



### **Fraudulent Sale of Zither Harps**

At Calne on Wednesday, William Payne, alias H B Simpson, alias Wilson, and Freeman Fox, alias Rogers, alias Wilson of Bristol, bookmakers, who were apprehended on a warrant at Flaxbourton, were brought up in custody charged with obtaining 39s 6d by means of false pretences from George Andrews, Underdown, Bremhill, farmer. The evidence showed that on January 24th prisoners called and represented that they were travelling for the British and Colonial Mandoline Harp Co, London, and upon Payne's representation that by purchasing a harp his daughter would have twelve months' lessons free on the harp and piano by a lady teacher, prosecutor gave a cheque for the amount to Payne, who signed it H B Wilson. Supt Daly asked for a remand. He was receiving letters daily showing that prisoners adopt the same system of fraud all over the country. The British and Colonial Mandoline Co knew nothing whatever about them. They were remanded to Devizes for eight days, an application for bail being refused.

#### **Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette Thursday 23 February 1905**

A representative from the Mandolin Company, London, said Fox was in their employ in January 1904, that he was prosecuted by the firm at Tredegar for false pretences, but the case was dismissed owing to the absence of the principal witness. Numerous complaints had been received of prisoners' conduct from various parts of the country. A representative from Duck, Son and Pinker, Bath, proved selling zither harps, similar to those produced, to prisoners. The selling price to the public was 13s 6d, but prisoners received a substantial discount. They were sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment in each case.

#### **Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette Thursday 2 March 1905**