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DUBLIN MURDER CHARGE.

STATEMENT BY THE PRISONER.

Before Mr. Cooper, K.C., in the Dublin District Court yesterday afternoon, Ralph Laffan was returned for trial, being charged on remand with conspiring with another man not in custody to murder Ernest Kahn, a member of the Jewish community, and also with the murder of Kahn by shooting him with a revolver on 14th November, 1923, at the corner of Lennox street and Stamer street, near the South Circular road. There was a further charge of firing at and wounding another Jew named David Miller on the same occasion.

The occurrence took place about midnight, when Kahn and Miller were returning to their homes from the Jewish Social Club.

Mr. J. A. Costello (instructed by Mr. Clarke, of the State Solicitor's Office) prosecuted.

Joseph Harvey stated that, at about 12 o'clock on the night in question, he was driving a taxi-car for the A and B Taxi Company along Stamer street. He saw a man lying on the roadway, and the last witness (David Miller) was bending over him. Witness asked what was wrong, and Miller said, "We have both been shot." Witness took the two men to the Meath Hospital and reported the matter to the police.

"YOUR FACE HAS HAUNTED ME."

Isaac Kahn stated that he was at the Jewish Social Club, Harrington street, until about 11 o'clock, and when leaving he saw

his brother talking to some friends at the door. Witness went home, and about 11.50 he heard four or five noises as if of shots. He rushed into the front drawingroom, and saw a motor car moving slowly up Lennox place. He did not know who was in the car.

Detective Sergeant Hughes gave evidence of arrest. He arranged the prisoner with seven other men, and David Miller identified him as the man who shot Kahn. The prisoner said, "Are you sure it is me?" Miller replied, "I have no doubt whatever. I was looking at you for five minutes, and your face has haunted me ever since."

PRISONER'S ACCOUNT.

Subsequently the prisoner wrote and signed a voluntary statement, as follows:—"James Conroy and my brother Fred got out of the car, which I was driving, and said they wanted to have a few words with a couple of men at the corner of Stamer street. They then fired several shots and came back afterwards and said they had a row with a couple of Jewmen, and I said I would not hold myself responsible for being in charge of the car. I then drove to Beggar's Bush Barracks."

When charged and cautioned, Laffan said: "I was driving my brother Fred, who has since left the country, and James Conroy, both of whom were in the National Army, from Griffith Barracks that night. When passing Stamer street Conroy said, 'Stop the car; I want to have a few words with these men' (meaning a group of men standing at the corner). I stopped the car and my brother and Conroy got out, and after a few moments I heard several shots coming from the direction of the rear of the car, and shortly after my brother and Conroy came back to the car, and I said, 'What are you after doing? I will not be responsible for being in charge of the car,' and my brother said that he would. They then got into the car, and I drove to Beggar's Bush Barracks, after which I drove home."

"This murder was not premeditated, to my knowledge, and I know nothing about it, for I never carried firearms. I believe I have been identified in mistake for my brother, who is very like me. We are so alike that we have often been mistaken for one another. Had I known what was about to be done I would have done my utmost to prevent it."

PRIMA FACIE CASE.

Sergeant Hughes was cross-examined by Mr. Lennon, who (instructed by Mr. Vincent Kennedy) defended, and said that Laffan bore a resemblance to his brother, whom witness knew to see. Laffan asked to be taken before Colonel Neligan at the Castle, and witness took him there. He did not hear anyone say, "We may be able to squash this." The man Conroy had been a commandant in the National Army.

Mr. Costello asked to have the prisoner returned for trial to the Central Criminal Court.

Mr. Cooper said he would return the prisoner, as a *prima facie* case had been made.

Bail was refused, and the prisoner was removed in custody.