

SYRIANS STIRRED UP.

Anonymous Threats of Murder After Newspaper Controversy.

Threats of murder have been sent in anonymous letters to several members of the Syrian colony of New-York as a result of a bitter controversy which has been carried on for weeks in the columns of two of the Syrian newspapers of the city. The Rev. Raphael Hawaweeney, of No. 320 Pacific-st., Brooklyn, who recently became the Bishop of the Orthodox Greek Church of the Syrians in Brooklyn, has been dragged into the controversy and accused of inciting a movement for bloodshed. He and his friends declare that he has preached only peace and has advised against violence.

A formal appeal to Police Commissioner McAdoo for protection has been made by Syrian merchants who have received threatening letters, and who have been arming themselves and avoiding going about the streets alone for fear of being murdered. In the appeal to Mr. McAdoo it is declared that Bishop Hawaweeney recently called a meeting of members of his church and asked them to defend him against attacks in one of the Syrian newspapers, telling them that he was to be regarded as a grand duke, to be defended by his people, and that, if necessary, some of them must be ready to lay down their lives for him. It is said in the appeal that some of the young men of his congregation laid their knives on a table in the church, in accordance with an Oriental custom, and swore that they would defend the bishop with the last drop of their blood.

Bishop Hawaweeney said yesterday to a Tribune reporter that nothing of the kind happened, but that he attended a meeting of his congregation to counsel the members against violence, telling them to pay no attention to the attacks on him, as he forgave all his enemies. The trouble, he said, grew out of a circular sent to the six Syrian newspapers of the city by a newly formed society of fifteen men, known as the Champagne Glasses Society, and in reality a drinking club, demanding that the editors and publishers stop publishing paid articles attacking business or social rivals. The circular led to a clash between "Al Hoda," a daily Syrian paper, published by N. A. Mokazel, and "Meraat-ul-Gharb," a weekly paper, edited by N. M. Diab. The latter declared in his paper that "Al Hoda" referred to the bishop in certain of its alleged slanderous articles. The bishop was asked by friends of "Al Hoda" to stop the controversy, but he said it was none of his business. N. N. Maloof, a Syrian merchant, had a talk with the bishop in an effort to patch up peace, and "Meraat-ul-Gharb" published an account of the conference, which led Mr. Maloof to insert some signed articles in "Al Hoda," demanding an explanation from the bishop.

Talks with members of the Syrian colony yesterday disclosed the fact that the newspaper controversy had excited them greatly and had led to a religious fight in which Roman Catholics and members of the Orthodox Greek Church had become involved. Mr. Mokazel said he had been accused of publishing a book attacking the Virgin Mary. A book which he thought was harmless, written by his brother-in-law, was printed at the office of "Al Hoda," he said, and it created some hostile comment. His life had been threatened in an anonymous letter. His character had been assailed by a friend of Bishop Hawaweeney in an article published in a paper believed to be under the bishop's control, he said, and the bishop had declined to stop the attack.

Syrians in the city said yesterday that some articles in "Al Hoda" and "Meraat-ul-Gharb" were indecent. They said they had forbidden the women of their families to read the papers as a result of the pending controversy.