

TREASON TRIAL WEEK FROM TODAY

Israel Schafer, Accused of Aiding King's Enemies, to Be Tried

A CAUSE CELEBRE

Case Long Pending Due for Hearing—Charged With Aiding Austrians to Leave Country

It was announced yesterday morning in the Court of King's Bench, that the case of Israel Schafer, the steamship ticket agent, who was indicted some months ago on a charge of treason, would come before the court a week from today. Mr. M. J. Morrison, K.C., counsel for Schafer, had a consultation with Crown Prosecutor Walsh yesterday, when it was decided to bring the case to trial at the present term of the court. They afterwards went before Mr. Justice Cross and the trial was fixed to commence next Tuesday. The ordinary list of cases for the September term of the court will be brought to a conclusion today, when the members of the petit jury will be discharged until next Tuesday. They will be brought back a week from today, but as the only case to be heard will be that of Schafer, after a jury has been sworn to hear the evidence in that case, the other members of the panel will be discharged.

Israel Schafer was arrested shortly after the outbreak of the war on a charge of treason. He was a member of the firm of Schafer & Wall, steamship ticket agents, West Craig street. It is alleged that he aided Austrians in getting out of Canada so that they could return home and fight for their country, passing them as Bulgarians. Six of those he is alleged to have aided were arrested and interned, before they could get out of the country, and are being held as witnesses against Schafer when he is brought to trial.

When he was first taken into custody Schafer was refused bail, although his counsel, Mr. M. J. Morrison, K.C., was prepared to offer any amount required. Judge Leet considered the charge so serious that he would not consider the question of bail before the preliminary enquete was completed. It looked for a few days as if Schafer might have to remain behind the bars for a considerable length of time. The night following the opening of the enquete, Judge Leet was struck and knocked down by an automobile on the crossing of Fort and St. Catherine streets. The injuries he sustained kept him confined to the Homoeopathic Hospital and his home for more than a week. Judge Choquet was to have taken up the case and recommenced the enquete, but it was decided, after a few adjournments, to await the return of Judge Leet. In the meantime, Mr. M. J. Morrison, K.C., had made an application to Chief Justice Sir Horace Archambeault to have Schafer admitted to bail, pointing out that although he had been born in Austria he had come to Canada when a boy and had never since left the country, that he was a British subject, a large holder of real estate in Montreal and had a wife and family here. His Lordship decided that he would not interfere.

Following the return of Judge Leet the enquete was completed, and although His Honor said that there might be some doubt as to Schafer's guilt, he thought there was sufficient evidence to commit him for trial and allow a jury to decide. But he stated that he would make a strong recommendation that the accused should be admitted to bail, pending his trial before the Court of King's Bench, which he did not think the Crown would oppose. The result was that Schafer was admitted to bail, but at the following term of the Court of King's Bench a true bill was returned against him by the Grand Jury. Since then his case has been put off from term to term, to be finally brought to trial next week.