

THE ARRESTED RUSSIANS

POLICE COURT PROCEEDINGS.

SARAH LIGUM'S EVIDENCE.

MAREN AND THE ANARCHISTS.

FURTHER ADJOURNMENT.

Testimony of an interesting nature was given yesterday at the City Police Court, before Mr. A. S. Roe, P.M., when the further hearing took place of the evidence against the two Russians, August Maren and Frederick Johnson, charged with having on or about April 20 last, at Doodlakine, conspired together to cause Johnson in the course of a hearing against Ernest Dreger, at Kellerberrin, to wilfully swear that he (Dreger) went to Kellerberrin for the especial purpose of obtaining a gun. Detective-Sergeant Mann prosecuted, and accused were undefended.

Sarah Ligum stated that she was 19 years of age, and at present lived at the Salvation Army Home, Lincoln-street. She knew both accused, who had resided at her mother's home in London, Maren by the name of Yahnst Jansen and Johnson as George Rosenberg. They, at one time, worked in a London rubber factory. Witness attended a club in Jubilee-street, London, several times in company with Maren. Johnson also went to the club. She attended another meeting elsewhere, at which a Frenchman, who spoke in the Lettish language, and Maren, addressed those present. The witness Dreger was known to her, she having met him at her mother's home in London, where he appeared to be friendly with Maren. She detailed Dreger's movements prior to his leaving for Australia, and added that it was arranged that she should follow him at a later date and be married to him. Witness and Maren asked Dreger to take Johnson with him to Australia, and they both departed from England by the same vessel. About a fortnight before Christmas, 1910, Maren left witness's mother's house and went to live with a man named Muller in the East End of London. She knew a Jew named Louis Erberg, alias Leide, who told witness's mother that he intended informing the police that Maren helped the Anarchists. Witness and Maren and Dreger's two brothers received tickets and money from Dreger to enable them to travel to Australia. Before the Hounditch murder Maren was still living at witness's mother's house, but after it he removed to Muller's residence. Dreger met the party on their arrival at Fremantle, and took them to Kellerberrin, where they met Peter Older and Johnson. Prior to her leaving London, Maren told witness that his correct name was August Maren. She lived with E. Dreger at Kel-

witess that his correct name was August Maren. She lived with E. Dreger at Kellerberrin, and he told her that she must not speak to either Johnson or Maren, but she ignored this. Dreger had a single-barrelled gun in his camp, which he took with him to Doodlakine. He (Dreger) was not too friendly with Maren over witness. Witness corroborated a portion of the evidence previously given, and said that after Dreger was sentenced to three months' imprisonment he sent a communication to her requesting her to keep his brothers away from Maren, Johnson, and Peter Older. Maren afterwards told witness that Dreger had gone to prison for threatening to shoot Johnson, and witness then left the camp and had since been at the Salvation Army Home.

Accused Maren explained that the meeting which he addressed in London, and to which the witness had referred, was a gathering of a party (branch of a social and democratic club), and he had commented on a lecture delivered by Schmidt, a Frenchman, about the rich and poor. The Jubilee-street Club was an Anarchist organisation, and he wanted it clearly understood that he had not delivered any utterance there.

Mr. Roe: You needn't bother about it. You are not charged with being an Anarchist.

Maren: It is in my interests. I hear people think I am "Peter the Painter."

To Maren, witness said that when the Sidney-street affray took place he was staying with Muller. She could not remember whether Dreger, at Doodlakine, had said he would kill both Maren and Johnson, and was not sure if she told Dreger that it would not be good for him to threaten them.

Adolph Dreger stated that he arrived in London from Riga, Russia, on February 1, 1911, and lived with Maren for two days, when they left England for Australia. Maren, in London, voluntarily told him that the police were looking for him, but they did not have his proper description. After the vessel had passed Port Said, Maren also told witness that some of his Russian friends, then in London, intended to rob a gold magazine there to get money to support their friends in Russia. He also told witness that he (Maren) was a leader of the Russians in London, and that picked men would rob the magazine, but did not say that he himself would be one of the band. Witness then described occurrences in which his brother was concerned in Western Australia, and said that once when fighting with the two accused his brother called them "Russian Anarchist brutes." Subsequent to witness's brother being sent to prison by the Kellerberrin Court, Maren told him that he would give evidence against Johnson if the latter was charged with having given false testimony against Ernest Dreger. Johnson had informed witness that Maren induced him to give false evidence against Ernest Dreger, so that he would be imprisoned, because Maren thought that his life was in danger so long as he was at liberty. Johnson also expressed his sorrow to witness for what he had done, and his decision not to do it again.

Witness was cross-examined by accused Maren, who endeavoured to show that bad feeling had existed between him and Johnson on Mr. Frowse's farm. Witness stated that no bad feeling was evidenced until after the arrest of Ernest Dreger.

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Michael Lavelle, proprietor of a coffee palace at Northam, said he was satisfied he had seen Ernest Dreger and had a conversation with him some months ago at his place.

Samuel Finlay, storekeeper at Kellerberrin, and justice of the peace for the Northam magisterial district, gave evidence of having, with Dr. Hodge, J.P., sat on the bench at the Kellerberrin Police Court, which is within that district, on April 21. Ernest Dreger was that day charged with having (1) stolen and (2) received a gun, the property of William Clothier. Accused Johnson, on oath, had said, amongst other things, he had seen the gun in Dreger's possession at Doodlakina, and that the last named had purchased it for 12s. from Mr. Gardiner, a butcher at Kellerberrin, and that he Dreger had gone to Kellerberrin on two occasions for the especial purpose of obtaining a gun. Witness related Dreger's account to the Court of how he became possessed of the gun (which particulars have been previously published). Dreger was convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Dr. William Theodore Hodge, practising at Kellerberrin, and a justice of the peace, gave corroborative evidence.

Detective-Sergeant Mann stated that four more witnesses were to be called by him.

During the hearing the magistrate informed the accused that they would not, if at all, come before the Supreme Court until the first Tuesday in October, as the case in his Court would not be finished in time for the September sessions.

Maren complained of the delay in reaching finality in the case. He said he was an honest man. If he was in Russia he could understand it, but he could not see any reason for it in Australia.

Detective-Sergeant Mann said that he would not oppose the granting of substantial bail. The Russian Consul had had an interview with the accused, and was watching the case on their behalf.

Maren: The Consul is only the servant of his Government. I have no friends here.

Mr. Roe: You can have bail in one surety of £50, to be approved of by me.

Maren made another voluble outburst, and said he considered that a distinction was being made between him and other suspected persons.

The magistrate assured him that every person on remand, no matter of what nationality or the nature of the alleged offence, was treated alike.

Finally Maren exclaimed, "Right, I am going to die in this cell."

The further hearing of the case was adjourned for seven days.