

TURBANED HINDUS FILL POLICE COURT

----- **NOVELTIES IN OATHS** -----

**Diverse Ways of Swearing In Sons of India --
Difficulties of Interpretation – Case Was Finally
Adjourned – Lights and Shadows of To-day's Session.**

The proceedings of the Police Court this morning were of a highly picturesque nature by reason of the large attendance of Hindus who were interested in the charges made by Rooh Mohammed against Dr. Davichand of obtaining money under false pretences.

There was trouble from the very first, an interpreter who had been brought from New Westminster failing to show even ordinary intelligence in the taking of the oath. Finally Dr. Davichand allowed Mohammed Khen, who seemed to have the direction of the prosecution, to act as interpreter.

A discussion as to the manner of taking the oath followed, in which the magistrate wanted the rule laid down by Crankshaw followed, but the interpreter brushed that authority to one side and unfolded the correct method. This consisted in kissing the Koran three times, touching the forehead with the book after each osculation. Later a Sikh took the stand and refused this form, saying he believed in one God. Then Mohammed unfolded another style of oath in the form of a simple declaration.

Demanded Payment of \$5.

The allegation of the prosecution was to the effect that Dr. Davichand has been prosecuting a regular system of extracting money from Hindus coming to this country representing himself as a doctor, and threatening them

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that he would have them sent back if they did not pay. Rooh Mohammed, the informant, said he came to Vancouver last May, and after the goro (white) doctor had passed him, Davichand demanded \$5 from him, saying he would have him sent back if he did not pay. Being afraid, he paid the money, as did also some of his companions.

The cross-examination of Mr. T. S. Baxter, who appeared for Dr. Davichand, was directed to the end that the payment was made for services in interpreting the commands of the white doctor for the securing of employment, but the witness positively denied both points.

Mr. Baxter then attempted to show that the information was laid under the influence of the man acting as interpreter, and an interesting passage occurred between the pair. Dr. Davichand, who was checking up the translation closely, said the interpreter was not saying what the witness said.

"I swear on my Bible. I cut off my head, if I not speak the truth," the Mohammed exclaimed, with emphatic gestures.

Two other witnesses from the same vessel gave similar evidence, the last adding that Davichand said, he had a Government order.

Scene Changed to Victoria.

Then the sphere of operations was changed to Victoria, and two Sikhs who came over on the last Empress alleged that Davichand met the liner there and demanded \$3 from each of the fifty-two men on board. His fees he said were \$2 and \$1 for his fare. If the men paid they would get through at Vancouver all right, but if they did not, they would be liable to be sent back. Some of the men paid at Victoria, and others at Vancouver. All were afraid they would be sent back. The last witness said Davichand said there was lots of trouble for the men who did not pay.

Mr. Baxter asked that the case be dismissed on the ground that no false representation had been made. Davichand had simply promised to interpret

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for the men when they were before the immigration doctor, and was around to act in that capacity when the vessel came to the wharf.

Mr. Bowser, K. C., for the prosecution, claimed that the representation of Davichand as a doctor was of the utmost consequence, inasmuch as the men knew that they were to be examined, and feared being sent back. His going to Victoria, where he boarded the vessel, also showed the systematic manner in which he was prosecuting the work.

The defence was directed to produce its witnesses, and after the examination of several, following the line noted by the cross-examination of the prosecution's witnesses, the case was adjourned for further hearing.