

THE DAILY PROVINCE

JANUARY 20, 1908

FIRST SIKH TEMPLE IN THE PROVINCE

Over Thousand People Attended Dedicatory Service on
Second Avenue, Fairview, Yesterday Morning.

Nearly a thousand people gathered yesterday morning to attend the dedicatory services of the Sikh Temple, located at 1866 Second avenue, Fairview. Among the number were representatives of all East Indian castes, the Sikhs naturally attending in the largest numbers. A number of whites were also present. Curiosity being the drawing card as far as they were concerned, though among them were noticed some who were acquainted with Sikh customs through residence in India. Those whites who came expecting to see anything in the nature of the sensational, such as idols, striking ceremonies, etc. were disappointed, as the ceremony was as routine as the dedication of any Christian Church.

After Balwan Singh, who officiated as priest, had gone through the ritual service for the occasion, he essayed to explain the religion of the caste. His English was, however, deficient, and finally Tarakanath Das, a member of the local United States immigration staff, briefly spoke in English of India and her religions.

The temple and the property on which it is located represents a valuation of about \$6000, and this amount was contributed by the Sikhs from all parts of the province before the service of yesterday. The spirit with which the caste was entered upon the undertaking was evidenced on the occasion by the fact that without solicitation nearly \$500 was given for the support of the church.

The temple is of ornate design and divided into two floors. The upper apartment is intended solely for religious purposes, and none but Sikhs may enter its doors. The lower floor is to be used for general meetings of the race. As the building is esteemed a sacred place, no lodging of any kind will be

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permitted within its walls. No seating accommodation is provided, the "squatting" custom of their home land being the rule for attendants on the services. The hall will accommodate an audience of about 30 by this method, and is judged to be ample for the general attendance on the services. It was stated yesterday that there are nearly a thousand of the caste now here but they are widely scattered throughout the various sections, the largest colony being located at Moodyville.