

THE DAILY PROVINCE, VANCOUVER, BRITISH
COLUMBIA DECEMBER 21, 1908

TEJA SINGH ASPIRES TO BE MOSES AMONG THE SIKHS

Plans to Lead Ten Thousand of Them Into Land of
Cotton.

WILL NOT VIOLATE LAWS

Scheme Aided by California Man Who Is Now in
Vancouver.

Ten thousand Sikhs from Northern India are to be located on the plantations of the southern states, especially Louisiana, where labor conditions are said to be very favorable. This is the ambitious project Teja Singh, the leader of the local East Indian colony, plans to carry out during the coming year. Although the details are withheld for the present, Teja Singh declares that the letter and spirit of the contract labor law prohibiting the importation of aliens under contract into the United States will not be violated.

He is receiving the co-operation of Mr. T. C. Crawford of 2028 Summit avenue, Pasadena, Cal., who registered from London, England, at the Hotel Vancouver last Monday. Mr. Crawford endeavored to make it quite clear that his motives in the matter are purely altruistic and disinterested. He has had numerous conferences with the Sikh leader since his arrival in Vancouver.

Not Revolutionist.

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Mr. Crawford is a middle-aged man of quite distinguished appearance. He has a florid complexion, clear piercing eyes and grey hair and moustache. Until yesterday his mission was apparently shrouded in mystery. Mr. Crawford did not mingle with the other guests, and maintained an impenetrable reserve.

When interviewed by the Province he laughed(Sic) very heartily at the idea that he was in some way connected with the revolutionary movement in India. His association with Teja Singh was readily explained. They had become acquainted in London, England. He did not hesitate to speak enthusiastically about the high-mindedness of his friend. Of course, he intended to do all in his power to assist the movement for establishing Sikh colonies(Sic) in the southern states, especially Louisiana. There the field for good labor was almost illimitable. Negroes are so lazy that they give no satisfaction, and are being rapidly displaced by Italian(?) immigrants. He sympathized with the keen struggle for existence among the millions in India, and regarded the Sikhs as ideally adapted for work on the rice and sugar plantations.

Mr. Crawford described himself as a mining promoter, operator and investor. His associates are American and English capitalists. He is interested in Alaska and California. His impressions of British Columbia are of the most favorable character, and it is not improbable that he may extend his hold of operations here. Mr. Crawford controls capital; all he requires is a meritorious mining proposition. In the York district, northwest of Nome, a company with which he is identified has spent considerable operating a placer tin property. Costs of extraction were found to be expensive, but it is hoped that the ledge itself will be discovered after further exploration. American and French capital is(?) interested with him in a freemilling(Sic) gold proposition that is now being developed near Jacksonville, California.

To Establish Stores.

“The Sikh is of an adventurous nature. With proper direction and encouragement he is not afraid to venture into strange lands to better his

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condition," said Teja Singh in admitting that he had originated and was promoting the project for transplanting thousands of his countrymen to the salubrious climate of Louisiana. He was insistent that this enterprise, inspired with the object of bettering their welfare, would not conflict with the United States immigration laws. The Sikhs are an agricultural people and it is believed they will solve a labor problem that has bothered southern planters for years.

Teja Singh is enthusiastic about the possibilities of his new mining and trust company. A general brokerage business(Sic) will be transacted and stores for the sale of East Indian food as well as Oriental novelties will be established in British Columbia. The company is also authorized to sell shares in other companies. Already East Indians, under his advice, have made investments in a California mining proposition.