

US Immigration

Department of Commerce and Labor
BUREAU OF
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION
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VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1914.

Toronto.

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THE HINDU IMMIGRANTS.

While the disposition of the Hindus who have been brought here by Gurdit Singh is an affair to be discussed with some reserve as a semi-judicial matter before a departmental court, the enterprise presents some aspects which may be reviewed. The Hindu magnate, who has taken it upon himself to bring to Canada some hundreds of persons whom the regulations of this country exclude, seems to have acquired the belief that British citizenship alone confers the right to go to any part of the empire and settle there. No such right exists. Last year 175 British citizens, of whom 16, were from the British Islands, were rejected at Canadian ports and returned to their homes. In the year before 237 British citizens from Great Britain were not permitted to land. Rejected persons from Australia, Newfoundland, the West Indies and other British countries brought the number up to 252. In addition 540 immigrants from the British Islands were deported after landing in 1912. The number so deported in 1913 was 359. These were people born in Great Britain and of European races. Their British citizenship gave them no licence to come to Canada and remain here.

Before this episode is concluded Gurdit Singh will have gathered some information which may be of value to him. He will learn among other things that a wealthy Hindu with a shipload of his countrymen will have no more influence in changing the policy of Canada than the poorest Hindu would exercise if he came alone.

KOMOGATA MARU
LEAVES FOR HERE

Acting Under Instructions From
Ottawa and Satisfying Him-
self That All Are Well Dr.
Nelson Grants Pratique.

FATE OF CONTINGENT
TO BE DECIDED HERE

All Hindus on Board Are Being
Vaccinated on Way From
Victoria—Vessel Is Due to
Anchor Early This Morning.

Special to the News-Advertiser.

Victoria, May 22.—Acting under instructions from Ottawa, Dr. H. R. Nelson, medical superintendent at the William Head quarantine station, boarded the Komagata Maru at 5 o'clock this afternoon, and after satisfying himself that all on board were in good health, granted the vessel pratique.

By 7 o'clock the Komagata Maru was under way for Vancouver where the ultimate fate of Gurdit Singh and his company of 375 Hindus will be decided.

One of the provisions in the cabled instructions was that each of the Hindus must be vaccinated and this operation was carried out by the ship's doctor during the passage of the vessel up the gulf.

Mr. H. W. Gwyther, one of the Dominion official interpreters, and two members of the local immigration staff, made the trip from William Head to Vancouver aboard the Komagata Maru and will remain aboard until the vessel is boarded early tomorrow by the Terminal City immigration authorities.

To Complete Arrangements.

Mr. Malcolm Reid, Superintendent of Immigration at Vancouver, and Mr. W. C. Hopkinson, head Dominion interpreter on this coast, returned to Vancouver from this city this afternoon to complete arrangements for the reception of the ship.

When the Komagata Maru put to sea from Japan she cleared from Yokohama for Vancouver, and under these circumstances, it was considered advisable by the authorities at Ottawa to allow the vessel to proceed to her port of destination.

At Moji and other ports of call in the Orient the Komagata Maru failed to secure a clean bill of health, and, upon being apprised of this fact, Dr. Nelson refused to clear the ship at William Head until he had communicated with Ottawa.

He immediately dispatched a telegram to Dr. Montizambert, Director-General of Public Health at Ottawa, informing that minister of the circumstances connected with the departure of the Komagata Maru from Moji.

Clean Bill of Health.

A clean bill of health was secured at Yokohama, which was the last port touched at by the Komagata Maru before setting out on her history-making voyage to Canada.

In replying to Dr. Nelson's message, Dr. Montizambert gave the necessary authority for the clearance of the ship providing that all aboard were in good health.

Following the arrival of the Komagata Maru at Vancouver, Gurdit Singh, the leader of the invading contingent, is determined to fight the cause of his compatriots to the bitter end and before the matter is disposed of it is expected that a lengthy legal battle will be waged in the Canadian courts.

"We are British citizens and we consider we have a right to visit any part of the Empire," said Gurdit Singh from

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KOMOGATA MARU LEAVES FOR HERE

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the main deck when asked by a representative of "The News-Advertiser" the reasons that prompted the chartering of the Komagata Maru.

To Be Test Case.

"We are determined to make this a test case and if we are refused entrance into your country, the matter will not end there.

"Other boats will be chartered and my people will continue to cross the Pacific until we secure what we consider to be our just rights."

Asked what course he intended to pursue, Gurdit Singh remarked that the whole question would be fought out in the Canadian courts and he appeared to be sanguine as to the outcome.

On the other hand, the immigration authorities do not see where the East Indians have a leg to stand on. Dr. Milne, head of the immigration service here, is of the opinion that the party will be sent back to the Orient.

There are 22 East Indians aboard the Komagata Maru claiming to be return men and if they can substantiate their claim by means of identification papers they will be allowed to land.

Gurdit Singh hails from the Indian province of Lahore. He is a man of splendid physique and speaks the English language fluently.

Two Women Aboard.

He is accompanied by his wife and seven-year-old son. Two East Indian women were aboard the vessel, the other being the wife of Dr. Raghubath, the medical officer who came out with the Indian contingent.

It was discovered by the William Head medical officials following the arrival of the Komagata Maru, that she carried no manifests. Forms were supplied by the local immigration men with instructions to have them filled out by the time the vessel reaches Vancouver.

Of the 376 on board none of them made the direct passage from India. They made the trip from Calcutta to the Orient in small companies during the

present year. Practically every class of East Indian is represented in the complement aboard the Komagata Maru.

All possess the necessary money qualifications and each presents a cheerful front as to the possible outcome of their voyage of adventure.

"I have received an intimation from Mr. Malcolm Reid of the Immigration Department here, that he will meet me tomorrow morning between nine and ten o'clock and go aboard the Komagata Maru with me. My first object is to get in touch with Captain Yamamoto, who is in command," explained Mr. C. Gardner-Johnson, to whose firm the vessel—but not the Hindus aboard—is consigned, when seen by a "News-Advertiser" representative yesterday with reference to the arrival of the Japanese vessel. "I imagine that she will anchor in the stream," he added. Mr. Gardner-Johnson estimated that the Maru would arrive between 3 and 4 a.m.

Immigration officials are making every preparation to see that the Hindus do not make a forced landing from the Komagata Maru. It is expected the boat will berth at the Johnson wharf at 3 o'clock this morning. Inspector Reid has secured a number of rifles for his men and the harbor will be patrolled by gasoline launches to see that none of the Hindus escapes from the boat. A detail of Vancouver city policemen will guard the landward side in the neighborhood of the Johnson wharf in case trouble should break out.