending you in connection with the Komagatamaru.

The Komagatamaru arrived in Yokohama on August 15th and is doubtless in Hongkong by this time. As already advised, yet the men who put up the money for the Charter are eagerly seeking for a return of their money both on account of representations I made to them, and on account of their present financial condition, arising out of lack of work.

Matters have been made uery much worse by the trouble among the Hindus to have been more or less connected with this matter. The latest episode was the murder of two and then wounding of some six others by a man named Bela Singh who I am eredibly informed was in the employment of the Immigration Department here.

Some two or three days before the date of the murder several of these men called to see and told me that their lives were in danger by reason of this man Bela Singh who afterwards committed the murders and some two or three others. They wanted me to get licence allowing them to carry firearms for their protection. I advised them against any such course having in mind that those who were arrayed against them purported to be the representatives of the constituted authority, and the carrying of firearms of any of those people might be miscontrued. In consequence of my advice those men refrained from carrying firearms. I do not know whether the result would have been different if they had been armed. You will therefore see how the whole matter if complicated by matters that are extraneous to the arrangement regarding repayment of monies advanced for charter purposes. The local men however are more inclined than ever to blame me for the delays of all the surrounding circumstances and I trust you will do what you can to bring the question to an early conclusion.

I think I pointed out to yourself and Mr. Lodner the attitude af those men in matters of this sort.

I am,

Yours truly,

(Sd.) A. N. MacNeill.

The above letters etc. will show clearly how the Canadian Government broke their plighted word in the matter of payment of the money promised instead of which they did a'l they could do to smash the Indian Vancouver Committee. The dishonourable way the Komagatamaru passengers were treated and the door of Canada was shut against them and the murderous shooting of Indians at Budge-Budge spread like a flame of fire out of which sprang many brave hearted souls ready to sell their lives for Mother India, account of whose deeds will brighten the last pages of this book to which the readers attention is drawn.

YOKOHAMA.

The ship reached Yokohama on the 16th August. There I received a letter from the Colonial Secretary of Hongkong, informing me that the Government of that dependency considered it undesirable that any of the passengers should land at Hongkong threatening to enforce a local vagrancy Ordinance against any

who might attempt to land at the port. (Please see para 19 of Komagatamaru Commission inquiry report).

The owners of the ship wired to the Captain to take the vessel to Kobe. Accordingly the ship left Yokohama on the 18th August and reached Kobe on the 21st August, where that perfect gentleman Mr. Jawahar Mal, Joti Ram Mansukhani M. A. met us, whose sympathetic treatment heartened the disappointed passengers. He gathered other Indians of the place and led us in a procession. He also encouraged us in many other ways. On the other hand, the attitude of the sailors and other Japanese crew became suddenly changed towards the passengers The light, that was usually given, was stopped and the water supply was also cut off. They began to trouble the passengers in many other ways; the passengers under the lead of Mr. Jawahar Mal placed their grievances before Mr. Y. Sato, agent to the owner of the ship and the British Consul at Kobe for redress. Mr. Y. Sato, instead of attending to the complaints, tried to get the ship vacated. But this he was unable to do, for the date of the Charter party was to expire on 3rd October 1914, upto which time the money due to the owner was paid up.

The passengers were very eager to reach Hongkong from where they had started, but their entry into that port was prohibited, so, as a last resort though

quite against their wish, they consented to go to Calcutta. The British Consul did not seem inclined to agree to this, nor were the Japanese sailors willing to take the ship there. The ship was lying at anchor. Valuable time and money of the new Charterers were being wasted, and the passengers were in trouble. At last the news was received that tne Government of India were prepared to incur the expenses of taking the passengers to India.

Here below are given the telegrams exchanged between the British Consul at Kobe and the Government of India in this connection:—

The telegram of the consul at Kobe runs :—

"In rent 350 Indians Komagatamaru alleged to be completely destitute. Only possible solution present, sending to India, requesting you will sanction expenditure not exceeding 19,000 Yen repatriation."

The Government of India replied as follows:—

"Your telegrams of 27th and 30th instant. Komagatamaru Indians. Government of India agree to pay expenses of repatriation up to 19,000 to you and would like to know immediately arrangements proposed. Very desirable they should return in one ship and land Madras; also that immediate intimation be given to allow officers to be sent to meet them in Singapore and travel rest of journey on board. Presumed you contemplate payment of passage and

messing fares to those otherwise distitute only. If names of any specially undesirable or any other particulars likely to be of assistance known would you kindly telegraph."

It is important to note that at Kobe, with the help of Mr. Jawahar Mal we prepared a complete history of the ship up to date. There were few copies of this history, and we learnt afterwards that one copy which was entrusted to a Sindhi gentleman there was purchased by an Englishman for 10,000 Yen. Before the ship left for Calcutta, the British Consul General at Kobe called and asked me to receive 9,000 Yen for the passengers of the ship and wanted an acknowledgement receipt for the amount. I refused to accept the amount, adding that I had sufficient money with me and at the same time I had nothing to do with the passengers, Mr. Mir Mohammad Khan, the Secretary of the passengers' Committee, thereupon received the above mentioned amount on behalf of the passengers, and signed a receipt for the same.

The Komagatamaru commission is quite wrong instating that I received the amount. It has recorded this simply to defame me in the eyes of the public. If the said Commission or the Government have the courage to support this statement, let them produce the acknowledgement receipt of the amount alleged to have been received by me.

As the ship was forced to remain in ports of Japan for more than two weeks we were able to receive sufficient financial help from Canada and other places and to collect more funds with a view to purchase the ship and etablish the Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Co. We had already received £7000/- for this purpose. We also settled the terms of purchase of the S. S, Komagatamaru with Mr. Y. Sato, Agent to the owner of the ship and took a letter dated 2nd October 1914 from him to the Agent Y. Sato & Co. at Calcutta, to the effect that the ownership of the ship was to be registered in the name of Guru Nanak Steam Navigation Co. after the payment of.....Yen.

The S S. Komagatamaru was to leave the port of Kobe on the 2nd September, when the passengers were given to understand that t e ship was given clearance papers for Calcutta but somehow the real destination which was Madras leaked out on which the passengers protested and threatened when the anchor was dropped about two miles out and clearance papers changed to Calcutta.

SINGAPORE.

It reached Singapore on 16th September 1914. Here too the ship was not allowed to go to the port, but remained at a distance of five miles from the place, where the steamers usually lie at anchor. The passengers found themselves prisioners as at Van-

couver. Many wanted to land there; some for employment. Mr. Jawahar Mal and his brother had to change the ship for Bombay, and I had to attend to business of mine; but we were not permitted to go to the shore.

At last we requested a European port officer to allow us time to send some important telegrams. But this request too was not granted. He, of course, consented to take the drafts of the telegrams and promised to send them, for which we paid him 30 dollers. One of the telegrams was addressed to the Viceroy intimating him the date of the arrival of the ship and requesting to appoint a commission of enquiry to hear our grievances. The second was to the editor of the "Bengalee" on the same subject. The third was meant for Sardar Harchand Singh of Lyallpur who was also informed the date of arrival of the ship and was requested to receive us at Calcutta with other national leaders.

DEPARTURE FOR CALCUTTA.

It has already been mentioned that when the passengers were thirsty at the port of Vancouver they were obliged to plunder water which the Japanees crew had brought from the shore for their own use, and that the Canadian authorities allowed the Japanese sailors revolvers and ammunition which they could use against the passengers. Now the crew got satisfied that they had no danger to fear from us. The revolvers and other arms, which they had and which

were of little use to them, were now secretly sold to the passengers. The responsible members of the committee of the passengers, Mr. Jawahar Mal and myself, came to know of the fact. We were very particular from the very beginning that nothing illegal or unconstitutional should be done on our part, otherwise we would lose the moral support and sympathy of the public. So a thorough search of all the passengers was made. The result was that all the objectionable things with the passengers were either thrown over board in the sea or restored to the Japanese, (a fact which is admitted by the Komagatamaru inquiry commission in its report in para 42) Before we reached Calcutta we got thoroughly satisfied that none of the passengers had anything in their possession for which we could be blamed afterwards. I also served a written notice upon the Captain of the ship instructing him to warn his men not to sell fire arms to the passengers, and holding him responsible for any such unlawful action on part of his crew.

On 26th September, 1914, when the ship was sailing at full speed in high tide waters near Kalpi, a flag signal was given by a European sitting in a launch and the ship suddenly came to a stand still.

KALPI.

The country people in boats approached the ship to sell their things to the passengers in their usual

manner; but they were ordered by the pilot not to come near. This created some fear in the minds of our men. For the whole night the ship remained there at anchor, and the passengers were treated just like prisioners, for a close guard was put over them, and nobody was allowed to go on the shore. The next morning i. e. on the 27th September, a launch containing some European officers appeared. They at once came on board the ship. Soon after they were followed by some twenty men, all Punjabis. They too came on board the ship, and were clad in plain clothes. The first and second class passengers were asked to stand in a line, for they, as they were then told, were to be searched.. But while they stood on one side of the deck, their cabines were locked and sealed and strict guard was put over them.

The Deck passengers were then thoroughly searched. Thus the 27th passed away.

On the 28th September again, the same persons began to make searches as on the previous day. When we asked the reason of the daily searches, they told us that the search of the 27th was conducted by the Custom Offiers, and for the search of the 28th the C. I. D. was responsible. On the 29th the same men, now in police uniform, searched the persons of all the passengers. The ship weighed anchor and left for Budge-Budge where it reached at about noon.

knowledge that the European Custom Officer at Singapore whom we handed the telegrams with thirty dollors did not send those wires or they were intercepted by the Indian Government. Either the Custom Officer bemeaned himself and pocketted this paltry sum or Government stopped these wires, which fact never came to my knowledge. Had these telegrams been received there was a chance that some of the occurrences at Budge-Budge would have been averted.

To go with our story. On the arrival of the Punjabis the 1st and 2nd class passengers were ordered to stand on board in a line as they were to be medically examined. One European gave out himself to be a Doctor. When they came out of their cabins and stood in a line as asked their cabins were locked and sealed and guard placed before the cabins.

After this the deck passengers were thoroughly searched.

Thus passed the 27th having put in gloom the already down-hearted spirits of the men who had suffered untold miseries.

When the 28th dawned fresh search was instituted and when we asked the meaning of this 2nd search we were told that the search of yesterday was conducted by the Custom Officers while the one of to-day was by the C. I. D. Thank Heaven that

nothing incriminating us in the eyes of the law was found on us. We had made most careful search of the passengers while on the way and it was most unlikely that the Police could find anything indiscriminating.

Like theatre actors the same men came the next day now clad in Police uniform and searched the persons of the passengers. This search too proved fruitless to the Police. After this the anchor was raised and the steamer proceeded on her way to Calcutta. I might add that early in the morning when the passengers wanted to cook and boil water for tea they were stopped and told that the food is already prepared for them and that they need not prepare anything on board. The spirits of the psssengers began to revive as they soon hoped to be on land after such a tedious and unfortunate wanderings over the waters. Little they knew what was in store for them. The steamer when near Budge-Budge slowed its speed and to the utter surprise and horror she stopped there when Calcutta was yet 17 miles ahead.

BUDGE-BUDGE.

What happened at Budge-Budge cannot be described. Had such treatment been meted out say for instance to the people of Ireland, that country, though she had been under the English Crown for

several centuries, would have arisen and revenged her wronged sons. Indians, having lost their manhood owing to the contact with British "Civilisation" for so many hundred years, let their brethren suffer the most disgraceful treatment and never raised even the feeblest voice in protest at the time and whoever dared to raise a voice he was put down with an iron hand. But by this most horrible tragedy Indian feeling began to smoulder, which one day, it is hoped, will spring into a flame and yet revenge the deaths of the innocent sons of Mother India who fell at Budge-Budge.

The wholesale murder of Bengal Regiment 47 in 1824 brought 1857.

Though we were unarmed and like sheep in a pin, yet the wolves in authority used most condemnable deception and cruelty in their dealings and bungled the whole affair. Had the man possessed even a grain of sense would have handled the situation with tact and nothing would have occured at this place to darken the pages of History of British dominion in India and Sikhs would still have been the dupes and tools in the hands of England. Thank God this tragedy happened and the Sikh nation opened their eyes and realised what actually were their master the "Whiteman".

To go on with our story. After the policemen have thrice changed their professions and treated us worst

than the lowest beasts, I was asked by my passengers to approach the officers and enquire their reason for stopping the steamer at Budge-Budge whereas they told us that we were being taken to Calcutta early that morning. I approached the Officer and following, is the dialogue of the conversation that took place between the Officer-in-command and myself.

Myself:—"You promised us to take the steamer to Calcutta. You even stopped us cooking our breakfast saying that food was prepared for us at Calcutta. May I know please, why a halt has been made at Budge-Budge ?

Officer:—"From Budge-Budge the passengers will be entrained and sent off to the Punjab."

Myself:—" (I was surprised) This is news indeed to send us to the Punjab under Government Police. Who asked you for such protection or guard ? Secondly this line from Budge-Budge does not go to the Punjab, Howrah is the Punjab station. Thirdly you have no right to remove me by force as I personally have business in Calcutta in connection with the Komagatamaru which cannot be adjusted unless I am in person in Calcutta. There are several disputes with the owners of Komagatamaru and these were to have been settled by an arbitrator at Hongkong and as we were not permitted to enter that place the

settlement is to take place at Calcutta. And according to the charter I am entitled to be in charge of the ship till the decision by a duly appointed arbitrator. By what right will you forcibly drive me from the steamer ?"

Officer:—"You cannot stick to the ship until you settle your affairs and moreover the ship no longer belongs to you. The Government has spent huge amount of money on this. As to your other question this line will join Punjab line 5 miles out."

Myself:—"On behalf of the long suffering passengers I beseach you to be more explicit and explain to us your ultimate object. All are rather suspicious of your doings. Without our knowledge we were being shipped to Madras direct from Japan, endeavours were made to put us all under guard from Singapore. Your keeping the ship stationery for 3 days in the Hooghly and then searching the persons of the passengers in a most disgraceful manner and now finally without our wish to take us to the Punjab and that too by an unfrequented path leads us all to think that there is a trickery in all you do.

" Let us know what you want to do with us so that we may be prepared for our fate. Why does the Government want to go to unnecessary expenditure and give us unnecessary travelling ?."

Officer:—"I am not here to answer your questions but to force Government orders which you must comply."

Myself:—"We are ready to obey. Slaves cannot do otherwise but if you are leading us to gallows, tell so, so that we may make preparation for the next world".

Another white Officer (who was standing close by) "You will have death, you swine. Shut up, don't talk much.'

Myself:—"Be careful what words you use. No matter what position we are in we are still Indian gentlemen. I will not bear such insult from you." (This man showed temper but the first Officer speaks to him English when he cools a bit but continues muttering something).

Officer:—"Go now and tell the passengers to get down from the ship."

Myself:—"Sir, think over and do not force us to descend from the ship in this manner. The route you are taking is not the one that takes people to the Punjab, and the passengers are not willing to go by that way."

Officer:—"Is it that your order or of Govenment ?

Myself:—"Agreed that the powerful Government orders, but it is also essential that Government give fair and reasonable orders."

Officer:—"Shut up. I won't hear you any more. Go and get all down".

The above conversation took place in the captain's cabin. All my men were standing outside and were listening to this conversation. I came out and told the substance so the Committee and all began to consult each other as to what steps to take. It was a great relief to me to know that I had a man by my side. He was Mr. Jawahar Mal Toti Ram Mansukhani to whose foresight we expected to be pulled through this most delicate situation. Our consultation took nearly half an hour and on the other side the Government Officials were also holding a Committee probably thinking as to how to enforce their will on the poor men. Suddenly a whiteman stepped out from the group with a watch in his hand shouting. "Get down, be quick or you will be killed. I give you fifteen minutes." Other Europeans too began to tell other passengers in the above strain. The concerted action that our Committee intended to take was useless against this brutal order and it became necessary for a new discussion. It was decided to send down a comrade to report on the treatment meted to those weak minded fools who were foolish enough to abandon their friends and obeyed the police order. One reason they obeyed the police was that they were owing large sums to the Charterers of the Komagatamaru. As the policeman

was shouting like an auctioneer, "Ten minutes more" Our man also came up and reported that men from each District was locked up in a separate compartment in the train with a police guard at each carriage. " Five minutes more" "Get down or you will be shot". Shouts the snobby Englishman. At this time the steamer too blew its siren which gave the passengers the impression that the steamer is moving seaward. Shortly afterward the same Englishman shouted that unless they get out and that quickly the steamer will take them out to be shot.

Meanwhile my private Secretary Sardar Daljit Singh was busy with the safe and trying to obtain a receipt for the contents when again the order was given: –"Another one minute" and with this the lines were untied and the steamer was about to move when our Committee was compelled to ask the passengers to leave themselves without removing any article. The Officers were "Smaritans" enough to say that they would look after our belongings and in this they kept their word as they are looking after them upto now.

Some were clad and some were barely clad and as they were, they were pushed and kicked down. There was only a single plank by which they could go down singly and their getting down was a sight that would have revolted any self-respecting man.

They were treated like slaves of the period not long passed. I was conveying the Holy "GRANTH SAHIB" and was relieved from the precious weight by Bhai Sucha Singh. Under such provocative treatment we kept our patience and reciting the hymn the meaning of which was "Look down, oh, Heavenly Father, oh just look down at our plight". Going a little further we sat the Holy Book on a small platform and squatted around with the unbearable load of our misseries. The police Officers continued ordering us to the waiting train. The passengers were hopelessly tired and hungry and they demanded for bread but the ruthless police had nothing but stones for them.

The following conversation again took place:—

Officer:—"Get up on to the train".

Myself:—"The men request me to ask you not to treat us so harshly. We are all tired to death"

Officer:—"What is that you want to say?"

Myself:—"The passengers fear a trick as this is not a place where Punjab passengers get their train, moreover we have a dispute with the steamship company and this under para 25 of the Charter party is to be settled by an arbitrator at Calcutta. Under the circumstances it is hardly fair to compel us to go in this manner.

Officer:—"This is not the time to settle your dispute. Government's orders are that you go to the Punjab. We will employ force if you refuse to go willingly".

Myself:—"We are aware that Government could and would send us by force. If you would not grant our request as above would you please get us a lawyer from Calcutta at our expense, in whose hands we would leave our business and give instructions to take legal steps against the Steamship company.

Officer:—"I am not your servant to call a lawyer for you".

Myself:—"Yes, you are not my servant but you must know that all my comrades will suffer financially if you compel us to go in this haste."

Officer:—"What is the harm or loss if you go at once? Say at once what you want to say. Don't waste time.

Myself:—"Hear me please (1) Our Holy Book which is with us is to be ceremoniously deposited in any Sikh Temple in Calcutta. It is sacrilegious to carry it in the train. We have made arrangement to buy this Steamer for Yen 80,000 from the Agent, Mr. Sato who has given us in writing. This matter of the purchase too is to be settled at Calcutta.

(2) The passengers having stayed together for the last six months have to settle their financial affairs with each other. I personally have documents amounting to twenty-five thousands dollars to be recovered from several parties.

(3) Several persons owe money to the Guru Nanak Steamship Company and this too has to be settled. (4) We have large stocks of goods which lie in the Steamer and as we intend to purchase the Steamer we did not remove. We have 533 bedsteads and other valuable articles which were not intended to be removed until we had fixed up the matter of purchasing. For this we asked for a lawyer in whose hands we can leave these affairs.

(5) The above affairs will take at least a week to go through and unless we go to the Howrah Sikh Temple, where we have to hand our Holy Book, we will be at a great loss.

(6) None of us have applied to the Government for free passage to India. Moreover many of the passengers intend to seek work in Calcutta as owing to winter there will he no farm work in the Punjab."

After listening very impatiently to the above arguments the Government Officers went aside and talked among each other for some time. Shortly again they came and said that there are some reasons

in our request yet they dare not disobey Government and ordered us to board the trains. We agreed but begged very humbly and respectfully to allow at least 5 Sikhs from among us to carry the "Holy Granth Sahib" to a Sikh Temple at Calcutta as is the religious custom among the Sikhs. This most reasonable request too was refused. And my further request for a lawyer was bluntly rejected too. Not only rejected but the officer lost his temper and commanded us to get into the train and that nothing could be done for us. I consulted with my Committee and told the Officer that we were not prepared to obey, that we remain where we were. If you could show us our warrants of arrest we would gladly give ourselves up. Without warrants we will not obey. We wait here for one hour and if during that time no warrants are shown to us we go where we like. We had no proof of the authority of the Budge-Budge Officers and we had no need of Government mercy shown in the matter of free passages to the Punjab. I also added that any one among us willing to take advantage of free passage could do so if he desired. I also added that there is no law in existance which would enable the Government to permit us if we do not avail ourselves of the Government bounty.

The Enquiry Committee though althrough pervading far from facts do admit in this connection our

long argument with Sir Haliday, Commissioner of Police Calcutta also our very reasonable request to take the "Holy Granth" to the Temple also admits that all requests were refused. I may add that I have proof in my possession to support what I write.

Passengers during the meanwhile scattered themselves hither and thither and at the expiration of one and half hours seeing no warrants for their arrest decided to march to Calcutta.

While the passengers were on the march a white soldier blocked the road and showed the nozzle of his pistol and threatened to shoot. Sardar Inder Singh and Sardar Amar Singh of Sandpora, Lahore opened their breasts and touched the mouth of the pistol and asked the European to shoot but this white man got funky and moved out of the way. There were some Policemen from the Punjab who were walking with us but without any hinderance. When we had nearly gone about three miles we met some four or five Englishmen who on seeing us began to load their revolvers and tried to stop us but they could not do so. When we had gone another mile a car came along with some Officers.

Officer:—Where are you people going to ?

Myself:—We are going to Calcutta.

Officer;—What business have you at Calcutta ?

Myself:—First to deposit the Holy Book in a Gurdwara and afterwards seek an interview with the Governor before whom we will lay our grievances.

Officer:—The Governor has sent me to hear your case. I am his Commissioner.

Myself:—If such is the case, very well listen to me I will relate you the miseries and injustice suffered by us.

Officer:—Not here. Return with me to the Budge-Budge station where I would hear your case.

The passengers looked at each other and came to the conclusion that it would be an impossibilty to re ch Calcutta as the road all through was thronged with military men. It was also realised that in case we disobeyed the ruthless Officers would not hestitate to shoot. Our chief object besides the depositing of the Holy Book was to approach the Governor and as this man said he was deputed by the Governor we would lay our case before him. I must say here that almost all of us had lost faith in the Government Officers but we had no other alternative except to be murdered then and there or go back with this man and try a hand at dialogue the outcome of which was anticipated as a victory for him. We in fact had consulted with each other that it would be better to go as these tools of Government

So we walked those weary miles back. I must record here an incident which will give another lie to the Government's allegations that the men did not love me. While on our way to Calcutta, I was both weary and sad at the outcome of the the voyage which I had expected to bring much good to my country. While walking I was dropping behind the others. They seeing this reduced their pace to keep up with me when they saw a Bengalee youth coming towards them on a By-cycle. They begged him to sell it for my use and asked him to put a price. He said he recently bought it for Rs. 60/- and would gladly sell for that sum. This youth was paid Rs. 75/-. He was rather happy at having made a small profit on his cycle and in consideration of ourselves being liberal with him he enquired if he could do anything for us. We gave him the message to let Calcutta know that the Komagatamaru is back and passengers would probably stay at the Howrah Gurduwara. He promised to let some people know about this and departed. Thus I was relieved from tramping by riding the cycle.

I will go on with my tale:—The police kicked, boxed and clubbed us on our return journey to Budge-Budge. My little son was thirsty and continually begged for water and when approached a way side inn to ask for a bottle of lemonade, an officer caught me by the neck and gave me such a push

that I hardly escaped falling and had I not caught my turban it would have toppled down. Passengers were of course very angry at this and wanted to retaliate but I pacified them. The Enquiry Committee in paragraph 27 of the reports admits the Police ill treatment but at once whitewashes them that this was necessary as passengers wanted to fly. But I say such was never the case as the passengers fully realised the value of the saying of "Union is strength" and their whole idea was to be united.

On arrival we directly went to the Budge-Budge Station where the "Burra Saheb" wanted to listen to us. But there we were pushed out by the Police who told us to get out and get into the steamer. Thus was how the Governor's Deputy kept faith with us. Discouraged, sore at heart we again went to the open ground where we placed a platform and placed the Holy Granth on it. All squatted round the Book and started singing hymns.

The police threatened us and ordered to Board the steamer.

We naturally were surprised and afraid to comply with this order. This was the very steamer they wanted us to vacate with all speed and now the order was to get aboard. The Enquiry Committe admits the order having given but gives the reason that there was no train available and that the authorities wanted to

"prison" us in for the night. But hundreds impartial witnesses would testify that there was a train.

The Governor's Deputy, seeing the strength of the Police at Budge-Budge quite enough to control us did not consider it worth while to keep his word. We on our part were now reluctantly willing to get into the train and go whither these "Lords" wanted to take us. But fate had reserved another fate for us. Now the Police took a cowardly advantage of force and began to pull, push, kick, blow and command to compel us to Board the steamer. Our Committee fearing a treachery absolutely refused and advised the men not to go into the steamer. They began to say the evening prayers and when still praying my child Balwant Singh started shrieking and calling on me. On my enquiry as to the cause of the boy crying I was informed that a soldier had carried him. I understood at once the meaning of this act. I rebuked my boy saying "This is not the time to cry and ask for father. That relationship has ended. Be prepared to face death bravely". "I am prepared for that father but would like to be near you when the time comes". He shrieked and kicked and nailed the soldier who chucking him away said, "Go, if you want to be killed". What I understood at the time and I am still of that opinion that the cause of the show of mercy to the

child was this. The officers who were never disobeyed by Indians were fed up and angry at us because we refused to obey their unlawful and arbitrary orders. They could not brook this and had finally decided to shoot us if we still continued to disobey. Subsequent shootings at Jalianwala Bagh and other places has shown Indians that to shoot at disobedient Indians is as amusing and sporty as shooting wild beasts and we knew well now that the authorities will not hesitate to shoot us down. No people however cruel will bear the sight of an innocent child dying in these circumstances. This was the sole reason that particular kind hearted soldier wanted to remove my child from the place of danger.

We had just finished our prayer and were half way through the "Rememberance Appeal" known among the Sikhs as "Ardasa" when I was called out and I replied, "Please wait till our prayer was over. Always accustomed to be obeyed this reply was like a blow to the officer. He came into the gathering, with a Lathi in his hand hitting some on the head and some on the shoulders to give way so that he might reach where I was. It was I believe Sardar Nabh Kamal Singh our standard bearer who resented this intrusion and snatched the stick from the soldiers hand. On this another man came straight into the gathering. This man was stopped by the Granthi from approaching the Granth Saheb. At this

the soldier fired point blank. There was a bit of a confusion and to our horror we felt the police bullets hitting us. No warning of whatever nature was given for this unprovoked attack. The bullets poured like hails. The whole force swarmed round us. They shot they cut us with their swords and beat us with their lathis. I saw my comrades, my children, falling beforeme. I was helpless and there was no way to protect ourselves let aside retaliate.

No free country in the world could have borne this treatment. But poor Mother India was trodden under foot, her blood her manhood has been sucked by centuries of foreign rule. Nothing is left for Indians but sigh for their fate.

There was a great commotion during which three or four of my men lifted me on their shoulders and flung me across. I protested and even used harsh words to the men who forsibly took me.

Never in my life before had I struggled so to be relieved or used such long to the men who out of ove for me were carrying me to safety. I remonstrated with them but their quick reply was "Alive, you will tell the world the sad sad story of Komogatamaru. And if you die we and the story of our suffering die too, with you" This was a pure untarnished love borne by my men to me but I was really unhappy. I preferred death with my friends as no Sikh once

he has been baptised and made a "Singh" should abandon the field. That is the permanent command of Guru Govind Singh. To be hit in the back and to desert the battle field equal to a most dishonourable death in the eyes of a Sikh.

When my friends were carrying me on their shouldiers one of them was hit on the neck and also on the breast. This was Sardar Thakur Singh son of Sardar Budh Singh of village Udo Nanggal in the Amritsar District. He was a very brave man and very strong. It was he and who carried me though the later and Sardar Darbara Singh of village Malan Ferozepore had 2 bullets in his arms. I was carried into a patch of jungle. My rescuer was in flood with blood. He coolly said that the bullets were still in his arms that there is a slight pain. I at once put my hand for the knife but that has fallen out.

We entered in a pool and decided to spend portion of the night submerged. We could not speak for fear of detection. Till about 3 a. m. bullets were heard and I summrised that "passengers" were being hunted like beasts and shot at. It was strong on me to go out and have a last look at the now sacred place where my noble friends passively defending India fell like heroes. I walked off and saw the place guarded and found it impossible to penetrate up to the place where my comrades fell.

I now wandered a little to one side. There was a small pool and as the thirst was on me I went to drink.

To my horror I saw a huge snake swimming hither and thither after its prey. When it has gone to another side I knelt down and putting my handkerchief over my mouth, to avoid insects getting in, I quenched my thirst.

This is a hastily written incomplete story of the incidents at Budge-Budge which deed shall never be forgotten.

Proceeding further on my way, I came to a bunglow. The compound door was locked, but I lifted a plank of the door and made enough way to squeeze myself in. Having got in, I re-set the plank. In the front room of the bungalow I heard a man snoring in a bed protected with a mosquito curtain. I gently shook him by the arm. He opened his eyes, and sat up in fright. I mentioned to him to be calm. There was a dimly burning lamp in the room and on trimming the light he was alarmed to see a long-bearded man in the room. I offered him a sovereign to lead me to the owner of the house.

The man hesitated, but I said "Friend, the day will soon be dawning, my interview with your master

must be secret, so you must make haste." He went up and in ten minutes brought his master with him. He asked me who I was, I replied:—"I am the unfortunate person who has be n the victim of the terrible happenings of the last night. All this has happened within a few yards of your house. I have not much time to spare. I desire that the prominent Indi-n Leaders be informed of these occurrances and it must be done before I am arrested and shot". The Bengali gentlemen asked how the leaders could be informed in so short a time. I said if he could not do it, he might take ten sovereigns from me for expenses to convey my message to the Leaders and in the meanwhile allow me to spend the day in his house as I intended to get into Calcutta in the night and personally see the leaders. Thereupon the fo'lowing conversation took place between me and the master of the house.

He:—I don't think myself equal to it. We expect every house in this locality to be searched in the morning. We heard last night that out of the "mutineers" hundreds had been killed and hundreds had run off. These are the men acting under guidance from Germany, and the Government desires to search every house to arrest the "mutineers."

I:—No. Babuji, we are not coming from Germany I am a Punjabi Sikh. We went to Canada in

the Komagatamaru. You must have read in the papers of the treatment meted out to us in Canada.

Babu:—(in great surprise) O, Ishwar, are you the man of the Komagatamaru ?

I.—Yes,Babu Ji.

Babu:—Now I understand, you were the victims of the last night's firing.

I.—Yes, Babu Ji.

Babu—But, why ?

I.—Babu ji, the day is breaking. You must first hide me somewhere, and then I can tell you the whole story.

B.—Now there is no time to hide you. The day is dawning. You must leave my house or I will be involved in trouble.

I.—I have no objection to leave. Here I go to be shot and join my martyred friends. As soon as I present myself there I am sure to be shot. My soul shall keep company with the soul of the innocents slaughtered last night. I don't shirk death and am not afraid of joining my companions; but my soul shall always feel troubled because of the misunderstanding under which our leaders are labouring. You were saying that you supposed the Germans to be

the victims of the last night's tragedy. Now that I have told you, you know we are emigrants returning from Canada and we have nothing to do with the Germans. Other Indians also like you will have the same misunderstrnding. Now 1 bid you good-bye and depart.

Having said this I moved out. I was hardly out of the house, when I heard somebody calling "Mr. Mr." after me. On turning round I found the same Babu following me. Having motioned to me he proceeded to lead the way. He took me to a deserted house, and asked me to wait there till he returned. After about 15 minutes he brought another man. Both of them held a consultation and then said to me. "Now it is nearly seven. We are expecting the officials to come to search our houses. You must not yet go to the enemy, for you must be courageous and not give yourself up like this. If we cannot help you somebody else will. Your story will reach the ears of Mr. B. Chakravarti or Mr. C. R. Das and they will take up your case without charging any fees." I replied, "It is true. During night it is another matter, but whither can I betake myself in broad day light?" One of the gentlemen then brought me a worn out but clean Dhoti and kerchief. He told me to cover my head up with the kerchief, to put on the Dhoti and to carry my soiled coat and pantaloons in a bundle on my head. One of them took me to the Ganges and talked to a Ferriwala. Instead of

the stipulated sum of eight annas I paid the Ferriwala a rupee and the man put me under cover while other passengers sat outside. We crossed the Ganges, and now I began to consider where to go. I followed the other passengers. We came to a small Bazar. The other men dispersed, but I took the road to the Howrah Railway Station. I had proceeded only a short distance when I was overtaken by an Englishman on a cycle. The cycle whizzed past me. I recognised him at once. He had been present at the firing, and had taken a prominent part in it. I slowed up my pace and thought it advisable to leave the highway, for I was apprehensive that if I continued on the way I must come across some police-post where the Englishman might have me arrested. Beyond a bend in the road the cyclist disappeared and I turned to a by-path in the bushes. This brought me to a row of garden plots. Proceeding further, I came to a heap of hay in a house. I was dreadfully tired and lay down there to rest. I felt terribly hungry. My lips were parched. I was addicted to morning tea and was missing it badly. After a while the house owner came to enquire who I was and why I lay there. That was exactly what I desired to be asked. I told him the whole truth, and expressed the wish that some Indian patriot might hear me. I offered to give a hundred rupees to the person who might take me in a covered cart to Mr. Chakravarti or Mr. C. R. Das. While we were talking 3 or 4 young students

came up. I told them the same thing. On their enquiry, I told them my bundle contained nothing but my coat and pant. I requested them to give me something to eat. The house-owner who had left me talking with the students returned with some sweats, milk and tea, and I had a hearty repast. He now offered me his curtained bed to sleep in. I had hardly slept for an hour and a half, when another inmate of the house came up and asked who I was. When he learnt I was Gurdit Singh he was in a fury. Waking me up immediately, he said "Old man, please leave this house, lest we have to suffer in your stead". The other man asked him to allow me to take rest, but he was obdurate. The other man took me to a garden surrounded by big trees. Here I could sit, but there was no room to sleep. Mosquitos swarmed about. Towards dusk he returned with 5 or 6 other men. One of these appeared to be a noble born gentleman. He asked me if I had any money. I replied I had only a littfe of it lying in my pocket, because my cash box, valuables and money had been taken possession by the police. He said "If you spend some money, we can take you to some able pleader or take other means to save you. If you save your life, sooner or later your desire will bear fruit. But at this time everybody is alert in Calcutta."

I gave him eight sovereigns and he left. When

he returned at 8 p. m. he took me to his house. Here I bathed at a tank, had a good dinner and rested a while. He now told me that no pleader could be engaged, and I had better go towards Jagan Nath Puri and wait there till peaceful times returned. He offered to keep me as a guest provided I assumed the dress and figure of a Bengali. The Bengalis wear short hair and their chins are clean shaven. I was a Sikh, and prefer death to any sacrilege of my Keshas. I told him it was impossible. This irritated him a bit, for be said "You people don't consider your life a ha' penny worth. I cannot keep you now. Please leave at once."

It was 10 p. m. I was supplied with a Dhoti, a shirt, a lota, an umbrella and a towel of the Bengali fashion. Two men were in my front and two in my rear. The railway station Bauria was about a mile distant. We went thither, and one of the Bengalis brought me a ticket for Jagannath. I was standing at the Railway platform with other men, when the train came in from Howrah. I espied a Punjabi Police Inspector and several other Policemen in it, and told my companions that my enemy sat in the train. They said they could not render me any further help and I must either take that train or shift for myself. I put my trust in God and entering the last compartment where some coolies were sitting I got upon the luggage board and lay down there to sleep. Through out the

night and the next day I remained in the train. At 4 p. m. Jagannath was only one station off. I alighted and proceeded on foot to Jagannath for seven miles. Here I went to a Dharamsala, which was under the care of a Punjabi Brahman. He was friendly and we visited the temples from 8 to 10 p. m. The next day we again went to the temples and also saw the Gurdwara Bauri Math of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji situated by the sea-shore. There I felt at peace. Some Sikh carpenters from Kharagpur factories also met me there. I told them all about myself and gave them a letter for publication in the Indian papers. I gave another letter to a Subedar pensioner to be delivered to the Khalsa Sewak of Amritsar; and further asked him to let the Punjab know of the fate that had be fallen me and my companions. When the Subedar heard of my misfortune, tears rolled down his cheeks; he took away the letter, promissing to see it safely delivered.

The next day I had an attack of dysentry and was in sore trouble. The Mahant appeared a good man but his chela (disciple) looked like a scoundral. I suspected that he would betray me. Two Englishmen had come to the Gurdwara and returned after looking in at the door. I was anxious about my safety now. From the Kharagpur carpenters the news had probably leaked out, and these Englishmen had come to see if it was true. From the Mahant or his chela

I expected no help. If I left the place, the change of water might cure my dysentry too. With this idea I came to the city of Jagannath, took a small dose of opium and hired a bullock cart for the Railway Station whence I had come. I knew Jagannath Railway Station would be watched.

On the 4th October, 1914, I came to this Station called Haldipatpura, purchased a ticket for Godavari, and entrained at 4 or 5 a. m. The train had to be changed at Khurda Road. In the new train I got into a III class compartment which was quite empty, and covered up my face and lay to sleep.

When the train was about to move, two strong men jumped into my compartment. One of them said:—"O Tatia, is that photo with you or with the Inspector Sahib ?" The second said "Yes, it is with me, just have a look at it."

Tatia opened a bundle of clothes. I saw it contained a policemen's uniform. They took the photo out and holding it in the light began discussing it. The first said:—"Bhayya, this photo was taken in Japan; this is very fine; Here in India they do not make such photos". Second: "You are right, but every Sikh has a beard like this. Does this photo give any clue by which one may recognise Gurdit Singh at once".

First;—"Brother Tatia, are you running mad ?

Whenever we see a Sikh we can take out the photo and compare it with him."

Second:—"Tatia is not mad, but I hope you heard the orders of the Inspector with your ears open".

From this talk I was convinced the police was making strenous efforts to arrest me. I feared that my escape from this compartment was impossible and I would die with my tale of woe untold. I heaved a deep sigh and involutarily the word "Wahiguru" escaped my lips. "Wahiguru" in Sikh scriptures means God.

At the sound of "Wahiguru" these men picked up their ears and began whispering to each other. In the meanwhile other passengers came into our compartment but these Policemen would not admit them giving the excuse that it is reserved for the Police. The two Policemen and myself were the only occupants. The engine whistled and our train was in motion. One of the men came to have a closer look at me. I knew I was betrayed by the utterance of "Wahiguru" but I trusted to providence to take care of me.

"Wahiguru, the destroyer of all fear, would protect me", I thought. When the train stopped at the next Railway Station, Tatia got out of the train and warned his companion to keep an eye on me. I guessed he had gone to inform his superior officer, who might be

travelling in a higher class compartment. My moving from the place was fraught with danger. Tatia continued to get off and report to his Officer at every Station. Those two men continued to converse in whispers, and I caught a few words. "There is no mistake 'Wahiguru' is spoken only by Sikhs. Look at his strange boots. If it is not he, why does he not sit up ?.

From the constant whisper of the word 'wire' I understood that their officer had wired to some office at head quarters or perhaps he could not arrest me without some local officer's permission.

The day thus passed away. I did not leave my place even for a second. When it was 7-30 p. m. the train reached. Vizyanagram a big railway station. Tatia went to his officer and the other fellow kept watch over me. To the new passengers desirous of getting into the compartment, they would say: "Get off. This compartment is reserved in the name of Sarkar" I felt there was more trouble in store for me, and some thing was going to happen. When the bell rang for the train to start, about a dozen policemen in uniform with bayonets fixed on to the rifles entered my compartment. As soon as they were in, the train started. These men were busy in arranging their kit and Tatia's companion was also looking at them. I thought that was the right moment to act. Within two or three minutes I would be either safe or

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a prisoner. Tatia failed to get into this compartment and the officer-in-charge was questioning the other man during which conversation the train had travelled half a mile when I, quick as lightening, jumped out of the door nearest to me. I jumped in the direction the train was moving I had got used to this sort of thing when I was a railway contractor. I suffered no harm except a scratch on the abdomen.

As soon as I jumped out, the policemen raised a hue and cry. I could not understand their words but the train stopped after 3 or 4 minutes. I took full advantage of this interval and the growing darkness. Leaving the road to the railway station, I took another way to the city. From 6 a. m. till 8 p.m. I had been practically a prisoner; now I eased myself and felt free.

In the city I first went to a Hindu Hotel. Here I asked the address of a druggist and took from him medicine for my dysentry. I slept in a verandah and when it was 4 a. m. thought it advisable to leave the city quietly at that hour. I took to a high road and walked along it under cover of trees. By sunrise I was about ten miles away from the city. This road ran parallel to the railway line, with the intervening distance of nearly a mile. I therefore, fancied this might lead to Godavari and being a highroad might be watched. I turned to one side and, desirous of taking rest, I approached a shepherd's hut at the edge

of a forest of Chichra and prickle shrubs. Here I drank milk worth eight annas, and slept in the jungle for 3 or 4 hours.

Now I kept to the by ways which ran parallel to the high road. I was feeling hungry and returned to the road so that I might know from some traveller if there was a village near by. I was waiting on the road when three Sadhus came along. They were on a pilgrimage from Rameshwar to Jagannath. I asked them if a village was near where I might secure some eatables.

Sadhus: —Just a little way off there is the hut of an old hermit. We dined there and you will also get there plenty to eat.

I:—You seem to be Marwari Sadhus. Have you ever been to the Punjab ?

Sadhus:—We have been to Lahore, Amritsar and other cities in the Punjab several times.

1:—You have been to Deccan. Have you seen the the Sikh Gurdwara of Hazur Sahib at Nander in the Nizam's dominion ?

Sadhus:—We have not been to the Gurdwara at Nander but we have seen a colony of Sikhs at Bhadrachal—a place of pilgrimage on the Godavari Ganga.

I:—Can you recognise the Sikhs ?

Sadhus:—"Why not. The Sikhs keep a Kesh (hair). read the word of Guru Nanak Dev and follow Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

I—What is the way to Bhadrachal, and which cities occur on the way ?

Sadhus:—You can go by train to Godavari. Then you have to take a boat. On both sides of the Godavari there is a dense forest and walking on foot is impossible.

I:—Cannot you tell me of some straighter way than through the Godavari ?

Sadhus:—We know not of any other. But you must enquire from the old hermit who gave us food.

I then went to the old hermit and found him a very good and peaceful man. He wore long hair and kept a flowing beard. He was an old man of about 80 years, but had a bright face, and people revered him. I am fond of hermits and I found this old man very loveable. I thought of making him a small offering of money and putting him some questions. The old man began the conversation by asking if I had dined.

I:—No, Holy sir, I have not; but I do not feel very hungry.

Sadhu:—If you wish to cook it yourself, you may have the materials.

I:—Alright, holy sir, I shall do so. Now the hermit ordered his Chela to prepare his chilam. The Chela brought it, and the hermit motioned to me. I held back. He then asked if I was a Sikh. I answered yes. His next question was what had brought me to these parts. I told him I wished to see Bhadrachal on the bank of the Godavari, and asked him to let me know of a direct path to the holy place. The hermit replied he knew of none other than the Godavari one; and even if there were any shorter route over the hills it must be impossible for me.

While we were talking, he was smoking the charas and producing flames in the chilam. This was disgusting. The faith, inspired by the old man's beared was shattered. Here was a hermit, a holy man using Bhang, Sulpha tobacco and other intoxicants purchased with the offerings of his simple followers. I believe a Sadhu should lead a simple life, keep free from passions and evil ways and devote himself to meditation.

Having learnt that the nearest village was 4 miles off, I proceeded thither, but not finding any eatables there I went on. By the side of a stream there was a small town a sacred place of the Hindus.

I went towards the temple so that I might be taken for a pilgrim.

I was about 300 paces from the temple when I came across two men. One of them at once said: "I think this is the man", then he asked me, Old man, where do you go to ? "To pay my respects at the shrine," replied I. The other man spoke to the first in English and advised him not to talk but to follow me into the temple.

Their English was little better than that of a school-boy. They did not seem to have had much experience of the world. How did the fools suppose that the man they were after did not understand English.

I went into the temple, put my things in a corner and devoutly began to walk round the idol looking all the while for a way of escape. I saw a small lane across the temple enclosure. There was a bania's shop on that side. The man who had accompanied me talked with that Bania and then went away to call somebody. I saw him motioning towards me and cautioning the bania to be on the alert.

I deliberately went to the bania, lest he might raise an alarm if I moved elsewhere. I said to him "Seth Ji, I am feeling very hungry, where can I get some puris to eat ? The bania said, " I can get these ready for you". I said " Alright, prepare a seer of puris for me and direct me to a bathing place." The

Bania replied, "There, sir, you will find the sacred stream flowing by. Please leave your things with me and have a good bath." It was about 7 p. m. and darkness had already set in. Having told him that I had nothing besides a suit of clothes which I would change after bathing, and having shown him my bundle I began to walk towards the stream. The bania set a small boy to keep watch on me. I went to the stream, took off my clothes and told the boy I would bathe on the opposite bank. I went to a fording place, bathed hastily and began the recitation of the evening prayer (Rahiras) as I hurried along a path. I came across a Kutcha road along which some bullock carts were proceeding. I paid the usual fare to a carts man, and told him that I was feeling unwell and did not like to be disturbed in my sleep. I should get into his cart only if he assured me that no body would disturb me in my sleep. The carts man emphatically said, "nobody, nobody". I asked him what he would reply if any body questioned him as to what was in his cart. He said "No fear, if any body wakes you, don't pay me a pice." "Yes, that is right", I added "If nobody wakes me, I shall pay you a rupee in addition to the stipulated fare." At this, the cartsman was immensely pleased. During the night he was twice asked if he carried any stranger. To this he would reply in the negative, and goad his bullock onwards. By the morning we had travelled 25 miles and were near Waltair. At a suitable place,

I left the cart and paid the cartsman the promised amount. He went away quite pleased and I took a bye-path in the forest. I bathed in a pond of clean water and then went to a small village. On enquiry as to where I could get food, I was directed to the Munsiff's house. (Munsif :in these parts means a lambardar or reporter). I went to his house and had dinner. Then I left the village and lay down to rest in a jungle, and began to think what I should do next. I proposed to myself that I should go to some railway station and catching a night train I must cover as much distance during the night as possible. I went to a railway station called Dowada and slept in a jungle near by. As soon as it was dark I made for the Railway Station. On the way I heard persons on two trolleys talking in Punjabi. I was afraid these persons were in search of me. At some distance from the station I sat down on a heep of stones away from the public eye. At ten the moon rose, and at eleven the train arrived. Avoiding the platform I went to the other side of the train, and opened the door of a compartment. I was still on the footboard with my hand on the handle of the door, when a person from the adjoining compartment shouted in Punjabi "Get up. he has come "The others asked, "Where, where" and he replied "Quiet quiet, he is in the next compartment." I had one foot in the train and the other on the foot board, so I at once jumped

out. A pointsman asked me who I was. I only shook my head and took to a path on the other side of the Railway line. Though it was moonlight now; yet by a dodge I made the pointsman believe I was walking in the direction of the train. I took exactly the opposite direction. Guided in my course by the stars, I travelled on along fields jungles, dry land and swamps, villages and wilds. While passing through villages I was careful not to make a noise. My rubber soled boots helped me much in this. I could not estimate how much I had travelled by the morning. I was extremely fatigued, and went to a hillock in the jungle to sleep. At the foot of the hillock there was a deserted house. I stepped into it, but it seems I was observed entering by a girl from out in the fields. She must have informed other persons, for a man came to ask who I was. I told him I could not speak, for I was fatigued and felt dizzy. I gave him a rupee to bring me some milk. The man took away the rupee and my lota. In a short while, he returned with ten annas and the lota full of milk. I gave the change to the man's son, a small child who stood by. Having finished the milk I was able to converse.

I.—Friend Ram Swami, you know Hindustani well. Where did you learn it ?

Ram Swami:—Well, Sir, I served in the army

and was on the point of retiring on pension when an English Officer abused me and called me "the son of a pig". I could not control myself and retorted. My name was struck off the roll without any right to pension. Now I live by agriculture and thank God for my prosperity.

I:—Friend Ram Swami, when the Sahib called you the son of a pig, he was right, for what better than a pig or a beast is the person who, being a human being, has no sense of self respect, honour or shame, who has no national pride, no love for his motherland and who passes his life in serfdom.

Now Ram Swami and I became friends. He purchased for me things worth five rupees from a town which was six miles distant. I paid him ten rupees extra, and made him understand that I was also a victim of beaurocratic tyranny. I was wandering desolate and waiting for justice. I stayed in the hut for 3 or 4 days. The neighbours of Ram Swami came to know of the stranger in his fields, and he became afraid. On his saying so I too became anxious lest the police might know of it. I paid him seven rupees so that he might take me in his bullock cart as far as possible and return before sunrise. Ram Swami and a friend of his son accordingly drove me in the cart. We started at about 10 p. m. and by the morning they left me at a distance of about 15 miles along the

path of carts to the Godavari. Now I walked alone, and passed the noon in a grove of mangoes. In the evening I again walked 3 or 4 miles. At some distance I saw a washerman drying some clothes in the sun. I went thither in search of water. Here I found a stream of clear water coming from the hills. I drank some water, bathed and washed my clothes. I was preparing to depart when my eyes fell on a big temple by the stream on the hill. The temple was called "Gopal" As I saw it I noticed two men coming towards me. They were conversing to each other and when I was quite near, one of them asked who I was. I said I was a Hindustani. The other laughed and said "Your fashion is really that of a Bengali." The first man now laughed and said in English "Surely this is Gurdit Singh", and he called to the head priest of the temple. I was now moving back when both of them said "No stranger can be permitted to return without seeing the head-priest's house. The head priest offered me some food which I refused to take. Having finished his own meal, he pressed me again, and I yielded. I was made to sit down and eight men mounted watch over me. A bullock cart was got ready, lanterns were procured and a letter was written. The head-priest then went to another house to consult somebody. I had heard it uttered when the letter was being dictated, "It may or may not be he, but his age is about 50 years". The clerk

also asked the head-priest about my beard and other marks of identification. I got up to go, and the men asked me where I was going to. I replied, "My things are at the tank below, but now I am going out only to make water". Four men gathered round me and told me not to go out but to stay there. I felt I was their prisonor and escape was well nigh impossible. Gopal Pande and two more persons were talking with a woman in a room, the door was open. If I could make use of some trick and secure my escape, that was the time to do it. The jaws of death were ready to devour me. The letter and the bullock cart of course, meant that they were sending information to the police. If the police came all would be over with me. I thought over the situation quickly and made up my mind to act at once.

Without much ado, after they came out, I entered the room where the head-priest was with the woman. I knew a woman's heart is softer than a man's and I said "I have come to make a request to Baiji (the lady)," "What is it", she asked ? I replied, " I am not unaware of the arrangements you people are making for me. Your doubts are well founded. I am Gurdit Singh, for whose arrest the British Government has sent orders to every village. But consider, are you prepared to commit this sin and go to hell ? I am innocent, I have not harmed the Government,

on the other hand the police has robbed me off everything. I am ruined, harrassed and f·lsely accused. Say what the Sarkar might, I assure you that for no fault of mine I am being persecuted. If your son show me no mercy and hand me over to the police, I shall die at once. I am already ordered to be shot as soon as arrested. You are the priests of a sacred temple, you will have committed the sin of man slaughter. You might have read or heard "Dharam-Shastras" that killing of 100 goats amounts to the sin of killing one cow and killing of 100 cows amounts to the sin of killing one human being, and killing of 100 human lives amount to killing one Brahmin and killing of 100 Brahmans amounts to the sin of killing one's own relation or family·man and the killing of 100 relatives amounts to killing of one daughter and killing of one grandson (daughter's son amounts to hundred times sin of killing a daughter.

So, I being next to Brahmin that is a 'Shatria' by caste, wish to let you know that killing of an innocent man like me would be equal to a sin of not less than 5,000 cows. And your son is going to take over the responsibility of this great sin, the result of which would surely be that your fore-fathers would be thrown in the hell.

Upon this the mother and wife of the Pandit got very uneasy and on return the Pandit asked from me my story. I told him that I was Gurdit

Singh and had come to bathe on that place of pilgrimage and the moment the Police would arrest me they would hang me up. I further told him that this calamity would not have fallen upon me, only if I had not come there.

The women asked the priest to explain what I had said. When the priest told her, she began to tremble and uttered "Ram, Ram" several times. Two other women were called, the despatch of the letter and the cart was stopped. Then they consulted amongst themselves, and sent a Pandit to assure me that I was safe and might sleep fearlessly for, said he, "Your silence was fatal, but since you have spoken the truth you must feel safe".

The bullocks were unyoked and the watchmen were dismissed. It was given out that doubts regarding me were not well founded. I was provided with a bed, and lay down without going to sleep. The Pandit's bed was also near me. At 4 a. m. I saw he was sound asleep. I sat up and prepared to go; but it was not wise to depart without his permission I called him in a low voice, and he woke up. I asked his leave to go. He came to me and said "Where will you go? I said, I intend to see Bhadrachal and wherever else fate might take me".

Pandit:—"If you don't feel afraid, you can stay in the big temple. I shall arrange for your board and lodging".

I:—"The temple is visited by so many pilgrims. I must not stay in the temple".

Pandit:—"You might get clean shaven and stay in a garden of mine, about a kos distant from this village."

My eyes were full of tears as I replied "Pandit Ji, the life of a brave Sikh is given to him but once. In my previous incarnation I must have committed horrible sins for which I am now suffering. If I now transgress the rules of religion I belong to and whereby I hope to be saved, can I hope for peace in the next incarnation"".

The Pandit still tried to persuade me to stay and offered me money for my expenses. I thanked him, as I had enough; and even if I had not, I could not take money out of offerings to sacred temples. Now I begged leave to depart, delay was dangerous. I asked him the names of some villages on my way and having thanked him profusely, started for the Godavari.

My way lay through fields of rice and slippery ground. I felt troubled as I had never before felt in my life. For three days I walked with great difficulty.

I walked in the day time and passed the nights in the huts of some shepherds who would purchase victuals for me. I came to a spot where the only way was by the highroad. I decided to resume my journey at

night time after resting in a field where a milkman supplied me with some milk.

I had hardly proceeded 2 or 3 miles when I saw 4 or 5 persons on both sides of the high way conversing. They had a lantern I took shelter behind a tree, and saw that two of each party were lying and two had lanterns. I grew suspicious, and thought it prudent to avoid meeting them. I turned to a field on the left; and having walked across 3 or 4 fields I again took to the road. I had to make such deviations 3 times. In the small hours of the morning, I came to a bridge across a stream. This was manned by a dozen watchmen. I was in a fix. If I tried to swim I might be carried away by a whirlpool; and if I went to the bridge, I was sure to be arrested. I sat by a tree trunk and thought over matters. Some carts were coming from my side of the bridge. The carts men were dozing and I took my opportunity. I got under the middle cart and walked on all fours under it. The watchmen asked the cartsmen if they carried a Punjabi, and the cartsmen replied. "None, none". I was thus safely across the bridge, got out from under the cart and was walking along the road before the carts came to a stand-still.

I crossed a village and came to a Railway Station. The road along which I was walking crossed

the railway line near the station. When I came near the railway station, I left the road. I was walking quickly when I heard a blood-curdling voice, "Halloo, mate, see who is the fellow that saunters along there". The speech was in pure Punjabi, and the reply was made in the same language. "Thousands of dogs saunter about here. Whom should we run after ?"

To my good luck these men did not pursue me. Had they done so, I would have fallen an easy prey, because I was fatigued and for 3 days I had taken no food. It was now about 5 a. m. and the light was visible in the east. For these reasons I was much embarrassed. After walking for some distance I was afraid the men at the railway station might yet be keeping an eye on me. I therefore hurried on. When I had crossed the railway line, I again took my previous road. I crossed this too and came to a shrubbery. Beyond this there was a stream, where I stopped covered up my face and lay down to sleep. I awoke at about nine and felt very hungry. In the distance I descried a village where I immediately went and asked for some flour. This was not obtainable. I boiled some rice and ate it with raw onions. Freed from the pangs of hunger I went back to the stream and slept again. When night was drawing nigh, I returned to the road and resumed my journey. I came to

a town, passing through which, I felt, would be dangerous. Keeping to the right I passed over hillock and was soon on the other side of the town. After regaining the road I met a Sadhu who asked me whither I was bound. On my answering "to Godawari", he asked me to stay for the night at his village near by and offered to take me to the ferry the next morning. The Sadhu was a native of Mewar Jaipur; he seemed very compassionate and understood my tongue. For obvious reasons I did not accept his offer, and asked him to arrange with some bullock-carter to carry me for the night only. The Sadhu made this arrangement.

I made the cart-plier understand that if anybody asked him whether he had any man in his cart, he must say there was none. During the night two or three times the cartsmen were asked if they carried a stranger from Kashi or Patna. I remembered that in the last village where I had boiled rice, a Railway servant on leave had asked me which city I belonged to. On my replying "Patna" he had asked "Where is Patna", and to this I had replied, "Towards Kashi." The railway servant must have reported it to the police and the police had sent the news to all posts along the road.

In the morning the bullock-carts went to a village I got out at a safe distance and bathed at a stream and thought of how to procure food. In these parts

there is a fruit called Kothi. It is a tasteless thing eaten by the poor. Who could be poorer than myself in such circumstances? Even a poor man is free, but I was a fugitive who was being ruthlessly pursued, I lived on this "Kothi" till the afternoon. Then I went to a village. Flour could not be had. For boiling rice I begged for a utensil from 4 or 5 houses; not getting it I came back to the forest and boiled a little quantity in my lota. This did not appease my hunger. I went to another village; and to my good luck I was still at some distance from the provisions shop, when I heard three or four persons saying aloud to the shop-keeper, "O Modi, if some stranger comes to you to purchase flour or provisions, do report to us at once".

Remaining hungry for three days and saving myself from the preying eyes of watchmen by night, I was at last within 6 miles of the Godavari. During the day I hid myself in the forest and remained sleeping when wood-cutters hunters and others began to roam about. I climed up a high tree, and I saw the town of Godavari at a distance of about five or six miles and caught sight of the waters of the Godavari River. I heard the approaching footsteps of men and forgetting my lota and rope there, I hurried off.

I came to a cleared spot in the forest. This was a practice shooting ground, and I was afraid I might come across some military men. But then I remembered

it was Sunday, and no soldier would be there I came to a person hewing wood. I said to him, "Friend, I am very thirsty, I shall give you a rupee, besides four annas or so as compensation for daily labour, if you take me to a place where I can bathe and drink cold water. But you m st take me to an unfrequented place. The police are after me. I am an innocent person persecuted by the Government and I ask you to help me".

The m n profusely abused the police, and left off hewing wood to accompany me. He brought me to a well and said "Godavari is far, you must drink water here". After drinking my fill, we went on to the outskirt of the city, aud I espied a man in Khaki with his rifle and bayonet patrolling the street We had to cross the street, and this was the gate of the city. I hid my face behind an umbrella and siftly slid past the guard and took shelter behind a house. I said to my companion, probably you mean to betray me. Why have you brought me before a guard?" The man lifted his hands to the sky, and said: By God, it was a mistake and no evil motive".

About a mile and a half further on we crossed the road between the city and the jail and came to a field towards the Godavari. There I sat under the shade of a tree and sent my companion with a five rupee note to the city to purchase for me a lota and some eatables and to help himself with some sweets. The man

followed my instructions. At night fall we again set out up the Godavari It was a dark night. We had proceeded two or three miles, when I discovered that a party of four or five men preceeded us. My companion conversed with them over something quite unintelligible to me, but my fears were aroused. These men might take me to be a rich stranger and rob me of everything. I slowed down my pace ,and when those men were at a distance I said, "Friend I cannot travel at night, let us leave this way and go to the river bank where I must have some water." The man insisted that I should go on. The more he urged me to go on the more my suspicious grew. At last we when to the river which was a quarter of a mile distant. I tried to sleep, but my agitated mind kept me awake.

That evening I heard fire works in the city and was told by my companion it was the celebration of the Diwali festival.

In the morning my companion left me and I walked on for about fifteen miles. Beyond that there was no way for pedestrians; I must take a boat. Calling a ferry man aside, I engaged his boat for twenty rupees and he promised he would take no other passengers. I told him I was going on some Government business, and my boat must go alone. The man kept his word and on the fourth day we landed near a city. Bhadrachal was only two days' journey from there. I walked all day and passed the night in a village.

After the long days I was able to get two miles loaves for ten annas and was thankful to Providence for it. Near Bhadrachal there is a village named Nainpur and a few Sikhs of the Deccan reside there I went to the house of Baghel Singh. He was all hospitality, After ages I ate a full meal that night. When it was about 4 a. m Baghel Singh said to me. "You might stay here at my house. I have a cart-load of salt to convey to Mangapet." I told him that I could not stay without him, and that it was better for me to accompany him. After six day's journey we reached Mangapet. The way was not long; but a cow and a mare were yoked to Baghel Singh's cart and it went very slowly and at several places I had to get, down and push from behind

On the way we met Baghel Singh's maternal uncle Hari Singh, who was also his father in law (such marriage are permitted there by custom). I thought him a man of some experience, and related my whole story to him. He consoled me, and offered me his own house as refuge saying that he would be back in a fortnight and if anybody should question him regarding myself he would say that I was a Sodhi from Hazur Sahib.

On reaching Mangapet, I was very warmly received and was quite comfortable. I would daily bathe at the Godavari which a mile off, and thanked Wahiguru for the respite.

The Jagirdar of Mangapet was a minor, and his

guardian was a learned pleader. When he came to Mangapet from Hyderabad, he was received with great pomp and eclat a public jalsa was held in his honour. In this meeting I read from a Marhati Urdu paper, that Gurdit Singh was still at large inspite of the efforts of the police guards patrolling every place between Waltair and Bajwara. I now thought—"Nobody has asked my identify so far. Hari Singh has not yet returned. In the house there are only the women and the children. If the police were to suspect and enquire about me who would say I am a guest. To avoid the risk, it is better I should depart". I prepared depart early in the morning and was on the point of starting when I heard Hari Singh's sister weeping. Poor thing, she was a widow of 35 and had no children. When asked for the reason, Hari Singh's wife told me the widow had hoped to marry me when her brother returned This was also the intention of Hari Singh's wife. But I was leaving them only after ten days, and this had set the widow weeping. Both women tried their utmost to persuade me to stay; but what could the poor souls know of the dangers and troubles through which I was passing.

I pacified them as best I could, and left the house. Feeling grieved at their sorrow I had hardly proceeded half a mile, when I heard voices shouting after me. She had come to ask me for my word, that I would

return some day. I told her it was fohlis to fall in love with strangers, that I was not sure of my own safety and my coming and going was not in my hands. I had eaten their bread, I was leaving as ordered by fate. I was wretched, and she more wretched that I. As Guru Nanak says:—"The whole world is in trouble, only those are happy who make him their support." I could not make a false promise. Having said all this, I went on my way and the poor women returned home. She had misunderstood my intention from the very beginning. When I first came to their house and they asked me if I was going to stay on, I had replied in the affirmative purely from motives of personal safety, but these females had taken it in another light, thus, although I meant no deception, they had been deceived, and when they saw me departing they were broken-hearted. Although the mistake was not intentional, I feel I was responsible for their misery and ever pray to Akalpurukh to forgive me. I took a path in a thick forest on both sides there were stately trees of different varieties, the mighty banyan and teak trees were there in plenty. I sighed, and said to myself "Such is the fate of us Indians, from these teak woods ships worth millions can be made; but we have given everything to the strangers, and we are content to be coolies. Will ever the time come for us to wake up and to use the wood for our fleets and to be masters in our own house".

This forest belonged to the Nizam of Hyderabad. With the name of Nizam, another current of thought was started. Better if there had been no Nizam. India could have been no loser. The state of the brave Maharani of Jhansi would not have been destroyed; and the brave Rani, the embodiment of virtue, high-minded bravery and pure patriotism, would not have committed suicide by burning herself alive on a heap of dry hay. I remembered another event. The Nizam had offered his state army and 70 Lakhs of rupees for the great war of 1914-18. This was helping non-Muslims against the Turkish Caliph in contravention of the clear orders of the Koran. I am sorry for these harsh remarks, but there is a Punjabi saying "Truth is bitter, falsehood is sweet; Money is the Pir, woman is the Guru. These mislead the world". Truth is bitter, but its fruit is sweet. I don't blame the Nizam alone. Most Indian princes are like him, and knowing the truth they do not utter it and are content to be led astray. My musings of that hour proved true. The people and the princes of our country helped in changing the map of Europe, making Turkey a scene of disintegration for the time being. The war won, the loyal services and sacrifices of the country were forgotten. And the heart-rending tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh followed to point the moral and adorn the tale of Western diplomacy. If yet we don't understand the West, India's case appears

to be hopeless. "Look before you leap" is an English proverb. When our help was sorely needed, all sorts of promises were made but when the hour was up, the friend in need was rewarded with the Rowlatt Act and other repressive measures. These tended to destroy even the last vestige of national honour that was left us. It would have been better if the Indian princes and people had settled before hand everything about their rights before joining the Great War and afterwards only seen to the fulfilment of the conditions made. Let by-gones, be by-gones. Let us be well awake in the future. Let the rulers and the ruled mind their respective duties.

But to come back to my story. I passed the night at a village in the forest where I had some milk. Early next morning I started again. The way was through a thick forest and dangerous for anybody except in company of ten or twenty. The carts also passed in groups of ten or twelve. For obvious reasons I was in no mood to have a companion. As I went on I saw a big tiger emerging from the forest towards my right. I at once climbed a tree but the tiger did not notice me and went ahead of me. I thought it had gone to drink water somewhere and I walked slowly on in the same direction as my way too lay and thitherward. The tiger was soon out of sight but I could see its footprints for four miles up to a stream beyond which I lost its trace. I had walked about forty miles that day. My feet were sore, and

I came to a village byond the forest. Here I stayed for the night. The next day I came across a police post, occupied by three Sikh policemen of the Deccan. I went to these Deccan Sikhs, One of them had Nihal Singh, for his name, the second was a low-caste man and there was also a Brahmin, named Mangal Das. Out of my love for my Sikh brethren I offered them some money for good food and was polite to them to suit my ends. They also softened by my pecuniary help and good behaviour and I told them my true story. I asked their help to have my story sent to the Punjab through them. On inquiry, they told me that none of them had been to Amritsar or seen the Golden Temple. I gave £ 4 to Nihal Singh and sent him to Amritsar to bathe in the holy tank and deliver my letters to the Sikh papers, e. g. the "Khalsa Samachar" the "Khalsa Sewak" etc. I told him also to bring me the back numbers of these papers for about 2 or 3 months. I wanted to see at what conclusions the Punjab leaders had arrived about myself.

Nihal Singh returned in a fortnight, and told me that my son Balwant Singh had not yet reached home and perhaps he was in jail. My property had been confiscated by Government. My aged father of 90 was living with my sister at Odiara in Lahore district. Rs. 2,000 had been offered by Government as a reward for my arrest, and a pro-

clamation had been issued to that effect. From the Gurmukhi papers which he had brought I learnt that our leaders were spoiling the whole thing and dubbing us Non-Sikhs to please the Government. These leaders were killing their conscience and calling us traitors to the country.

What pained me most was the fact that my father who would not even drink water from my sister's village was now obliged by misfortune to go and live there. I was told by Nihal Singh that my father was still holding to his vow and getting water from a neighbouring village and that he had taken some provisions with him from our own village. I thought this could not last long. This was the time for me to serve my aged father but he had to live with my sister, perhaps because of my sins of the past. I was not very anxious about my son Balwant Singh, aged seven, because my 376 other brethren had all been in trouble and several of them had been actually killed. How could I grieve for individuals? I had to submit to the inevitable. Even death would not come to my relief. Otherwise, how could I have escaped wild beasts and successfully evaded the ubiquitous police. Perhaps death would have come, but I was determined to live so that I might lay before the country the true facts about what happened to us.

I now gave another sum of Rs. 30 to Nihal

Singh and assured him of a further help of money. For the present I could pay him Rs. 25/- per mensem to keep me company. To this he agreed. His companion and his companion's brother who was living at Aurangal, had as was apparent later resolved to make the best of my money and to betray me afterwards. I did not, however believe that they would be mean enough to turn traitor and be willing to hand me over to certain death. I accompanied Nihal Singh to Aurangal, and thence to Karimnagar, where there were plenty of Sikhs. They grew friendly with me, and I spent a lot to make them pucca Sikhs. I sent for a copy of Shri Guru Granth Sahib from Amritsar and also some newspapers. From these we could get some Punjab news. I stayed there for two months. It was here that I read Sardar now Sir Sunder Singh Majithis's exhortation to the Sikhs, that because they constituted a small community in comparison with others the Sikhs should not take part in any political or anti-Government activity. To this I wrote a suitable reply and sent of to the Khalsa Samachar. No doubt the Sikhs were few and to create a commotion was undesirable but what was Sardar Sunder Singh doing to get the proper reward for those Sikhs who were offered as a cheap sacrifice during the war and for enlisting whom he had been rewarded by the Government. Those very Sikhs had been instrumental in casting many a nation its valued asset of freedom.

My letter was never published in the Samachar because of the paper's connection with Sardar Sunder Singh.

I wrote the history of my woes at Karimnagar during these two months. It was about 80 pages of manuscript. It was translated into Urdu by Nihal Singh. With these two manuscripts we reached a Railway Station in 4 or 5 days. I had brought Nihal Singh from Karimnagar with the tempting promise of liberally paying him on our arrival in the Punjab, but the unscrupulous Nihal Singh was always thinking of earning Rs. 2,000 by getting me arrested. There is a secret communication between minds; and I had misgivings that Nihal Singh was not upright and it was not proper to send him to the Punjab. I, therefore, put him off by asking him to go to Hazur Sahib and bring me Charandhur, one bottle of sacred water from the Baoli Sahib and some other things. I gave him a sovereign and a few rupees for his expenses.

Nihal Singh frowned and asked where he was to find me on his return. I said, "The road along which we are going divides and one branch leads to Nirmal Talaka; while the other passing through the Railway Station comes back to the Nirmal Talaka Road. You will find me at the junction of the two. You must hurry off and meet me there.

PLAN OF NIHAL SINGH'S TREACHERY.

A road passing through 1 & 2 leads to the Railway Station.

No. 1 is the road along which we were going.

From No. 2 a branch leads to Nirmal City.

No. 3 is the place where I was to meet with Nihal Singh.

At No. 4 a road from the Railway Station joins the main road. At No. 5 I sat to test Nihal Singh's uprightness. No. 6 is the water pond.

No. 7 is the Railway Station.

From No. 8 a road comes to the Railway Station.

The reason why I took up the position at mark (?) in the plan instead of mark 3 as previously agreed was that the spot marked 3 was open and free from bushes, while mark 3 was lower and full of bushes; there was also water near by, and one could see Nihal Singh on his leaving the Railway Station.

Two days had elapsed after Nihal Singh's departure. That day he was expected back, but he did not turn up. It was 8 or 9 in the morning of the third day, when I saw Nihal Singh coming from the Railway Station. He was wearing the coat which once belonged to me and which had been given to him by my nephew to save him from the severity

of cold in the Punjab. I recognised the coat from a distance and intently watched Nihal Singh with the hope that I would be blessed with some article from the holy shrine of Hazoor Sahib. Nihal Singh was walking with a light foot, and had nothing with him. He came as he had gone with his both hands empty. I was wondering what could be the cause of it, when I saw Nihal Singh going down the bridge on which the road crossed to take some water. His three companions stood beside him, one of them taking up a position, which would only have been taken up by a man who had to prevent Nihal Singh's escape. My suspicions were therefore strengthened that these men were Policemen who had been led to that place by the treacherous Nihal Singh. I concluded that instead of going to Hazoor Sahib he had gone to Nizamabad, his birth place where he had served in Police department, and had brought with him a police escort for my arrest for the sake of securing the reward. The party had proceeded to the spot marked 3.

They were, however, utterly disappointed at not finding me there and returned to the Railway Station. After this I had to scrap all my older scheme and chalk out a new path. I gave up the idea of going to the town of Nirmal and made up my mind to proceed to Hazoor Sahib, for I was sure that Nihal Singh had believed me when

I told him that I could not go to Hazoor Sahib safely and that he should bring the sacred dust (dhur) for me. I pondered over the matter carefully and concluded that he must have disclosed every thing to the officers, and they would search for me everywhere except at Hazoor Sahib where they would least expect me. My anger was considerable at the insincere and deceitful conduct of Nihal Singh. I had been kind and generous to him, but he tried to betray me. It gave me much pain to think that a human being in the garb of a Sikh was guilty of the most heinous sin of betraying a friend. I knew he would suffer its consequences. I was however, reminded of the adage "If the Almighty happens to be unfavourable, every body turns unkind, an enemy", and decided not to take revenge. As I had much to do, I thought it wiser to cope with the present danger instead of embarking on new risks. Hence, I remained where I was the whole night. As the place was the habits of wild animals, I had moved towards the Railway Station. Shortly before 4 in the morning I heard Nihal Singh and his police friends talk as they were driving to the town of Nirmal in a bullock cart hired for the purpose. The cart went on its way to the town of Nirmal. I too, started wastward, when it was still dark. Hazoor Sahib was 83 miles distant by rail, but I was proceeding through villages, concealing myself in the jungle inspite of the obvious

danger from wild animals. I need not describe the hardships that I had to encounter on the way for want of food. In five or six days I reached Shikarghat which is situated on the bank of the Godavari about six or seven miles east of Hazoor Sahib. The Gurdwara is above the hill, but I put up with the Sikhs who lived in the village below. Bhai Ram Singh was very hospitable. I stayed with him for a day to shake off my fatigue. The next day I made up my mind to get up. I enquired of him whether there were any Punjabis on a visit to the Gurdwara. My purpose was to escape the C. I. D. people. They are up to any wickedness if there is money and prospect in it. They would not realise that I had no personal gain in view and my privations had no selfish object. What was there that I could do but did not do for the sake of freeing these very hounds from their much-relished bondage. Not only did I sacrifice all my worldly possessions as well as health and comfort but also neglected the imperative duty of serving my father in his old age and of providing for the proper bringing up and education of my only son of about seven years of age. I am prepared to undergo all those hardships once again if need be for the freedom of India so long as there is life in me. I would prefer Swaraj for India to getting the throne of Indar or the wealth of Kuber (God of Wealth) for my own self.

I had (darshan) of Gurdwara Shekarghat for three

days as my consolution. I also paid my homage to the Gurdwara of Mata Sahib Dewan situated a little away from Hira Ghat. There I met two Nihang Sikhs, Bahadur Singh and Hari Singh by name, and stayed for two or three days with them. The festival Hola Mohalla drew near, and I left for Nagina Ghat where I put up with Nihang Nagina Singh whom I told that I wanted to pass my days in secret. I would get up early in the morning at one or two O' clock, would visit the Gurdwara before three and after tasting the Nectar of Bawali Sahib I would sit in a corner enjoying meditation. I would go to the Khalsa library in the garden at about five when it would be time for every body to visit the Gurdwara. Before it was light I would go back to the Nihang's house, and after refreshing myself with tea I would go to Nagina Ghat and thence to Banda Ghat towards the jungle returning in the evening to take my food and retire for sleep. What little I could afford, I offered for the Gurdwara through other people.

The Hola Mohalla festival was over. Sikhs of my age and even older than myself from the Punjab had gathered there. They had to return after another two days. That was my opportunity if I desired to return to the Punjab and I decided to travel in their company. At Randu Policemen always are on guard to make enquiries about the passengers leaving the station. I therefore, moved on to Moghal,

eight miles east of Randu, and entrained there taking a ticket for Jhansi. Hari Singh was with me. When the train reached Randu about sixty or seventy Punjabis got in. Now I lost all fear of the Poliee. We had got in at half past six, at quarter past seven we alighted at Manwar, went to the Nadi, and cooked our food, and ate it. Balak Singh was accompanying me. From Manwar I sent two copies of my statement; one in Gurmukhi and the other in Urdu, in the form of book parcels to Lahore and Lyallpur, (Urdu copy was made by Nihdi Singh).

Again we got into the train and reached Khandwa. There we saw a Police guard of about ten or twelve Sikhs. They examined our compartment which was full of Sikhs. But the was of God are inscrutable; and though I was in fully view of the policemen they could not recognise me. What astonished me even more was that the guard contained two pssengers of the Komagatamaru, aged 22 and 27. I asked Balak Singh to engage them in conversation.

The train started, and after a short time we reached Bina. Hari Singh and Balak Singh and myself with some of their acquintances, got down there. We left the Railway Station and had a bath and then got our food cooked and took it. We stayed there for the night. Next morning a policeman came to tell us: that we could not stay there longer than twenty four hours, and that we should depart. Hence

the others went back to Jhansi, while Hari Singh and I got into the train for Gunewali. On our way we learnt that some residents of Amritsar district had got leases of land in four or five villages in the Gwalior State. We got down at Tukrani and saw the servant of the Sardar. We stayed there for some time and then decided to do some work. I sent my companion Hari Singh to the Punjab, myself staying behind. After ten or fifteen days the Sardar's younger brother turned up, and his depravity of character roused pity in me. He was devoid of intellect and rude in conversation. It was his habit to use abusive language. For these reasons, I decided to leave the place which somewhat annoyed him. I went to live with Mangal Singh of Pandori. There I bought a mare which I used for visiting Punjabis living in the neighbourhood. I used to see one Hari Singh, who had been once to America. The village of Bachan Singh Subedar of Durgapur was also near by, but I never disclosed to anyone who I was. In one village there lived one Ganga Singh of Amritsar district. I asked him whether he knew anything about Gurdit Singh of his district who had chartered a ship to Canada. He replied that Gurdit Singh was roaming in the Punjab living as a refugee and evading the police, that his property had been forfeited and that Government had offered a considerable reward for his arrest.

I laughed at how the people had been befooled.

I had never visited the Punjab since the tragedy at Budge-Budge but they were attributing to me crimes which were farthest from my mind. It does not become an upright man to loot his brethren. Moreover I was hoping to get justice done by law courts and was careful to remain on the right side of the law. I was suffering so much when I was strictly subservient to legal limitations. Had I transgressed them I do not know what would have happened to me and my people.

I lived there for two months moving from one place to another. I subscribed some newspapers as well. Then I passed Shandauri and reached Sipri, where there lived one Ram Singh Jat of Sialkot district. He was living alone. I stayed with him, and soon after he left the place for the Punjab.

I had, however, made some acquintances there, and Pandit Murlidhar, Overseer, gave me a contract for some work on a tank and a canal. I started the work but my funds ran short. I could do nothing without money. I wrote a letter to a well-wisher and a friend of mine who came to me personally and gave me about two hundred rupees. The work went on well, and I got introduced to some person at Sipri. I received newspapers in my assumed name, and thus I remained in touch with affairs in the Punjab. Payment was made to me in two or three bills, and with that money I bought some cloth which I sold at profit.

I bought land for a tank, and had a mind to buy one chak of about twenty five hundred acres in area. I had every hope of getting i', when all my plans were upset. My mare had white marks, and people of that district told me that it was ominous and would bring some calamity on me. But I paid no heed to those remarks. A few days afterwards the mare was stolen, and I lodged information at the Thana. I was going in search of my mare, when I learnt that the Punjab Police had come to know of my stay at Sipri. My informant advised me to quit the place instantaneously for good. This was another misfortune for me. I had invested all that I had. With what I earned in the contract work as well as in the sale of cloth, I had bought a bullock cart and a few other necessary articles. At that time I was almost penniless, and did not know what to do. I went to Sipri, and saw a sikh of about 30 years of age getting down from the train. He had a loose beard. He did not see me and I did not attract his attention. There was a Brahman, with whom I used to put up when I had occasion to go to Sipri. I could not find him at his house, but from the talk that I had with his son-in-law I guessed that there was some thing wrong. How could I trust this Brahman, whose daughter lived as wife with Prem Singh. This man tried to betray me for the sake of reward even when I had been of so much use to him. I, therefore, put up at another place for

the night. Rising early I visited the temple of Bala Jee. While there I had visited a hermit who sat before the sacred fire. Whenever I went there, I made my obeisance to him. I was rewarded for my humility this last day of my visit. As soon as I approached the Sadhu, he told me that Prem Singh and a Punjabi, apparently a Government servant, had enquired of him whether Hari Singh (my assumed name) had been to that place. The sadhu having replied in the negative, they had begun an anxious search for me. He did not know my secrets, but thought it advisable to warn me of what was happening. I moved on to old Sipri, where I could get gun-powder which I had bought on previous occasions as well, for I had to protect myself from the attacks of wild beasts in the jungle. Now all hopes of my getting justice were blasted. I thought that it was for the police to chalk out the way in which I would die. Nobody would try to sift the truth. The Government would only believe what the Police reports said. If I had to be prosecuted openely like Bhai Matti Das, who was sawed into pieces, I would have been willing to surrender myself to the Police; but I knew that the Police would shift the guilt off their shoulders after they had perpetrated acts of open oppression. For these reasons, I could not reconcile myself to the idea of being arrested by the Police. I decided to spread gun powder in the room and to keep it concealed under straw and then to set fire to it when the police

approached, which would blow up the house along with myself and the policemen. I thought, I would, in this way, accompany the souls of the policemen to the Court of DHARMARAJ. where I would enquire of them what offence I had committed. I would ask them in that sublime court to tell me what offence I had committed that they were so untiring in their efforts to persecute me. I arranged everything, and waited for their advent; but nobody turned up. When it was about 10 O'clock, I went to sleep fastening the door from inside. I looked at my cot and other furniture of the house, and thought that I was there for that night only.

At about 2 in the morning I dreamt that I was in the presence of a majestic personality clothed in a white robe. I wondered whether I was in the presence of the Kalgidhar Guru Gobind Singh. Looking more closely I thought it was Baba Ram Singh, Saint of Sarhali, who patted me on the back and advised me not to lose heart. He asked me to muster up courage, as I had to do much work. After this my eyes opened and I had nothing but the recollection of the dream to cheer me up in my peril. I considered myself very fortunate that I had been blessed with the presence of such a saintly man. I made up my mind to put my nerves together, for now there shone a ray of hope that the Almighty might so arrange things that I would get a redress of my grievances. I swept the gun powder

away to one corner. I got ready with some articles and left the house between 3 and 4 in the morning. I handed over the key to my neighbour, the Brahman, telling him that I was leaving on some business.

Leaving the house I made for Sipri. On the way I hired a bullock cart for the journey. My destination was 11 miles from Sipri, and the road was a metalled one. When I had gone only about 3 miles, I saw the Brahman who was father-in-law to Prem Singh. I guessed that he was going to my house to find out if I was there, and then to inform the police. When I had gone a distance of 5 miles from my house, I saw a cart driven by horses wherein sat a handsome Sikh youth of about 25 or 26 years of age. His teeth were set with gold nails. I was well concealed and laughed at the idea that they had been outwitted and would search in vain for me at my house. A Second conveyance was following the first at a distance of about a mile and I saw in it four or five Muhammadan policemen from the Punjab. One of them obviously had some suspicions and was pointing to me; but meanwhile the cart increased the distance between us. On my part I feared that others might be following these men on the same road. I had agreed to pay hire to the cartman up to Sipri; but I paid him the full amount at once and proceeded southwards in the jungle.

I need not relate here the hardships that I experienced on the way. The jungle between Sipri and Bundi

Quetta abounded with wild beasts, specially tigers, bears and leopards ; and I had to traverse it mostly at night. One day about sixty miles from Sipir, while I was sitting at a tank I saw the same unfaithful Prem Singh walking hurriedly on the road at noon time. I concluded that he had been receiving information of my coming up to that point, and was upon my heels. Fortunately, however, he had not espied me and went on past me. I, accordingly, directed my footsteps towards the west instead of continuing southwards. On my way, I chanced to meet two persons, a man and a woman of Karia. They were frightened by seeing me, and tried to run away. I shouted to them not to apprehend any danger. I told them I was there at the tank, and they could bring to me their employers who had sent them for my search. They went away ashamed. I drank some water there, and exerted myself to walk some eight more miles in jungle. I found a Bhil's cottage where I stayed for the night.

Rising early I left for Rajgarh. On account of the previous year's draught there was scarcity of water and the people had to bring it on carts from a distance of five or six miles. A traveller had to beg for water at each door, for he could not get sufficient quantity from one house. One day I went begging for water in a village, and I saw three or four men of the C. I. D. Police disguised as pilgrims. Before they could see me, I left the village and went back to the jungle. Except.

in the village, there was no water to be had in an area of about 12 miles of the jungle. At noon, my thirst became unbearable ; and death for want of water was imminent. But God is merciful. I saw a horseman with two others walking by his side, coming in my direction in that desolate district. They were Mohammadans. I told them I was dying of thirst. They carried a bucket of water, and were kind enough to give me some water. I felt it soothing and invigorating : it was nectar for me, and saved me from certain death.

Every day I would walk on, taking rest at intervals in the fields. I bathed in a stream about four or five miles from Ramgarh. I also washed my clothes and cooked my food there. Then I lay down under a tree thinking to move on after sun-set, for I had to pass through a village. Suddenly I saw two men turn towards me. Seeing that I had a sword, they kept at a distance, and talked to each other. One of them sat down, while the other went back to the place he had come from. I suspected that police was on the look out for me at the next village and that was why I was waiting for nightfall to proceed further. When one of the men had gone some distance, I started on my journey. The second man enquired of me where I was going ; but I persisted in my course, telling him I could go where I liked. He intended to delay me, and asked me my name. Replying that I was only a traveller, I went on. He dared not obstruct my passage, for he saw

I had a sword and could use it. After walking some distance I concealed myself in a hollow of the stream. I sat there, and thought over the question whether it was proper for me to keep the sword and the chakkar. They were deadly weapons, and I might use them against an innocent person, who might try to stop me suspecting that I was a murderer or a dacoit. I feared such improper use of the weapons, and burried both under ground. Soon after I heared the voice of about thirty or forty persons who were suggesting to each other to search this way and that way ; but I took advantage of the darkness and walked on for about three-miles down the stream. The stream turned westward but I went on straight about eight or ten *Kos* guided by the moon. I found a village before me, and went to sleep near a well half a mile away from human habitation. This place was, however, much frequented, and it was not safe to remain there. One man came up to me to buy some medicines taking me to be a physician. I put before him the little stock that I had. While we were talking, another came up and said he suspected there was something wrong and I was no seller of medicines. I thought it wise to leave the place. Reaching the next village, I took shelter under a tree. At about 2 in the afternoon, I saw two persons coming towards me inspite of the severe heat of the sun. One was dressed as a merchant or pilgrim with a pyjama and a turban on and a small bundle hanging down from the shoulders. The second looked

like a Gurkha and spoke a tongue I could not understand. They had with them a boy of twelve or thirteen from the village Karai in the district of Sipri. The first one passed on, while the other two came to me. The boy saw me, and laughed with the remark that I was the same person. But his companion reprimanded the boy, and asked him to keep silent. The rest I could not understand. They were also followed by a third man, who was a Sikh and walked passed me. The boy had obviously been brought to indentify me. As for the Sikh I thought him to be either Mangal Singh or the brother of Prem Singh, for I had only seen his back and could not indentify him. When they went to the village, I got up and retracted my steps hurried back in to the jungle. I still feared that the police could surround me with the help of the villagers. I had some books I had taken much pain to write, and some Japanese currency. I lit up a fire in the hollow place, and burned these valuables lest they might fall in to the hands of the police Meanwhile, I met a man whom I asked for some water. The sun had set and he took me to a field, where he gave me water. He and his companion advised me to make good my escape without further loss of time as they were making preparations to arrest me. I accompanied them in their cart up to the village I had gone to in the morning. After that, I proceeded towards the south. It is difficult to describe the hardships that I had to encounter during that night ; and only those who have experienced such

misfortunes in their lives can realise my condition. From Kotah I had gone towards the Muttra Railway line, a distance of about fifteen miles. It was there that the above mentioned incident took place. Guided by star in the night I resumed my journey and turned back from the place crossed the Railway Line between Kotah and Bina where I lay down for sleep near a well outside the village. I passed the night as well in the jungle, for I had had to walk a distance of about forty miles during the previous night and day. There I entered a village and bought a few necessaries. I changed my clothes by buying new ones. I expected that I would be watched in a village and bought these things in a market which is held weekly and where thousands of people gather. During the day, I remained away from the village. During the night I came and took rest by a well. There I heard that a man was proclaiming by beat of drum in the village that any body, feeding or harbouring a Panjabi of about 50 years of age would be punished, that the Panjabi was guilty of a horrible offence and the Government was much displeased as the people did not help in his capture. After a short rest, started onwards in the dark at about midnight. I was following a foot path when I heard the sound of footsteps advancing towards me. I left that path. My pursuers atso changed their course and continued to follow me. I again resumed the old path, and in the next twelve hours I moved on a distance of about 40 miles. Here I was about to fall into the hands

of the police, but fortunately I noticed an empty ditch through which I continued my walk into the jungle. There, I found that certain cartsmen had come to a halt for the night; I also stayed there for the night. The police were going ahead of me by the same road. In the morning those cartsmen went their way, and I rose to proceed towards Bhanisa Garh. After I had gone a couple of miles, a small footpath led down a descent where there was a police station. I took another path and reached a barren place. In front there flowed a brook, but it was hard to go down as the slope was rapid. I also feared lest some bear should attack me. I had a rope of cotton yarn. I doubled the rope put the loop end round a bush and began to descend with its help. I would stop at the end of the rope, and draw the rope back by taking hold of one end and letting off the other, repeating the process, I reached the stream of water below. There I took my bath and proceeded onwards.

At about 4 o'clock I reached a small village, but I could not procure rations from there. Further in near Bhainsagarh, I saw a field of brinjals by a well, where outside a hut there was a woman busy cooking oat leaves. I asked her to give me one loaf for love or money. I offered up to annas eight, but in vain. She was not prepared to part with a single loaf, even if I offered her a sum of Rs. 10-. Disappointed, I resumed my journey. My path lay through Bhainsagarh village. I decied to wait

for darkness, and for this purpose sat concealed by a desolate place near a well. Soon after I heard voices calling out for the man who wanted bread. I thought there must be some thing wrong there. Now they were anxious to provide me with food while they had refused to barter a loaf even for a rupee. I decided to keep quiet and wait. I could see three or four men going by the same road and talking to each other. I suspected them to be hunting for me. I did not go through the village and went over a hillock on the north side. On coming down, I took a road leading westward. I had hardly gone two miles when I heard some voices. I concealed myself on one side and could hear a little of the conversation. One of the men addressed the other as Ketha Jee and said that their officer was angry that day and intended to return only when he had captured the murderer. The second said that it was easier to catch him if somebody harboured first and then betrayed him to the police. A third man expressed his opinion that one could deceive the outlaw by pretending to give shelter and afterwards handing him over to the police. Still another said it was foolish not to give the criminal credit for his sharp intelligence, for otherwise he could not reach up to Bhainsagarh. One of them enquired how they would be able to identify him. Another answered that he was 50 years of age with white beard, a clever looking Panjabi, and had a turban on his head. I could not hear more, for they had moved away. However, they were followed by another batch of twenty five or thirty people, among

whom there were a few horsemen. One of them struck a match to light his pipe and I could see that he wore a hat. From what I had seen and heard I concluded that the police received correct information of the route I had followed : and it was also clear that the police had by wire received reinforcement from the neighbouring village of Sadar and the European officer was himself leading the party. I accordingly changed my route and proceeded to the direction whence the party had come. Guided by stars, I thought I was going westwards. I came to a place between a tank on one side and a hillock on the other. With great difficulty I got through, and began to walk through fields. At 3 in the morning, I felt utterly exhausted. I saw a low stream before me and thought of sleeping on the stones by its side in a secluded place. Suddenly I heard a splash in the water and by the smell I presumed that there was a tiger coming to drink water. Near by, I saw a few logs of hewn wood. I at once made up a big fire with the idea that a tiger would not come near it. This I did in a hollow, for I feared my detection from a distance. I felt acute pangs of hunger, but had nothing but tea with me. I, therefore, boiled some tea in my *garvi* bowel and drank it. I felt a little refreshed, and slept for about an hour and a half. I then proceeded westward through the jungle, but hunger increased every moment. On climbing a tree, I saw a village at some distance. I proceeded towards the village and while I was strolling on I met a man who

seemed to be exhausted and blistered by prickly thorns I enquired who he was to which he replied "Kala" meaning thief. "Who are you" he asked me:"I am also a Kala. Any luck last night," to which question, he replied in the negative. Thinking me to be of the same profession, he was very courteous and invited me to go to his village. I politely refused. Finally he asked me if he could do anything for me. I asked for the pretty looking lathi if you like he was carrying. He gladly presented me with this which came in handy later on. After leaving this man I found a well where I rested. I had an empty stomach, and drank a large quantity of water which gave me trouble. A man came up to me and seeing me in pain asked what the matter was. I told that I was suffering from hunger and after a little talk I gave him a rupee and asked him to get me some wheat flour and molasses. He went away, and returned after about a couple of hours with two other men accompanying him. Pointing towards me, he told them something which I could not follow. The two new comers, thereupon, went back without asking me anything, I had my own suspicions. I feared lest they should go and inform the police. The articles that were brought for me were not to my taste. The flour was of maize, and the other things were also not good. Nevertheless, I thanked God that I had got something. I did not think it proper to prepare my food there, for I had some fears as regards those two men who had gone back. I was preparing to leave the place, when

the man who brought the food for me insisted and begged me to stay. That strengthened my suspicions. The more he asked me to stay the more earnest I became to leave the place. When ultimately I left the spot, he made for the village. I changed my direction towards the west, and began to walk without following any direct path. After walking about four kos' I came to a place where water was available. I sat down, and cooked my food and ate it. For the night I found shelter with the watchman of a field of onions. The next day I came to a Jagirdar's village. On one side there was a hill, and I was trying to pass through it when I came across two persons following a well laden buffalo from Bhainsagarh. One of them enquired who I was; while the other said why they should bother themselves, they had nothing to do with me, and I might be the person whom people were searching in Bhainsagarh.

Further on, I was about to resume my old path towards the west, when I saw before me a large tank with a residential bungalow on the north side and people shooting fowls from a boat. I decided to wait for darkness, when it should be safer to walk on. I said my evening prayers and meditated for some time on the almighty God, and then resumed my journey. It had grown dark and I stumbled at every step. I passed that open piece of land, and stayed in a field near a well. There was a goatskin to draw water; in the dark night there was none to watch me. But it so

happened that I approached the well from the side where the earth was loose, and it gave way. I had a narrow escape For the night I remained there. Early in the morning I resumed my journey through the jungle, without following any definite path. I took great care to keep away from habitations and for that purpose I had to walk longer distances.

At about 10A.M. that day in the jungle I came to a pretty village along one side of which there was a path coming from the village I had left behind, and leading onwards. I saw there a horseman. The horse appeared to belong to an officer,while the rider appeared to be a shop keeper. He was riding at an easy pace. I went to a goatherd to buy some milk ; but he refused to accept Indian Government coin. He wanted the current coin of their own Raj. I resumed my journey,and was passing between hills where there was a passage enough for only one bullock cart, when I heard some one calling me to halt. I stopped, and saw a woman of about forty years of age running after me. She said she had come to know that I was fatigued and wanted milk in the last village and that she had taken pity on me and wanted me to accompany her back where she would hire me a cart which would carry me to some neighbouring Railway Station, where I could proceed whichever way I liked. She talked to me in Marwari.

I wondered how she could find out : first that I was tired ; secondly, that I was in continuous trouble and

thirdly, that I would like to journey by rail. I had never talked such things to any body. It must be the guesses of the police, who were following me in one village one day and in the next village forty miles distant the next morning. I suspected that she wanted to help the police by ensnaring me. I sat down, and enquired of her where she could get me a bullock cart. She told me that at a short distance there was a stone house. She knew the inmates, who would oblige her by getting a cart even by compulsion. I had seen that fort, and had thought it deserted like many others in Mewar. But the woman has supplied me with the information needed that it was used as a Police Station. Now I guessed that the above mentioned horseman's visit was also connected with it. I thanked my stars that the woman had proved more useful to me than to the Police. I lay down to rest and requested the woman to go and get the cart ready through her men. I told her I would follow her soon after shaking off my fatigue. She desired me to accompany her, but when she found me persistent she went back with occasional glances behind to see that I was where I lay. When the police station was only a hundred paces from her, I concealed myself from her view behind a tree and ran towards the mountain on my right ; but she had seen me and cried out to men to follow soon as I was flying. I reached the top of the hill and fell senseless. I was lying by the side of a dreary grove of trees. The water that I had in

my garvy was almost all spilt. Only a few drops were left. It was about noon and the sun was very hot. I thought I would require all my nerve and presence of mind, when shortly I would be followed by so many peoples. God helps those who help themselves. That was true, but how could I help myself was the problem. I was tired out. I had a bit of opium, and swallowed it with the help of the little water I still possessed. I then again began to walk slowly. Behind me I could see nobody.

Soon a fresh difficulty arose. I found that my path downwards was guarded by forty or fifty men. I went to the other side but that too was obstructed. I began to run over the mountains. I was greatly affected with thirst for it was very hot. The opium had also increased my thirst, though it had relieved me of a little fatigue. While running I had freely perspired and that had also added to my desire for water. There would have been no surprise, had I died there of thirst but none can injure a person, whom the Almighty protects. It was a wonder how I got water in the deserted place where stones were radiating fire, where even the birds dared not enter, where there was no trace of human dwelling, where even my pursuers had not attempted to follow me and had been content to obstruct my descent. Owing to the draught of the previous year, the trees had also withered and there was very

scanty shade. The supply of water there at such an hour I could attribute to no agency but the Lord's. To my utter surprise I saw before me a young woman about 25 years old of rather dark complexion. She was carrying a deer skin full of water. For the moment I forgot my need of water. I enquired who she was and where she was bound to. She said she was a Bhilni, and was going to water the young ones of goats. On my further questioning where those young ones could be in such a place, she was rather displeased and reminded me to mind my own business. I told her I was dying of thirst. She offered water and I drank as much as I could. I also got my garvi bowl filled for future use. She left the place, and I went my own way.

I continued my journey over the hill. It must have been about 5 o' clock by that time. I got my previous store of water exhausted. I was again feeling the pangs of thirst. I turned eastwards where I saw a well and a woman by its side. I reached up to that spot and had some water. I made up my mind to go down, and lay down behind a stone heap to await darkness. There I saw two constables coming towards me. They had taken off their khaki coats and were carrying them over on their arms. They saw me there and were talking some thing, when suddenly I bent down extending my arms on a stick as if it were a gun I was aiming at them. The trick had its

effect. They disappeared at once. I lost no time in moving to the side whence I wanted to descend. Still I was reconnoitring from a raised place, if their be an well visible. It was growing dark. I had made up my mind to move downwards. While descending I began to recite my evening Prayers. On the Prayer coming to a close I halted to say the "Ardas". While I was almost through the "Ardas" I heard voices and at once I was on my guard. Had I not halted to say my "Ardas" I would have certainly stepped into the arms of my persuers. Mysterious are the ways by which God preserves lives of those whom He loves. There were about ten or twelve men suggesting the wisdom of going away now, for they said, I would not attempt the descent in the dark night. One of them was of opinion that I had only a garvi bowl of water that morning, and I must go down or die of thirst. They were quite ignorant of the angel who had helped me with water. They had also unwillingly rendered me another service for their loud talk had revealed to me their presence, for otherwise I would have suddenly fallen into their hands.

Then I heard an officer asking several persons to guard different paths during the night. He thought, I would have to go down for water. There was not much harm if they had no sleep for the night, he said; they must be on the alert when I should try to move further. They were moving slowly and I was following

at a distance. The most unhappy thing for me was that they would be watching the wells, while I needed water all the more because I had taken my usual dose of opium.

I walked down the side of the hill sometimes stumbling, but with a heart heavy with the fear of being discovered. I attempted to sleep at one place but in vain. At about 2 in the night I heard the musical sound of cymbals and drum accompanied with songs. Probably people were busy worshipping some goddess. I hurried towards the voices, where I saw a well as well as a field hedged all round. There was no body posted there. That this well was just close to the village, perhaps accounted for the lack of a guard here. I drew out water and drank it washed my hands and feet and filled my garvi for further use. I walked through the fields, and occasionally heard the men being warned not to indulge in sleep or to mind such and such a well, where there was some noise. At three or four places I had to remove the fencing round the fields with the help of my lathi. After I had done about a couple of miles I came to a hillock not connected with the one I had left the day before I had to turn westwards, and found a cartroad. I had left the guarded place behind. At one place I had to pass between two closed rows of hills, where there was a police station. The man on duty was fortunately sleeping and I passed him silently. Two or three kos further on, I came to the plains, where

there was no jungle. I turned northwards; and, finding a well sat down by its side, made bread of the little maize flour that was left with me. There four or five men gathered round me. I started forward lest some one should be following me. There was a stream, and I waded through hip deep water, which was very cold and produced pains in my joints. After some time I came across a Neem tree, whose leaves had withered away but whose stump was so thick that it could give a little shade. I lay down to sleep there. It might have been two hours, and I was still sleeping, when suddenly I heard a noise made by a camel. I rose and saw that two officers in uniform equipped with guns were on camel back and were about to alight there. They came towards me, and talked amongst each other. There was another man with them, who looked like an officer. One of the subordinates went away, and the other along with the officer stood there at a distance of about 50 yards from me. I thought they had been following me, and had sent one of them to bring some persons who could identify me. I made up my mind to see whether they obstructed me, if I moved. I started, and the subordinate turned towards the officer who did not mind the gesture much, for he was sure I could not escape. I went onward, one of them following me at a distance. I came to a village, and thought of spending some money. I had some fifteen rupees with me, and was not sure whether I would need them any longer. I bought ghee and gur

(molasses) worth one rupee and swallowed them. On enquiry, I was told that I could get a cart for Jahajpur from the next village Indrapur. I had, however, no need for a cart but only wanted to leave wrong information behind. On leaving the village, I found a man following me at a distance. He would sit down, where I waited and would walk after me when I would resume my journey. I entered the village, and enquired whether there was any cart or camel on hire. The sun had sat and when I was leaving the village, a man came running after me. There were a few thatched cottages and some fields at a little distance. I saw that man talk to certain people there, and four or five men came to obstruct my path. They told me that I stood in danger of being robbed, if I continued my journey during dark and that I could not be permitted to move on I argued that during the day the sun was very hot, and I could not linger there, and that I feared no robbers for I had nothing to lose They did not however, permit me to proceed. I was given a cot, and compelled to sleep in the field. Four or five men sat round obviously to prevent my escape. One of them asked the other to tell him some interesting story to beguile the night.

Early in the morning at about 3 o'clock they warned one of them to keep awake, and to keep a strict watch over me. If I attempted to fly he was asked to raise a hue and cry. Then they all went to

sleep, except the man who had been put on duty. He, too; after a short time lay down to sleep and I could hear his heavy snoring. That was what I had been waiting for. I at once rose up and removed the obstruction at the door of the enclosure in which I was kept. I then quietly slipped away. I went eastwards instead of proceeding to Jahazpur. About ten minutes later I heard a hue and cry behind me. I had gone about a mile, and came to the stream that I had crossed on the previous day. That day I had encountered many troubles and dangers and had escaped unscathed.

I had left Jahazpur to my west, and Bundi to my east and proceeded haphazardly for three or four days towards Toka state. One day while I was proceeding by the side of the Railway line in Jaipore State I saw a trolly running on the rails. The officer sent a man towards me, who called to me to halt. He enquired who I was. Mean while, the officer called him back. I could not understand what he meant by that I did not meet any other hardship in Jaipore state, and began to pass my days roaming here and there. One day I went to one village Bhilpura where the Brahmans cultivated lands. I told them I liked to stay there for ten or fifteen days living simply on melons. They agreed. For the night I would sleep there ; in the morning I would buy melons worth two annas, and after eating them

would move to a secluded place. In the evening I would come back, buy half a seer of barley flour and make bread of it for night meal. But flour was not to be had there. Moreover, I had very little money left, and I wanted to spend as little as possible.

After about fifteen days, I made preparations to go to Marwar. There was famine in Marwar, but I believe I could reach Gujrat, my real destination more safely if I went through Marwar. I had other reasons also for taking that route. I had a few difficulties at two or three places on my way through Marwar ; but suffered a good deal on account of want of food. It is, however, not neccssary to give a detailed account of my journey through Marwar.

I crossed Marwar and passing throug Palanpur reached Gujrat, The rainy season I passed in Palanpur with one Mohan Patel. He was very kind and generous, and I lived for about fifteen days there. The son of a Bhagat had graval, and I cured him of that malady by medicines. For that reason those Brahmans began to respect me. They asked me to stay there longer, but I refused. I went to Kharoman, and then to Area, where I stayed with mohant Sukhdev. For about four or five days. I stayed at Sidha Sawala and then at Rup Pur Paten. But the days passed away without any untoward incident. I knew a few medicines. In Gujrat I took

to reading Gujrati. I read a few books on medicine and subscribed to some news papers Gujrati. My medicines began to become popular, and I decided to live on what I could earn by their sale.

I had left Gwalior State, in March 1916 and it was September, 1916 when I reached Gujrat and the Baroda State.

I read in newspapers that in the Amritsar Congress the following expressions had been used, to the great discredit of myself and my fellow passengers

As my practice was flourishing, I remained in Swali near Baroda about two years and became friendly with the nobles and richmen there.

When the Jalianwala Bag massacare took place my mind was full of sorrow and it was very difficult for me to remain quietly without doing some thing in reply to the tragedy. I reached Ahamedabad to pay my respects to Mahatma Gandhiji and to talk over the Jalianwala Bag massacre but I met the Sikh who was deputed to find out my where abouts, So it was not possible for me to fulfil my desire.

After that I interviewed Messrs G. K. Das Pandey and Dayabhai Prot, Barristers-at-law, but thinking that I was C. I. D. they did not freely talk to me.

In December 1919 when the Special train of Maharaj Bal Gangadhar Tilak reached Baroda, I I intended to seek an interview with him at his bungalow where he was entertained at a tea party and to converse with him but owing to rush of his followers I could not do that.

There after I decided to remain at Bombay where all the Leaders came every now and then. A Rais of Sawali-Daya Bhai Desai (Jaigirdar), whom I came to know then very cordially entertained me. He was related to Mr.V. J.·Patel. Though he did not know me as 'Gurdit Singh' he gave me a letter to Mr .Patel requesting him to receive me cordially. I reached Mr. Patel's Bungalow near Bandra Station. But unfortunately he was not in his Bungalow.

As it was not safe for me to remain in Bombay before the very eyes of the Police, I intended to remain somewhere in the outskirts of the city and so I went to Mahowal Bandar-12 miles from the town where there was Seth Durlav Bhai Ratan Singh's Ship building factory. I however, took service in the factory as a Doctor and there after became manager of the same. I did not take any remunaration for discharging my duties as manager excepting board and lodging because I had a mind to remain there separately and subsequently to gain the favour of the authorities. Here I was living rather

very peacefully. Though I had every comfort of life here yet I did not forget my country and accordingly I went to Mr. Patel and gave him the letter I took from Daya Bhai Desai. Mr Patel received me cordially. He spared much of his valuable time to converse with me. But as soon as he came to know that I was Gurdit Singh he was little irritated and thought that I was coming from C. I. D. and to avoid the trouble he said "Just go to Mahatmaji who can hear your heart-rending stories.

I went to the house of Seth Rewa Sanker Matiwala in Gamda Devi where Mahatmaji was staying on its third floor. I intended to have an interview with him. The inmates of the house at first turned a deaf ear to my requests but on my earnest prayer they took me to the door of the room where Mahatmaji was living and from out side said "See there is Mahatmaji sitting" and forced me to come out. Next day I again went there but the same inmates said "Once you have a 'Darsan' (Visit) you are not allowed a second 'Darsan' (Visit)". I returned. But I insisted on a 'Darsan' (Visit) any how so I attempted the 'Darsan' (Visit) a third time when they asked me why I had come again I said I came with some presents for Mahatmaji. They requested me to hand the presents over to them but I said it was not possible, as I must go and pay my respects to Mahatmaji with these presents. So one man went in to ask for Mahatmaji's permission.

Mahatmaji allowed me the interview prayed for. I sat before Mahatmaji, Sm. Sarala Devi and some other gentlemen. I opened my purse, from which one five rupees note and a silver coin of rupee one were placed before Mahatmaji. When Mahatmaji asked me why this money had been paid, I said it was my humble offering towards the Jalianwala Bag fund for which he was then collecting. He accepted my offering.

Another bundle was opened by me in which there was a new coat. I also placed this coat before Mahatmaji on being asked why ? I said I had no more money, therefore something might come from the selling of this coat and raise my contribution to an appreciable sum. First he refused but my earnestness compelled him to take the same. Another present I had placed before Mahatmaji was my garvy. Mahatmaji was now astonished and asked me why this too was parted with. I said whatever I had and from which a farthing could be derived I must put before you. After that he told Sm. Sarala Devi something in English Turning towards me he said—This garvy is for your own use for drinking water. I won't take it. I said what of this garvy I was ready to sacrifice every ounce of my blood if the sufferers of the Jalianwala Bag could be profited by it ? Mahatmaji was highly pleased with my conversation and which had then a somewhat free flow.

I give below the conversation that followed.

Mahatmaji—"Have you got any property" ?

I.—"No, Mahatmaji, nothing at present".

Mahatmaji—"You have ofcourse got nothing now but have you not got any property at home"?

I.—"I have no home and no property whatsoever.

Mahatmaji—"When you have got nothing what makes you so indignant as regards Jalianwala bag"?

I,—"He alone can realise the Jalianwala Bag inciden who had been once a victim of such brutal massacre. I am really an unfortunate man as I have not been able to see the place up till now and am much anxious to see the place."

Mahafmaji—"How do you come to know that the place where the massacre took place, is a holy one."

I.—The soul of a human being is purified from the freedom of his country and that the starting point of that freedom is the Jalianwala Bag where the joint blood of Hindus, Sikhs and Mahomedans was spelled as a sacrifice for

that purpose. I regard that place as a holy one. "

Mahatmaji—"You better take back your coat and gavy leaving me the coins."

I—"When my soul is burning for the service of the country, wl at shall I do with the garvy and the coat."

(Mahatmaji showed my coat and garvy to Sm. Sarala Devi and spoke something in English.)

Mahatmaji asked my name,

I—I have no name, the one I have cannot be disclosed here ; if you still insist please allow me to speak with you privately for 15 minutes.

Mahatmaji—I have no time and there is no need of privacy.

I.—Very important affairs I have to comunicate—please allow me at least five minutes.

Mahatmaji—I have absolutely no time at all.

I.—I understand sir, we cannol have a few words together be good enough to ask Mr. Patel what I desire to speak to you.

Mahatmaji—Alright I shall see.

(I then came back).

From this day I used to go to Mahatmaji every now and then and there was no one to obstruct me in going to him. After a few days Mahatmaji sent my coat and garvy for auction sale and the amount fetched by the sale was Rs. 115/- a news whick gave me much pleasure.

When Mahatmaji comes to Bombay he lives with Rewa Sankar and accordingly all the visitors from far and near see him here.

13th April 1920.

I heard that Pundit Ram Bhaj Dutt Chowdhuri, husband of Sm. Sarala Debi had come to this house and had been putting up there. I went and met Sm. Sarala Debi and expressed my desire to see her husband. She did not recognise me but took me for an ordinary Sikh who generally came to that house So she did not hesitate to arrange the interview with Punditji.

She entered the Punditji's room and got the permission.

Punditji received me cordially and asked me to sit on a chair by him.

Punditji asked where I lived and what I came there for. I answered that I had no place to live in and without reason or rhyme I came to your goodself.

(Conversation).

Punditji—Sirdarji, please, let me know your business as I am ready for retirement.

I.—Punditji, you wish to sleep but my story is a long one.

Punditji—I had no sleep for 24 hours and if I don't sleep I shall not be able to deliver my speech at the ensuing meeting of this night.

I.—Punditji please appoint a time that I may express clearly all that I have got to say.

Punditji—What is that conversation that will take so much time ?

I. —Punditji when you will once begin to hear my story you will hardly leave me without getting to the end.

Punditji—Then please come on another occasion.

I had to leave the place

That night a meeting was to have been held near the France Bridge–in which the earth of Jalianwala Bag packed in small packets was sold at Re. 1 per packet and thousands of such pakets were sold. I had a mind to purchase one packet of the holy earth but I had no money then to buy it with. However I asked the seller to sell me 5 packets of the holy earth on credit. I got and as promised after 15 days I paid off the value of the same and distributed the packets free of charge.

19. 4. 1920.

I interviewed Punditji. :At the first visit I wished Punditji "Bandemataram" –Punditji replied "Sat Sri Akal".

(Conversation continued).

Punditji—Please excuse me, Sardar Saheb, as I do not know you.

I.—Yes Sir, when we will be acquainted you will have to take much trouble on my account.

Panditji–All right you have full liberty to speak to me what you desire.

I.—Punditji–At the last Amritsar congress Pundit Motilal Nehru in his presidental speech said that the Police of Budge Budge had tortured the inmates of the Komgata Maru and that they lost their temper and violated the law. This fact is not at all true and is absolutely wrong.

Punditji—There was no fault of Pundit Motilal Nehru as this was already out in the news papers.

l.—Panditji–The innocent passengers of Komagata Maru were the aggrieved patry and that they remained very calm up to the time of their death by a shower of bullets. But the public have come to know that those inmates were to be blamed for this mishap. (Vide Presidential speech of Pandit Motil Lal Nehru and news paper).

Punditji–The government enquiry Committee of Komagata Maru has reported to the news papers that the prassengers of Komagata Maru committed breach of peace.

I.--Will you kindly let me kncw whether any leader up to date took the trouble of mak ing enquiries as to the real facts of this incident ?

Punditji—No. No one.

I.—Is it not an absurd thing Sir, that you have not taken the trouble of setting up Enquiry Committee of your own ?

Panditji—Yes it was our duty no doubt but we were so busy with other affairs that we could not give our attention to thism atter.

I—Is it not the fact that the matter had been reported on by the Government only who generally do not like to disclose their guilt so you have accepted the report as Gospel truth ?

Panditji—Pandit Motial Nehru made his speech on the basis of the news papers he did not add anything of his own.

I—Panditji On 13th April 1920 at the French- Bridge meeting you said about hundreds of innocent persons being shot dead and thousands wounded is absolutely true ?

Panditji -- "That I said in the meeting is absolutely true.

I, —Panditji–You have most probably read the Government Report on Jalianwala Bag in which it was mentioned that only 29 parsons were dead. Is that true?

Panditji—It was absolutely false-Govt. to avoid their responsibility brought such untruthful Report before the general public but at last they were obliged to accept the real fact.

I.—Then now Sir, how did you belive the Report of the Government Enquiry Committee?

Panditji—It is true that I don't belive it but I want to know the real fact which I have not yet heard,

I.—If you desire to know the real fact please appoint an Enquiry Committee and I will make you understand that the Report issued by Government is absolutely false.

Panditji—Do you know the fact by guess or by actual knowledge?

I.—Without actual knowledge I would not have troubled you Sir. Before my eyes the passengers of Komagata Maru were shot dead like innocent beasts. (when

uttering those few words I could not control my tears and for some time I could not speak).

Panditji—Sardar Saheb–the case has become very old and it is not possible to redress the wrong at the present moment.

I.—Panditji you may call it and old one but it is and will remain fresh in my heart so long I shall be living and after m death too. It also may be a fact that these heart–reading thoughts may bring about my demise and their yield at the next birth.

Panditji—Unfortunate Gurdit Singh is no longer in this world otherwise there might be some means of conducting the case.

I.—Panditji if yon are ready to appoint an Enquiry Committee it might be possible that Gurdit Singh will himself explain the matter before you.

(Note of Gurdit Singh).

Upon this the face of Panditji flashed with astonishment and he asked me if Gurdit Singh living then.

I.—Yes Panditji he is living but he is absolu tely broken hearted and will not rally unless and until he is able to redress the brutal wrong.

Panditji—If he is alive can he come to me ?

I.—Yes Panditji he is alive and whenever you will send for him he will come to you.

Panditji—I want to see him to-day if possible, if not as soon as he can.

I.—Panditji—If Gurdit Singh just now comes to you how will you recognise him.

Panditji—Yes I shall be able to recognise him through my heart.

I.—I am that unfortunate-always at your service.

Panditji.—Yes you are one of the fortunate sufferers but where is Gurdit Singh.

I.—I am Gurdit Singh before you.

Note—Puuditji was very much astonished and blusted out, "O' my God" you are the same And immediately embraced me cordially and gave me a seat by him. At this embracing the major portion of my grief was removed.
(Conversation Continued).

Panditji—Babaji, How did you escape the clutches of the police ?

I.—Our Almighty God is our saviour. If I narrate my whole history it will take you not only a few hours but a few days. If you however have time and if you allow me such time I may narrate every thing.

Punditji—I have not so much time but if you can narrate by writing I shall gladly read it.

I.—It will also take much time to narrate in writing.

Panditji—All right you may prepare it and I will take it when I next come to Bombay after 3/4 months.

This time Punditji opened his trunk and brought out a bundle of G. P. Notes to give them to me but I said please take it back and utilise it for the country's cause—I wish to live as a Sadhu–I am determined to live upon my own earning.

I then prepared the history of the brutal incident and handed it over to Punditji when he next came to Bombay.

For an interview with LALA LAJPAT RAIJI.

Once I came to know that Lala Lajpat Rai had come to Bombay on the occasion of a Tramway strike, and attend the meeting of the strikers. A little before my reaching there Lalaji left the meeting I then heard he had gone to Kalva Devi Road to meet the Punjabis living there. I also went there and was informed that he was engaged at the Marwari Meeting was a private meeting and tickets were issued only to the members, I had no ticket--I stood at the gate—the volunteer at the gate fortunately went on some business within the meeting. In the meantime I took charge of his duties un-called for. When he returned and saw me officiating for him hs was pleased and gave me a chair before him to sit on. In reward of my two ours duty I begged him to find out Lala Lajpat Rai. I wrote in a slip "I am Gurdit Singh of S. S, Komagata Maru" and asked him to hand the same over to Lalaji. After his departure I scaned every one of his steps very earnestly to see what would happen when the slip was handed to Lalaji. I saw that when the slip was handed over to him he saw it and put it by on his chair—thinking that Gnrdit Singh was dead and gone and this man had come from C. I. D. to cheat him. However as soon as I saw the chit thrown I rushed there and picked up the same so that except Lalaji no one would be able to know of my arrival there. At the door from which Lalaji was coming out I stood before him and caught his arm and said "I am rather tired to sent an interview with you—

please allow me to speak. I showed the chit reached the hands of the police what would have been the result. Still he did not pay much attention to my affairs–he told me to first have correspondenee with Master Sunder Singh Laral Puri at Lahore. "If he ask then only I can uudertake your case."

Dewan Chiman Lall was delivering his speeches at Bombay when there was strike in the schools and colleges–I too delivered several speeches with him but he did not recognise me nor did he ask me who I was.

I went to Seth Sanker Lal–Banker–but he did not pay any attentian to my affairs.

One day at J. J. Hospital of Bombay there was a mass meeting and Moulana Saukatali was present, I

I delivered here my speech to the students as given below:—

"Boycott of schools and colleges is necessary not because the autocratic Government are doing no good to us and in future there is no chance of their doing anything for the Indians. They have taken our little Dalip Singh and converted him to Christianity. They have belonged the precious stone "Kohinoor" and broken it into pieces.

The speech inflamed the heart of a Punjabi C. I. D. who was noting down the utterances of the speakers at a little distance from the pandal, and who then made a move to catch hold of me. But immediately after delivering the speech I left without their knowledge.

One day at the house of Rewa Shanker several leaders with Mr. Moti Lal Nehru came and resided. I went and met Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Jawahar Lal Nehru, his son, and repeated the conversation I had with Pandit Ram Bhaj Dutt Chowdhury about the Congress.

Pandit Ji admitted that his utterances in the previous meeting as regards the Komagatamaru incident were not quite true. "The Nagpur Congress" he said "is going to take place within a short time and you will come over there and I shall try to do

something for you." But owing to my serious illness I could not attend the Congress.

January 1921.

I interviewed G. K. Desh pandey. At first he did not recognise me. Then after the recommendation of a gentleman who came from Ahmedabad he came to know that I was "Gurdit Singh".

Mr. G. K. Desh panday opened a Swaraj Asram at Anderi a village 20 miles away from the town. I sent Charkha etc. from the Factory where I was a manager.

From "Ekdil Akhbar"—a news paper—I learnt that 200 Sikhs died at Nankana Sahib at Gurdwara—this news went deep down into my heart and wounded me sorely. I could not help going there and join the agitation. At the time of delivering one of my lectures an inmate of S. S. Komagata-maru named Bhai Puran Singh recognised me and came to entertain me. But I told him to keep the news to himself as I was roaming incognito.

I asked my master to grant me leave for some days but he was very sorry to part with me. However I could not remain there.

On 13th March 1921 I reached Ahmedabad and after being introduced to Mahatmaji through a friend of mine I was requested to surrender to the police.

Before my surrender I made up my mind to have the necessary interview with other important persons. I, therefore, went to Hyderabad, Sind, Karachi, Sekhar, Montogomery and Lahore.

The Governor of Bombay was to visit Karachi when Swami Govindanand agitated for the boycott of the Governor. At this time I was in Karachi. He in course of his speech said that "It is rumoured that 200 Sikhs at Nankana were killed by the Mahanta at the instigation of the Government, but on the other side Government deny it. For the time being if we take the view of the Government to be true the questions arise, that Government maintain the C. I. D. Department and the duty of this Department is to bring out each and every fault of the general public. It is quite absurd that this department did not succeed in anticipating the incident. Certainly they anticipated but did not do anything. So the blame lies on Government and this Government should at once be removed".

That time Pandit Lokeram, Pandit Bishnu Sharma and all other Sindhis prohibited me to go before the police but I had no mind to disguise myself any longer. At Lahore I met Pandit Ram Bhaj Dutt Chowdhury. I had been in Lahore for some time. Then I went to Amritsar, Tarantaran, Ludhiana, Amballa, Mustupha, Saharanpur, Hardwar, Dehradun &c. where I established Khilafat Committees and

Congress Committees through my impassioned speeches. If I describe all the details of these tours the bulk of this will be considerably increased so I abbreviate my touring journal. In these places I met with well-wishers. After the adventure I returned to Lahore and met the leaders. I told them that I intended to surrender myself as I was tired of disguising myself. But they prohibited me to do so saying "the Sikh Leage is to meet at Lyallpur within three or four months so please wait for their arrival as we intend to put the matter before them." In this league meeting several pamphlets were distributed declaring that Baba Gurdit Singh would no longer remain in disguise and come amongst us very soon. A history of my adventures was regularly published in the news-papers. Owing to some reasons I was prohibited by the Sikh League to go to Lyallpur and attend the Festival there.

To pay my last visit I went back to Sindh, Gujrat and Bombay. On 3rd November I came back to Delhi where the all India Congress Committee was sitting. I represented the Khidrawad Amballa Congress Committee as a delegate. With almost all the Congress members I talked about my persecution. But they unanimously restrained me from surrendering to the Government. They said that the atmosphere was poisonous and the attitude of the Government was not at all good. So if you surrender the Govern-

ment will hang you, and in consequence we will lose an innocent worker and our work for country's cause will suffer greatly. So it was necessary to remain amongst us a few days more. I said alright, please refer this matter to Mahatma Ji.

It was at last referred to Mahatma Ji. He said "it was not much creditable for him to roam hither and thither disguising himself—he who once shook the Government made a voyage to Canada, awoke the sleeping India and exposed the bureaucratic policy before the general public, he whose adventures helped the Indians in Africa in their distressed condition; I think his demise for country's sake will bring forth some good for the country".

Another question arose, if I have to surrender to the police, when and where is it to be done. Leaders were of opinion that when Ahmedabad Congress will take place then I may be handed over to the pelice but Mahatma Ji was not of that opinion, he was of opinion that I should surrender myself to the police at Delhi immediately.

After a great discussion between the leaders and Mahatma Ji it was settled that when Nankana Festival would take place at Nankana Sahib on the 15th November 1921 and where almost all the Sikhs would assemble then before them I should be handed over to the police. I have already written an open letter to

the Government that repression has touched its extreme point in my case and now I am coming before you to bear further oppression.

On 7th November 1921 I wrote several letters to the news-papers and to several of my friends that I am attending the Nankana Festival on the 15th instant and that I must be present at the morning prayers of the festival that day when I shall disclose who I am. There they took it to be a fine idea that I intended to first attend the morning prayer and afterwards before thousands of Sikhs would ask the police to arrest me; but the machinations of the police were that before I reached the meeting they would arrest me and send me to any unknown place they liked without the knowledge of my brethren.

The Government put forth all their efforts to arrest me, they arranged military force on such a huge scale that before the British Raj Nankana Sahib was not fortunate enough to be the centre of such a a military display. No persons were allowed to go there without showing their faces. The veiled women had also to take out their veil. At that time the Secretary of my ship Komagatamaru, Sardar Daljit Singh whose name is at present Sardar Rai Singh was with me and tried to be there before me. But I restrained him saying that let me go first. Just fancy the act of this Government. When

200 Sikhs were shot dead at Nankana not a single member of the force was in evidence there, but to arrest an innocent man—Gurdit Singh, they requisitioned such a huge force.

However I reached anyhow a field two miles off Nankana. I rose at 4 in the morning and bathed at Guru Hargovind Sahib's well and then went to the pandal where the prayers were going on. It was arranged there that after the prayers lectures would be delivered. It was also arranged with the speakers that after the delivery of all the speeches Sardar Harchand Singh of Lyallpur will deliver his speech and as soon as his speech will be finished my turn will come.

Just at the time Sardar Harchand Singh addressed the mass saying "if Baba Gurdit Singh is here please come and appear before us". He then ordered the mass to sit quietly and await the event.

When I appeared before the mass and stood up, a man behind me slapped on my back saying you old man sit down let me first make the Darsan of Baba Gurdit Singh. I told him, brother, why are you prohibiting me. I have also come to make the Darsan. As soon as I stood and finished the prayer Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri came to me and requested me to go to the pandal and to speak there. I delivered a hot speech for two hours. Again I went upstairs

where thousands of my brethren were praying and delivered a speech for half an hour.

After taking some rest I went again to deliver another speech in the evening. As soon as I uttered a few words Master Motta Singh came in with open sword saying "Sat Sri Akal". I stopped my speech and let him deliver his sensational speech which he delivered for about two hours. Darkness came on and the evening prayers went on. In the meantime I conversed with Master Motta Singh. He said, "Babaji I have come to save you, don't appear before the police as you will unnecessarily be sacrificed, I answered yes, Master Motta Singh I am aware of it but I cannot return now for two reasons (1) I have already proclaimed in the newspapers that I shall surrender myself to the police after my appearance before the public to-day at Nankana Sahib Festival and (2) If one innocent Gurdit Singh be sacrificed for the country's sake to-day, from to-morrow there will rise hundreds of Gurdit Singh.

On this occasion I was questioned by a person near by and I turned towards him for two seconds. On my turning back I saw that Master Motta Singh had disappeared. I searched for him hither and thither but could not find him out. I was invited by several persons and accordingly I met all these persons from 9 p. m. to 1 a. m.

Then after returning to Nankana Sahib I joined the fire-works and prayer parties.

At 9 a. m. a letter came from the Police Commissioner to the manager Nankana Sahib to the effect:—Two Government culprits have come to you—you have neither sent them here nor given us any information of them. You should hand them over to me otherwise you will be prosecuted. I saw the letter and advised the mrnager to reply as follows:—

"It is true that Baba Gurdit Singh and Master Motta Singh are remaining here and delivering lectures whole day long before thousands of your police who were hearing the speeches and seeing the performance. It is very shameful for you that you are asking me to hand them over and to give information about them to you. I am the manager of the Nankana Sahib and not the servant of the Police and so it is not my duty to hand over the pilgrims to you for arrest. Two months ago Baba Gurdit Singh issued his notification that he was ready to surrender himself and about Master Motta Singh I had seen him only yosterday in the pandal. Under the circumstances if you want to bring me under your clutch I have no objection at all.

I also wrote a letter to the Police Commissioner as under:

"Your letter addressed to the manager Nankana Sahib had been seen by me. You felt no shame to write such a letter to the Manager. You tried your best

for seven years to arrest me but without success. Continually for two months my notifications were being out in the news papers but you could not do anything. I am in India and doing work in the Congress and Khilafat Committees. Since 30 hours I have come here and have been delivering speeches before the very eyes of your Police. Over and above, to avoid showing further unfitness you are reprimanding the manager. Please let me know the time and place where I may meet you".

At 3 in the evening I got the reply of my letter that 'please come over to the Bungalow of Police Commissioner at 4 p. m'.

A procession of over 2 lacs of Sikhs went with me up to the Bungalow from the Nankana Sahib placing me in their midst. The spectacle of the time was really imposing. Thousands of my brethren were ready to give their lives on my behalf. From the midst of the masses I told them, "My brethren after reading from the news papers you wanted to see me in your midst which desire of yours has been fulfilled by me but now the time has come that you should listen to me. If you love me whole-heareedly please take your seat where you are standing and wait so long I do not reach the Bungalow of the Police Commissioner. This news spread from one corner to another and all the men assembled accordingly took their seats on the field. This grand scene

was witnessed by my old father aged about 100 years and my sister of about 70 years. They loved me very much. My son aged about 12 years was on the shoulder of a person whence he cried aloud "My father is going to sacrifice himself for the welfare of the Country— I shall also follow him when I shall grow up."

I, accompanied by Sardar Teja Singh Samandari and other five leaders reached the Commissioner's Bungalow. As soon as I reached there the Police Commissioner came out to welcome me and wanted to shake my hands which I declined saying I regret that I am not prepared to touch the hands of the unrightous police and thereby contaminate myself. With a smiling face he withdrew his hands.

After a while my comrades were asked to go back with a promise that they would be informed if there be any fresh arrangement for Babaji. So they retired. At about 2 in the night I was roused from my bed in camp where I was placed under military guards and saw that about 60 armed police with their officers were around me and asked me to accompany them on foot. We went on in this manner and reached a place on the railway line about a mile from Nankana Sahib Railway Station. We waited there for some time until an Engine attached to a third class Bogie arrived on the spot. I was told by the officer to get into the train. I obeyed and the train without

touching at any intermediate station reached Mianmir at about 2 a. m. From there I was brought to Lahore and harded over to the C. I. D. Police at about 3-30 a. m. At this time I requested them for leave to make water but the police did not allow me until I reached the Lahore Central Jail at 9 a. m. The outcome of this was that I have been suffering from urinal diseases since then.

The room allotted to me in the Jail was one meant for murdered and the iron ticket on my neck was numbered 828 (Under Section 148, 149 and 302).

The Punjab Government was unable to deal with my case as they had no evidence against me, so they wrote to the Bengal Government to deal with my case and transfer me there.

One night I was brought by motor to Mugalpura Station whence we were booked for Calcutta. During the time we had to wait for the train I delivered my lectures to the passengers on the platform; in the meantime an officer with a telegram came up and said to the officer in charge of me "Don't take him to Calcutta as the Bengal Government declined to interefere with the case". If there was any good motive of the Government they might have released me then and there but it was not their policy, so I was brought back to the Central Jail.

I was then brought under the temporary law that came into force during the war time." Under this law I was sent to Dehra Gazikhan, without any trial in the law courts.

I was so long afraid of this sort of thing. I knew that I could go to the court where I might explain my grievances for redress but if I be in the hands of the police I shall not be able to explain my grievances. But alas! at last I was put under a temporary law. This temporary law was recalled on 28th February 1922 and I was released accordingly. After my release I reached Amritsar Darbar and explained to my friends and brethren the inhum n treatment of the bureaucratic Government towards me. The next morning when I was about to start for my native village the police came with the order of my arrest and accordingly I was taken to the court of law and was sentenced to five years rigorous' imprisonment under Section 124-A and was sent to Mianwali Jail. According to the rule of the Jail only one letter can be received and one despatched within a month.

September 1923.

I sent a letter to the address of Rai Singh asking him to take care of the important court papers for the ensuing case, which were lying in the trunk kept at my sister's house. This letter was read by the police

and accordingly they took away the trunk—broke it and scattered all the papers hither and thither. I found several important documents were missing and after six months of my writing they returned the trunk in broken condition.

27th November 1922.

The Governor of Punjab came to Mianwali Jail for a visit and told me that my articles on S. S. Komagatamaru were not found. At this I referred him to the paras 2, 10, 17 and 49 of the report of the Enquiry Committee appointed by Government. I told him that the officers appointed by the Government all agreed in these paras that all the articles were found and taken by the police. Now you are denying. Can utruthfulness go any further? He said he would see into the matter, with a smiling face. At this moment I had a statement of eight pages. I said, "If you are agreeable to consider the matter please take this for your perusal" and it was accordingly taken by him. But I have up till now received no reply to that statement.

The practical reader who has followed me so far in my futive wanderings would know that over seven years the Police were not able to lay hands on me. Nor did the Police make it known by proclamation that I was a "wanted" man and the

crimes for which I was being watched for every step I took. Had the Police made it known that I was wanted I would have come out at once and endecvoured to prove my innocence and the high handedness of the Government officials. I would have escaped many year's sufferings in my wanderings. Had I committed a crime why did not the Government confiscate my property. From these facts it appears that the intention of the Police was to do away with me mysteriously and leave no trace.

There has been more than enough evidence to prove that I never committed a crime for which the Police could prosecute me legally and it was injustice all through which was done to me. I have facts in my possession which will clearly show how I stood and the unjustifiable strong hand used by the Government to do away with me as I was considered to be the disturber of peace in a period when the English had lulled the suffering Indians into a Ripvan Wincle's sleep.

The Government could not put up a case for my Charlering to trade the Komagatamaru but the much applainded British Justice sank to its lowest depth when the Court sentenced to be hanged that brave aud noble Indian, Sardar Balwant Singh for a crime that was not horrible enough to hang a dog for. The court has recorded that there was no direct evidence

against the accused yet it is proved that Sri Balwant Singh did meet the notorious Gurdit Singh at Yokohama "in Japan" and that in his possession was found a copy of a verse from the writings of Guru Gobind Singh the purport of which was that "when all other attempts to gain liberty proved futile the the salvation of a nation lies with the sword." These were the words that were found copied in a note book in the pocket of Sardas Balwant Singa and these brave and noble words made him climb the steps of a scaffold. No doubt these were a thorn in the side of the Government. Had the words been of the gentle and Meek Jesus "turn your right cheek when struck on the left cheek" then this brave man's life would have been spared.

I am still alive. I did not go to prison for any crime with regard to the Komagatamaru but a man was hanged because he dared meet me in Yokohama.

I append papers of the case which is now pending in the High Court of Calcutta.

BRITISH JUSTICE.

Once an English gentleman prided on the British Justice and added that the English Law permits a hundred criminals to escape in doubtful cases in order to escape the sin of punishing an innocent person. This theory is meant only for preaching as the great saying of Jesus Chirst that "if you are struck on the left Cheek, turn to to the striker your right also" Christianity boasts of these noble words but I have never come across a single disciple of Christ doing as Christ bids. Our English masters raise sky high the praises of the English Law—the law which is only available for the wealthy and not the poor and the good missionaries preach the word of Christ to the poor masses who swallow the only sweet dose and give both their cheeks to be struck. These are some of the causes of Indian slavery.

I will give here an example of British Justice in my own case :—

It has been recorded in the previous pages how under the pretence of Justice I had to undergo a sentence of five years. This sentence was passed on me because I dared to tell the British Law the shallowness of its Justice. When I was released from Dehra Gaji Khan on 28th February 1922 I came to Amritsar. On 7th March, 1922 when I was giving a lecture to

a huge crowd telling them how English Justice deals its blows to the innocent without any pretence to legal procedure. I was arrested and charged under Section 124A. I was pulled before the courts where none gave any defence owing to the great boycott and non-co-operation movement that was in full swing at the time but I was advised to defend my case as it was hoped that the full story of the Komagatamaru should come out and that Public may know for the first time the most horrible deed committed upon Indians at Budge Budge. I gave notice to defend and submitted a list of witnesses including Sir, Wm. Vincent, Kuwar Daljit Singh and Maharaja of Burdwan who drew up the Report on the Komagata Maru while the written law permits the calling of any witnesses but, by what law I do not know, my request was refused. The only reason for refusing this request was that most appalling revelations of Government deeds at Budge Budge would come to light. In the Court of Justice of Lala Amarnath I gave my written statement in defence which later on was published in Gurmukhi under the title of "Julmi Kathah. As far as it was possible the whole story of the government of Canada as well as of the Government of India's atrocities are written down yet that is not the whole truth but truth will be out when the flag of Swaraj flow at Delhi.

By Justice Amarnath I was given five years. Before this tool of the British Justice could send me away I gave him my mind and what I thought of the Justice he sowed in that Court

"I thank God almighty that the sons and daughters of India have learnt to suffer and out of these sufferings will spring up the Young Indian Nation the like of whom the world have never produced. May God bring that day nearer is the earnest prayer of Gurdit Singh, the prisoner on his way to Mianwali prison, the Andamans of the Punjab."

Expecting no justice no appeal was tendered and in meek submission the five years had to be spent.

It was very hard at first to spend the days of captivity in a recreation that I was not accustomed to. I busied my-self with collecting details in a endeavour to get back some portion of my property looted by police from the Komagatamaru.

I wrote to my secretary to this effect and this letter some how went to the hands of the Police, who acting on the information contained in the letter ransacked the house of my sister and took hold of my steel trunk and all it contained. I sent several letters to the Police and the result of this correspondence was that the trunk was returned after six months after all the important documents were removed.

With great difficulty and labour the papers were again collected and kept in a friend's house from where the Police, clever than thieves, managed to get them and repeated requests to the Police at Lahore were futile to get recovery of the same.

Why the Police had gone to these length, the reader might ask. The reason, is most apparent that as far as they could,

they wished the Budge Budge tragedy to be forgotten and that truth might not see the light regarding this matter. But "truth will out" and before I laid the matter in front of the public I again endeavoured to bring the Government to reason and commenced correspondence from which the reader will clearly perceive the hollowness of the government attitude and the pedestal of truth on which I stand.

True Copy. P. D. 50.

(By the grace of the True precepter the one Wahiguru.)

To

The Inspector General,

Bengal Police,

CALCUTTA.

Dear Sir,

SAT-SRI-AKAL.

It may be fresh in your memory that on the 26th of September 1914, the Steamship Koma Gata Maru arrived at the mouth of the Hugli ; on the 27. 9. 14, the Punjab Police took charge of the Office, the treasure and everything that belonged to the ship, put it all under seal and appointed Police Guard over it and on 29. 9. 14, I, along with my companions, was

separated from the ship. Uptill now the belongings of the ship have neither been given to me nor to any of the claimants in my absence. The Government cannot confiscate thereon any pretence ; and it has issued no circular for the confiscation. So without any delay everything that belonged to the 'Sri Guru Nanak ship' be at once returned to me. In verification of the above mentioned let me refer to paras 2, 10, 17 & 49 of the Report of Koma Gata Maru Enquiry Committee No. 4465 A., dated the 3rd December 1914, which was sent by Sir William Vincent and other members of the Committee to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, The copy of the said paras is sent herewith. Also it is your duty to take the trouble of giving information with regard to the result of the Bengal Police enquiry about the looting of the ship treasure referred to in para 49 of the same report. The above mentioned things ought to be in the possession of Mr. Twynam, The committee's Secretary referred to in para 55 (of the said report). Please take the trouble of giving me the reply very soon, as it is necessary to send its report to the world's Board of Commerce. The copy will also be sent to the Government of India and to the British Parliament as well.

Yours sincerely,

PRESIDENT,
COMA GATA MARU.
(SRI GURU NANAK SHIP)

Mianwali Jail,
Dated 18. 3. 1923

P. D. 51.

Copy of the paras 2, 10, 17, 49 & 55 of the Report Koma Gata Maru Committee No. 4465 A dated 3rd December 1914.

* * * * *

PARA 2.

2. In order to obtain the eVidence on which this report is based we have held meetings at Calcutta and Budge Budge and also at Jullunder in the Punjab, in which province a number of the witnesses examined reside. We have held 27 sittings and examined 201 witnesses. Many of these witnesses had been examined by responsible authorities prior to our investigation, and where this was the case we have admitted the statements so made in evidence before us, but before doing so, We have in each case, where such a course was possible, caused the statement previously made to be read over to the witness and given him an opportunity of correcting it or adding to it. We have also visited the steamship Komagata Maru and the scene of the actual occurrence near Budge Budge station and have scrutinized a number of documents which throw much light on the questions under examination.

* * * * *

PARA 10.

The second suggestion is that Gurdit Singh conceived the whole of this scheme purely for his own pecuniary benefit and that he started proceedings by systematically misappropriati the money paid by the passengers, but we find no sufficient

evidence to support this allegation. There is no doubt that Gurdit Singh hoped to obtain considerable pecuniary advantage out of the venture, and if he had succeeded in effecting the entry of these immigrants into Canada within reasonable time he would probably have made a very large profit. The ordinary fare from Hong Kong to Vancouver is, as we are informed £10 and Gurdit Singh charged £20 per passenger. He hoped to book 500 passengers, the full complement of the ship being 533; if this number of tickets had been sold he would have realised 100,000 dollars out of the fares, against which he would have had to pay the cost of chartering the vessel for a couple of months, 22,000 dollars, plus the cost of coal, say 10,000 dollars, and of feeding the emigrants on the outward journey, say 10,000 more. Moreover, if the venture had succeeded, the number of passengers on subsequent voyages would have largely increased and the profits would have been proportionately greater. It is clear from the evidence that if he had been successful in the first voyage Gurdit Sing intended to return to Calcutta, and if he had done so he would certainly have been able to get a fresh complement of passengers there without difficulty. We are also inclined to the view that Gurdit Singh was largely actuated by the desire to pose as a political hero who had obtained for Indians the free right to enter Canada, which is now denied them, and if he had succeeded in securing the admission of the passengers by the Komagata Maru into Canada it appears that he would have been successful in both

of his main objects. In the result, however, his efforts to carry this difficult commercial enterprise to a successful termination were a complete failure, and we think in the circumstances that this was to be expected. For it appears that Gurdit Singh started on his venture with no capital and no knowledge of business methods or of accounts and book-keeping. Several books of account have been filed before us, and we have had them examined and have caused a complete translation to be made of one which purported to be the daily cash book. It is however, utterly unintelligible and kept in such a manner that it is impossible to get from it any accurate information as to the financial details of this enterprise. It also appears that the number of passengers was smaller than Gurdit Singh anticipated, and it is the promissory notes found on board are accepted as genuine documents they indicate that many of the intending immigrants were not able to pay the full amount of their fares in cash, as we find notes for nearly 24,000 dollars executed by various passengers for their dues on this account.

PARA 17.

It may here be noticed that in a description of this incident in a history of the voyage, compiled on board the Komagata Maru and found amongst the papers of Gurdit Singh this affray is referred to as a defeat inflicted on a man-of-war and army by unarmed Indians who only used coal to repel their assailants.

PARA 49.

We may now consider the incident referred to in paragraph

35, which is the subject of a police enquiry. It is in evidence that when the Komagatamaru came to Budge Budge there were in Gurdit Singh's safe on board the vessel considerable sums of money, including about £300 in gold, some Rs. 2,000 in Indian currency and a large roll of Japanese notes. The exact amount was unfortunately not ascertained, but the evidence of Mr. Petrie who saw the money in the safe is to the effect stated above. There is reason to believe that before disembarking Gurdit Singh distributed part of this money to some associates, including one man called Tehal Singh, and that Tehal Singh handed over a part or this whole of the sum so received to a Sikh named Nand Singh, who was subsequently arrested in Bhowanipore in the suburbs of Calcutta. A large sum of money was found on the person of this prisoner when arrested, including Rs. 1,025 in cash and a number of notes among which were 8 notes of a hundred yen each. The money given to Gurdit Singh by the Consul-General at Kobe was, it is believed, paid by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank in yen notes. On the Ist, 5th and 10th of October a Bombardier of the Royal Garrison Artillery, at present-attached to the wireless station in Fort William, where the Fusiliers are also stationed, cashed 29 hundred-yen notes of the approximate value of £290 at the Calcutta branch of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, receiving in exchange rupee-notes of various denomination, including a certain number of 100 rupee notes, the numbers of which are known. Five of these 100-rupee

notes have been traced to a poddar or moneychanger in the fort who deposes that he received them from four soldiers in the Royal Fusiliers. The soldiers who changed these notes signed their names in the note register of the poddar, but of the signatures, all except one, are denied by the persons whose names purport to be signed, and on a comparison of the actual signatures of these men with the signatures in the book we think that the signatures are probably forgeries. The signature in the register relating to the remaining note is admitted. This note was, as alleged received by a private in the Fusiliers from an European dressed in mufti at the regimental cofee shop in exchange for small notes. It is impossible at present to arrive at any definite decision as to the proper inferences to be drawn from this evidence, and the matter is still under police investigation.' We are informed that this police investigation will not be concluded for some time as efforts are being made to trace other notes issued by the bank in exchange for the 100-yen notes and to ascertain who actually changed the notes already traced with the podder It has been suggested that some of the soldiers on duty at Budge Budge looted the hundred-yen notes referred to from some of the Sikhs, There is, however, no evidence of this, and it is possible that the possession of the notes by the Bombardier may be accounted for in some satisfactory manner or that the notes were never the property of the Sikhs. We think, however, that the matter calls for most searching enquiry by the police,

and that the facts referred to above should be brought to the notice of Government. The only other mention of any attempt to loot is a statement by one witness that a European not in uniform was seen on the night of the occurrence putting his hand into a haversack lying on a bench near the level-crossing ; but this man has not been identified, and the story does not seem to us to be entirely above suspicion.

PARA 55.

In conclusion we desire to thank the Government of Bengal and the various officers whom we have had occasion to call before us for the assistance rendered to us in the course of this long and complicated inquiry. We also desire in particular to place on record our appreciation of the manner in which Mr. Twynam has performed his duties as Secretary to this Commitee. His services were placed at our disposal by the Bengal Government and the assistance he has rendered to us in our investigations has been invaluable.

True Copy.

P. D. 52.

Commissioner of Police, Calcutta.

Please wire what action re. my application to I. G. Police Bengal about Koma Gata Maru property

Sd. Gurdit Singh,
A. Class Prisoner.
31. 5. 1923.

Note : This Telegram I think was sent by Jail authosrities on 7th of June 1923.

P. D. 53.

Calcutta Police form No. 638 (new) 613 (Old).

CONFIDENTIAL.

D. O. No, 3361

1972-c.

Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police Special Branch, (14, Ellysium Row), Calcutta.

(Camac St. P. O.)

The 11th June 1923.

To

GURDIT SINGH,

"A" Class Prisoner,

Mianwali Jail,

C/o. The Inspector-General of Prisons.

Punjab, Lahore.

Reference—His Telegram dated the 7th inst.

He is informed that the previous petition was transferred to the Superintendent of Police, 24 Parganas, for disposal to whom further correspondence on the subject might be addressed. The present telegram is being also sent there.

Sd. F. W. Kidd.

Deputy Commissioner of Police.

Special Branch,

CALCUTTA.

A. C. I. P.—A 1137—28-2-1916—8916-4, 500.

P. D. 54.

Confidential

No. 1972-c.

Office of the Deputy Commissioner Police.
Special Branch, 14, Ellysium Row
CALCUTTA.
(Camac St. P. O.)
The 5th June 1925.

To

GURDIT SINGH,
"A" Class Prisoner,
Mianwali Jail,
C/o, Inspector-General of Prisons,
Lahore.

MEMOR.

His petition dated the 18 th March 1923 and subsequently Telegraphic reminder have been transferred to the Government of India, Home Department for disposal. Any further communication on the subject may be addressed to that Department.

Sd. F. W. KIDD,
Deputy Commissioner of Police,
Special Branch, Calcutta.

J. G. S.

(N. B. The letter was in typewriting).

P. D. 55.

00549.

POST TELEGRAPHS.

C.

Notice.	Charges to pay.
This form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this telegram.	Rs. As. Stamp.

Handed in at (Office of Origin). Date Hour Mts. 19. 17. 30. Words. 14.

Recd. hire at 21 H. 44 M.

To

GURDIT SINGH,
Mianwali Jail
C/o Prisons, Lahore.

Petition Transferred home
Department Simla.

Sd. SANOTUM.

N. B. The name of the sender, if telegraphed is written after the test.

Lal Chand & Sons. 3617—27. 2. 22—200,000 Bks.

True Copy of wire.

Note : 1. Was Telegram form.

2. The stamp was indistinct Lahore & June 23 could be made out only.

P. D. 56.

The Secretary, Govt. of India,
Home Department,
Simla.

DEAR SIR,

On the 18th March 1923, I applied to the Inspector General of Police Bengal copy of the letter enclosed (marked A) to kindly give me back my property taken charge of by the Police on 27. 9. 1914 at Budge Budge.

On 15. 6. 1923, the Deputy Commissioner of Police Special Branch, Calcutta replied that the matter has been referred to the Government of India. Home Depactment).

(Copy of his letter enclosed marked B)

I hope you will kindly arrange that my property is returned to me at an early date and oblige. Please reply by the return of post for which I shall bo thankful.

Mianwali Jail·
29. 6. 23

Yours
GURDIT SINGH.

P. D. 57.

Copy of memorandum No. 2236 S. Jails dated the 30th July 1923, from the Home Secretary to Government Punjab to the Inspector General of Prisons, Punjab.

Note—It appears that Jail authorities sent it on 10th July 1923

Reference your letter No 186–S. dated 10th July 1923, Gurdit Singh should be informed that the Police took charge of no property from the "Koma Gata Maru" The contents of the safe appear to have been removed by Gurdit Singh himself. The personal luggage of the passengers was sent to Ludhiana where most of it was claimed by the owners on their release. It is understood that the few articles remaining were of little value and were ultimately auctioned. It is too late now to establish any claim to such articles.

Copy made over to Special Class Prisoner Gurdit Singh for information.

Sd. Ramji Dass Rai Sahib,
Superintendent District Jail,
Mainwali
9. 8. 23

P. D. 56

The Home Secretary,
Government Punjab,
Simla.

SIR,

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of a copy of your letter No. S-2236 dated 30-7-23 through the supdt; Jail Mianwali and in reply I beg to say as follows :—

Your remark that the charge of my belongings of the ship Koma Gata Maru was not taken by the Police is wrong and if

need be I can prove the fact satisfactorily. The fact is that only Granth Sahib was taken out of the steamer and everything else was left in the charge of the Police.

You write in your letter that luggage of passengers was transferred to Ludhiana wherefrom most of it was delivered to the respective owners. With respect to this I draw your kind attention to my letter dated 18-3-23. As far as I know I have not asked you about the whereabouts of the luggage of my passengers. I only made enquiries about my goods referred in Official Report of the Steam Koma Gata Maru para 2, 10, 17 and 46 the copies of which have already been supplied with my letter dated 18. 3. 23. In connection of my enquiries about the goods I draw your special attention to the abstract of above-said paras enclosed herewith. Your remark that the luggage have been given to the passengers is not a satisfactory reply to my last letter. What I required from you was that how my articles including one iron safe with the money in it, Diary of the Ship, Hundis (promissory notes) worth 24,000 dollars, steamer account books, which I left with the Police at the time of my leaving the ship were disposed off. Along with a clear and a definite reply to my above enquiries, I would feel oblige if you very kindly send me a complete statement of the articles said to be auctioned out of my belongings. The statement should contain the names of the articles and persons to whom sold, the price fetched and the date when auctioned. I would be further obliged if you also let me know under the orders of which Court

the articles referred in your above letter were auctioned and when that order was passed and if this all has been done without the orders of any Court, then under what law ?

You write in your letter that it is too late on my part to institute any claim about my goods, in reply I would say that in the first place my claim is within time ; secondly it does not appear proper to raise such a technical objection on the part of of the Government, I would therefore be obliged if you kindly give a final and definite reply to my enquries.

I am yours,
Sir,
Sd. GURDIT SINGH,
Special Class Prisoner,
15. 8. 23.

P. D. 59.

Home Secretary,
Punjab, Lahore.

Your letter dated 30. 7. 23 in reply to Inspector General Prisons letter No. 186/S. dated 10. 7. 23 being unsatisfactory

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Note : No reply.

was again replied by my letter dated 15. 8. 23 A reply to which is anxiously awaited. Wire reply.

GURDIT SINGH,
Mianwali Jail,
C/o, The Superintendent,

15. 11. 23.

P. D. 60.

To

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB,
In Council, Lahore.

The petition of the undersigned Gurdit Singh. Most respectfully Sheweth :—

I. That on the 18th March 1923 your petitioner sent a letter to the Inspector General of Police Bengal (Copy enclosed marked "A") asking him on the basis of paras 2, 10, 17 & 49 of the report of "the Koma Gata Maru" Enquiry Committee No : 4465A—dated the 3rd December 1914, to give him back the property taken over charge by the Police from "the S. S. Koma Gata Maru."

II. That the Bengal Police forwarded his letter to the Secretary, Home Department Government of India. In reply

Note; No reply

he received a letter dated the 10th July 1923 from the Secretary, Home Department Government of the Punjab (Copy of letter enclosed marked "B"), informing him about the disposal of his property. As this reply was not satisfactory, your petitioner wrote another letter on the 5th August 1923 (Copy of letter enclosed marked "C") asking further about his property, no reply was given to this. On the 15th November 1923, he sent a telegraphic reminder (Copy enclosed marked "D"), this again remains unanswered.

III. That now your petitioner begs to bring the following to your kind notice :—

(a) That according to paras referred to above and other documents in his possession, it is quite clear that "Koma Gata Maru" property was taken charge of by the Police ; otherwise how could the Committee refer to documents etc., in third report ?

(b) That your petitioner had not asked for the luggage of the passengers, as the Home Secretary replies, but the property of the ship "Koma Gata Maru" referred to in official report in paraa 3, 10, 17 & 49.

(c) That your petitioner specially asked the Home Secretary about the iron safe with the money in it, Diary of the ship, and steamer account books etc. which are referred to in the paras mentioned above.

(d) Tbat he asked about the hundies (promissory

notes) for 24,000 dollars which are referred to in para 10 of the said report.

(e) That there was nothing in the reply of the Home Secretary as regards the results of the Police enquiry about the loot at Budge Budge as referred to in para 49 of the said report.

(f) That the list of the property auctioned, the copies of the orders of the authorities who ordered the auction and the law under which the order for auction was given have not yet been supplied to your petitioner and no reason given for the same.

(g) That your petitioner's claim was within the time limit and it was not proper for a high Government Official to raise such technical objections when dealing with a man like your petitioner who has suffered so much.

IV. That in the end your petitioner most earnestly requests Your Excellency to kindly order the full investigation of his case. Your Excellency, by a perusal of the paras of the "Koma Gata Maru" report referrence to above, shall be convinced that your ,,etitioner has been dealt with most carelessly, if not dishonestly, by the officers concerned. In the interest of Justice and fair play and to save the reputation of the British Administration, it is necessary that his property be given back to him and no 'prevcrication or false excuses be allowed. Your petitioner hopes that an early and favourable settlement would

be made of his case or he should be allowed to approch His Excellency the Viceroy on the subject. He is prepared to substantiate his allegation by documentry evidence in his possession, and also by the evidence of the members of the "Koma Gata Maru Enquiry Cemmittee" before whom the Police produced the property referred to in the patition.

For an early reply shall feel highly obliged.

Beg to remain,

Sir

Your most obedint petitioner,

Sd. GURDIT SINGH,

Special Class Prisoner,

District Jail,

Mianwali.

Mianwali

Dated 22nd January 1924.

P. D. 61.

Copy of a memorandum No. 29663. Jails dated the 7th December 1923, from the Home Secretary to Government Punjab, to the Inspector General of Prisons, Punjab.

Reference your letter No. 211-c dated
3rd December 1923.

In reply to Gurdit Singh's letter dated 15th Augost 1923, which was addressed to the Inspector General of Police, B. Randhir Singh's original receipt for the trunk seized by the Police was sent to the Superintendent Mianwali Jail, for Inspection by Gurdit Singh. It was returned by the Superintendent Mianwali Jail, with his letter No. 141/C dated 22. 9. 1923 Presumably Gurdit Singh saw it and his telegram is not understood.

Copy of endorsement No. 1/C dated 2nd January 1924, from from the Inspector General of Prisons, Punjab, to the Superintendent District Jail Mianwali.

Copy forwarded to the Superintendent District Jail Mianwali for information in continuation of this office endorsement No. 1212-c dated 3rd December 1923.

Copies of the foregoing made over to special class prisoner Gurdit Singh for information.

Sd. Ramji Dass Rai Sahib,
Superintendent Jail,
23. 1. 24.

P. D. 62

To

The Home Secretary,
Government Punjab,
Lahore.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of your letter 29663 Jails, dated 17. 12. 23 addressed to the I. G. Prisons, Punjab and delivered to me by the local Jail authorities on the

23rd January 1924. In this letter you have written about my trunk and its receipt etc. and that you could not understand my telegram dated 15th November 1923. In reply I beg to refer my letter dated 15th August addressed to you regarding the belongings of the Komagatamaru referred to in paras 2, 10, 17 and 49 of the Official report of the said ship. I further wish to bring to your kind notice that your long silence on the matter has caused me to write to H. E. in Concil on the matter. I hope you would be kind enough to take special pain in this case and would save unnecessary trouble. Regarding my telegram said to be not understood I beg to inform you that this was a reminder to my letter dated 15th August 1923, regarding the property of the Komagatamaru and not about the trunk referred to by you.

An early reply and settlement in the matter would highly oblige.

Sd. GURDIT SINGH.

25. 1. 1924.

P. D. 63.

WIRE.

H. E. Governor, Lahore.

DRAW YOUR KIND ATTENTION MY PETITION 22nd JANUARY. EARLY REPLY REQUESTED.

Sd. Gurdit Singh,
C/O, The Superintendent.
Mianwali District Jail.

Written on :— 1. 4. 1924
Sent on : — 2. 4. 1924

P. D. 64.

Letter received by Superintendent from I. G. P. Punjab to say that it is useless for him to send further letters and telegrams to Government with regard to his "Komagatamaru" claims as he has already been furnished all the information that can be given on the subject.

Sd. GURDIT SINGH.

Note: 1. The signature appearss to be of J. Fordum. the Superintendent
2. The signature is made such that it cannot be made out.
3. The above letter was enterned in Baba Gurdit Singh's history tract of Mianwali Jail on 13 4 24.

P. D. 65.

Copy of telegram sent by me to the Deputy Commissioner of Police Special Branch, Calcutta.

WILL YOU GIVE MY IRON SAFE RECOVERED FROM KOMAGATAMARU AND OPENED BY POLICE IN LALBAZAR JULY LAST. IF NOT WHY.

GURDIT SINGH,
Special Class Prisoner,
Mianwali Jail,.

Dated 20. 12. 1924.

P. D. 66.

Copy of Reply to the above.

Calcutta 29th December 1924.

GURDIT SINGH-JAIL MIANWALI.
IRON SAFE SOLD PUBLIC AUCTION
AS UNCLAIMED.

SANCTUM.

P. D. 68.

28th February 1925.

To

The Secretary,

Government nf Bengal.

Baba Gurdit Singh,

Agt.

The Secretary of state for India

in Council.

Dear Sir,

Under instructions from our client Baba Gurdit Singh son of Baba Hookum Singh, Resident of Sirhali Kalan, District Amritsar and now a prisoner, special class in Jail, Mianwali, Punjab, we send you herewith a copy of the Plaint, which our client filed against the Secretary of State for India in Council unless the Secretary of State for India in Council pay to our client the value of the goods particularly mentioned in the said Plaint. The cause of action of our client, name of our client, description and place of residence of our client and the reliefs sought for by our client are given in the said copy of the plaint.

Your faithfully,

Sd. K. K. Dutt & Co.

Suit No. 1125 of 1925.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL. ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION.

BABA GURDIT SINGH, son of Baba Hookum Singh, resident of Sirhali Kalan, District Amritsar, and now a Prisoner, Special Class in Jail, Mianwali, Punjab.....Plaintiff.

Vs.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA IN COUNCIL.....DEFENDANT,

The Plaintiff above named states as follows :—

1. In 1914 the plaintiff started the scheme of Sri Guru Nanak Steamer Company with the object of carrying imigrants and other passengers to Canada and it was a commercial venture of great profit.

2. On the 24th March 1914 in pursuance of the said Scheme and as part thereof the plaintiff chartered a steamship named "Komagatamaru" at Hongkong and equipped and fitted up the said steamer for carrying imigrants and other passengers to Canada.

3. The said steamer arrived at the mouth of Hooghly on the 26th September 1914 with many passengers on board the said steamer.

4. At the time of tho arrival of the said steamer as afore said the plaintiff had on board the said steamer belonging to him many moveables including cash, iron safe, account books, furniture and Hundies of the value of about Rs. 2,50,000/—

5. On the 27th the Government of Bengal at Calcutta through the Police seized and took possession of and brought to Calcutta from the said steamer the said cash iron safe, account books, furnitures and Hundies belonging to the plaintiff and detained the same inspite of the plaintiffs protests.

6. The said Government of Bengal received the said properties of the plaintiff and held the same for and on behalf of the plaintiff and it was its duty to keep the same for the plaintiff until called for by the plaintiff. In the premises as aforesaid the said properties became vested in the plaintiff and plaintiff, and the said Government of Bengal recognised that it was holding the properties in that capacity.

7. The said Government of Bengal assumed the said trust and in pursuance thereof appointed an enquiry committee and also held a Police enquiry with reference to the said properties, but the plaintiff is now aware of the results of the said enquiries. The said properties were produced before the said enquiry committee and the plaintiff states that the said enquiry commi-

ttee received and took possession of and detained the same in trust the same to the plaintiff.

8. The said Government of Bengal and the said enquiry committee had filed and neglected to return the said properties to the plaintiff though repeatedly called for by the plaintiff.

9. On or about the 30th July 1923 the Government wrongfully took up an adverse attitude with reference to the plaintiff's claim to the said properties and ultimately in April 1924 wrongfully and finally rejected the said claim of the plaintiff to the said properties altogether.

10. On landing on shore from on board the said steamer the plaintiff and the other passengers of the said steamer were attacked by the Police without any justification whatsover and there after the Police continued a wrongful threatening attitude with the result that the plaintiff had to remain in exile for about 8 years. After plaintiff came out of the said forced exile the plaintiff was put into prison and he is still detained there.

11. The plaintiff was accordingly altogether precluded from enforcing his claim against the defendant so long. In any event the plaintiff states that he could not have enforced his claim against the defendant before the 28th Febuary 1922 when the Ingress of India Ordinance elapsed.

12. A notice in writing for the said claim of the plaintiff

Sec. 80, of the C. P. C. has been duly delivered to the Secretary to Bengal Government.

13. The plaintiff's cause of action arose in Calcutta in April 1924 and thereafter is not barred by limitation.

14. The plaintiff has been advised to take leave under clause 12 of the Charter to institute this suit in this Hon'ble Court in as much as it may be contended that part of the cause of action arose outside Calcutta.

The plaintiff therefore prays for :—

(i) Leave as aforesaid.

(ii) A declaration that the said properties belong to the plaintiff.

(iii) For an enquiry as to the nature and value of the said properties.

(iv) Decree for return of the said properties, or

(v) Costs of this suit.

(vi) Such further and other orders as to this Hon'ble Court may seem fit and proper.

Drawn by,

Mr. S. C. Roy.

Settled by

N. N. Sircar.

Suit No. 1128 of 1925.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL, ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION.

BABA GURDIT SINGH, son of Baba Hookum Singh, resident of Sirhali Kalan, District Amritsar, and now a Prisoner, Special Class in Jail, Mianwali, Punjab.....Plaintiff.

Vs.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA IN COUNCIL.....DEFENDANT,

WRITTEN STATEMENT on behalf of the Secretary of State for India in Council.

The Defendant abovenamed states as follows :—

1. The Defendant is advised and submits that this Hon'ble Court has no jurisdiction to entertain this suit.

2. The Defendant is further advised and submits that the Plaint as framed discloses no cause of action against him.

3. Relying on the above contentions and not waiving the same the defendant pleads to the facts of this case.

4. The defendant has no knowledge of the facts alleged in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the plaint.

5. The defendant denies that the plaintiff's moveables on board the steamer including cash, iron safe, account-books, furniture and hoondies were of the value of Rs. 2,60,000/— as alleged in paragraph 4 of the plaint.

6. With reference to the statements made in paragraph 5 of the plaint, the defendant denies that the Government of Bengal through the Police seized the cash, iron safe, account books, furniture and hoondies at Calcutta or elsewhere. He denies that the said Government of Bengal took possession of any of the articles at any time or brought them to Calcutta or detained them inspite of protests except the iron safe which was abandoned on board the vessel and which was subsequently sold as unclaimed property by the Government.

7. The defendant denies the allegations in paragraph 6 of the Plaint. The Government of Bengal never received any of the said articles except the iron safe. He denies that any of the properties became vested in the Government of Bengal in trust or otherwise. He further denies that there was any recognition of any trust by the said Government of Bengal.

8. With regard to the statements made in paragraph 7 of the Plaint, the defendant denies that the Government of Bengal assumed any trust or that any enquiry committee was appointed in pursuance of any assumption of any trust as untruly alleged therein. He denies that any of the properties except the iron safe were produced before the said Committee. He further denies that the said Committee received or took possession of or detained the same in trust or otherwise for any purpose whatever.

9. Without prejudice to this contentions, the defendant is ready and willing to pay the price (realised by the sale of) of the

iron safe to the plaintiff. He denies any liability either in Government of Bengal or in the said enquiry committee to do so.

10 The defendant denies that the Government of Bengal took up any adverse attitude wrongfully or otherwise on the 30th July 1923 or any other date whatever or rejected any rightfull claim of the plaintiff.

11. The defedant denies the statement in paragraph 10 of the Plaint. The attack by the Police was not without justification or was the alleged exile of the plaintiff due to any wrongful attitude continued by the Police. He denies that the alleged exile was for 8 years. In fact the plaintiff was a fugitive from justice.

12. The defendant is advised and submits that the plaintiff's claim is barred by the law of limitation of actions and is not sustainable.

13. That defendant denies the validity of the excuse put forward by the plaintiff in paragraph 11 of the plaint or that he had any excuse at all.

14. The defendant denies that the plaintiff has any cause of action against him or that it arose in April 1924 and submits that this suit should be dismissed as vexatious and frivolous.

Sd. G. C. Gooding,
Defendant's Attorney.
Settled by Mr. B. L. Mitter,
Advocate General.

It will not be possible for the Police to deny that they laid no hand on my goods that were in the Kamagatamaru. The proof has been admitted before the Enquiry Committee, the existence of Hundies and the Yen note affair in Fort William which came out before the public.

I value my property taken charge by Police not less than two and half lakhs and for this I have taken a case in the Calcutta High Court against the Secretary of State for India. But it seems knocking my head against the rock of British Justice.

The Government is bent on ruining me, and with all my evidential papers with Government, and myself reduced to most pecuniary embarrasment, where is the hope for me to fight a successful case against the mighty British India Government ?

If the Government will only read Sir Wm. Vincent's report where my property is mentioned and as the said property was not confiscated, why do the Government hesitate to return the property to the rightful owner ?

It is not justice to keep another man's property in your possession without any reason merely because you are a mighty Government.

In a letter dated 30th July 1923 the Punjab Home Department denies having taken any of my property and vide case No. 1125/1925 para 6. In more than one place the Government admits having taken charge of my property and in another place it denies.

Once more I appeal for the sake of public peace of mind and openly ask the Government to go into the affairs of the Komagatamaru when I am available to give evidence and to return my property unlawfully seized.

It is difficult to say what will be the findings of the Court in the above case about which readers will be informed later on.

The Enquiry Committee's Report clearly states the quantity of the property brought before them by the police and on the other hand the Goverment Lawyer denies the existance of any property but I do not desire to touch this subject any further but would appeal to those Countrymen of mine who has the welfare of their motherland at heart to respond to this noble object. After countless sufferings and prosecutions, after losing all my worldly possessions and at such an advanced age of 70 years I am still at the helm and would not prefer any other death but in harness of my country. Would you not follow my example youths and wealthy of my beloved land ?

Assist us by any means you can to fit up a Steamship Company whereby we can assist our poor countrymen to go to foreign shores and learn and earn and come back better men.

Brazil wants you. This will be a befitting memorial to those grandmen who after endless sufferings gave their lives at Budge Budge. I appeal to you very strongly and ask for funds though however little they be to make this project a success.

The Direction General of Service of Population
RIO DE JANEIRO,
BRAZIL.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your rules and regulations for immigrants through kind favour of Mr. Chander L. Singh of Brazil for which I thank him.

I find in your regulation Decree No. 4247 that you have provided many facilities for agriculturists immigrants to Brazil. I or my committee is in position to send out to Brazil lacks of Indian agriculturists to organize the farms and settle up in the National territory of Brazil, but we are afraid to attempt to send them out to Brazil when we review the treatment meted out to Indians by other colonies, for instance I would point out that in Africa and other colonies Indians went and established themselves undergoing lots of hardships in cutting up the jungles, suffering from bad climates and thus sacrificing the lives of thousands who were killed while undergoing various hardships and when the time came that they could lead a happy life, the Government of Africa formed such rules and laws by which Indians were deprived of their rights. Taking such examples before us we wish to have a definite assurance that the Indians' rights in the National territory of Brazil will be retained as shown in your regulations in the coming future.

I trust that you will let me have a kind reply on the subject at an early date and will give a favourable consideration to the following questions and advise accordingly.

1. Whether Europeans, Asiatics, and particularly Indians will be given the same privileges in all respects whatsoever, and will have the same rights, or there is any difference in rights, privileges and treatment with any particular nationality mentioned above, and if there is then what and why ?

2. Can you give us any assurance that no laws will be formed in coming future which may deprive Indian immigrants of their rights in the National territory in Brazil (As they have been deprived of in Affica or other colonies.)

3. Can you give us an assurance that there will be no objection for an Indian steamship company to bring their steamers to Brazil and load and land cargo, passengers to and from any port of Brazil and that the Brazilian authorities will assist in such trade.

4. Vide your Art No : 3 of Decree No : 4247, any foreiner who is in the National territory of Brazil for a period of over five years becomes a citizen. Can you give us any assurance as to the Indians after five years when they become Brazilian subjects and citizens will be given the situations and rights of Counsils etc., according to their qualifications and will have the same privileges as of Brazilians in the Government constitution, and if not why ?

We request you to give a due considertion to the above questions because those intended immigrants will come to your country, will have to leave their mother land with the object of settling up for good at the National territory of Brazil, therefore our committee feels it their duty to discuss and settle up

the troubles and difficulties which may come between their happiness in the coming future.

We understand from your rules of reception and lodging of immigrants in the port of Rio de Jeniero that you have interpreters speaking several languages, therefore we have the pleasure in enclosing herewith a pamphlet issued (In Punjabi language) and distributed in millions by our committee with the results that lacks of agriculturists are at our disposal willing to go to Brazil awaiting instructions from us.

If you approve the aforesaid questions No : 1 to 5 we shall be glad to receive an official sanction from you as many agriculturists immigrants you will require or allow so that we may get busy at an early date. We only await your favourable sanction and we assure you that we have lacks of agriculturists to place at your disposal.

We further wish to advise you that before the first trips of immigrants is shipped, our committee propose to send out three representatives to visit the National territory of Brazil. These three representatives may be sent out to Brazil before the immigrants are shipped or with the first batch of immigrants, and trust that the Brazilian authorities will assist these representatives during their stay and visit to National territory of Brazil in obtaining whatever further information they may require.

Awaiting an early kind reply.

Yours faithfully,

32, Asutosh Mukherjee Road,
Calcutta.
(INDIA.)

Sd. (Baba) Gurdit Singh,

It is difficult to say now what will be the decision of the Court in my case against the Secretary of State for India for the recovery of Rs. 2,50,000/- or what will be the fate of the scheme of establishing a steamship service between India and Brazil for the purpose of trade and Immigration for which I have been trying. In part III of this Book which will be published in the near future, I shall enlighten my readers as to the fate of my case and the scheme. My heart now beats easy to realise that to some extent I have done my duty to my brave comrades who fell at Budge Budge by exposing the methods by which they came to their early end.

I would record here my greatest appreciation of those of my dearest friends who freely, without any grudge gave their valuable time in assisting to put these pages together.

Once more I ask my readers, to give their suggestion or point out any errors that they might come across so that future editions may be corrected and improved.

Part three of this volume which will follow will contain life sketches of the heroes who fell at Budge Budge, of those who became fugitives after the shootings at that place. How with wounds still bleeding, with bullets still in their bodies, with sword cuts, clothless, without food trying hard to swim across rivers like Ganges and Sone with police bands close behind chasing them like a hunter pursuing victims. Part three will tell the blood curdling stories of the Komagatamaru passengers' sufferings in prisons also stories of those noble souls like

Sardar Balwant Singh, Sardar Kartar Singh and others, who, after learning the massacre of their friends at Budge Budge came out to the motherland from free America to avenge on behalf of their fallen comrades but had themselves to go to the gallows.

May I hope the government will learn a little lesson from the story of their sufferings? May I hope the sad story of the 'Komagatamaru' passengers which I have related, relent some proud officer's heart to deal more patiently with the suffering Indian humanity? I stand ready to substantiate word by word the happenings herein recorded. I have living witnesses, I have documents and other proofs to lay before any impartial Judge willing to go over the 'Komagatamaru' details.

Part three will also relate the part taken by Indians in the new world to assist the movement for freedom financially and by all other possible ways.

This portion of the book will also advance ideas as to how and when probably India will be "India for Indians": The writer regretfully have to mention that there might be delay in putting part three into the hands of the Public for want of sufficient funds and the Author will greatfully accept assistance from any quarter in order to accomplish this book with all possible haste.

The following lines should have come earlier in the book but through an oversight they were omitted. Considering them as very essential I insert them at the end :—