

SYRIAN BISHOP KISSES SUPPORTERS IN COURT

There to Press a Libel Charge
Against His Countrymen.

SAY HE THREATENED THEM

Police Guard Formed to Take the Of-
fending Five to Their Homes
in Brooklyn.

Never did the frequenters of the Criminal Courts Building behold a stranger spectacle than that in which Bishop Raphael Hawaweeny, the head of the Syrian Church in this country, was the central figure yesterday afternoon. Five members of his race were to be tried before Magistrate Mayo in the Tombs Police Court on charges of criminal libel preferred against them by the Bishop. It seemed as if the whole Syrian population of the city was in and around the court building.

Hundreds of dark-skinned, hook-nosed, and curly-haired men were gathered in the courtyard of the building, while others walked restively back and forth on the outside or stood about in groups. Among them were scattered many uniformed policemen, who watched the talkers and the walkers with equal suspicion.

When the Bishop arrived a sudden hush fell on the multitude. He was dressed in the flowing robes used as the street garb by clerics of his Church. The Syrians on the street formed a lane, through which he had to pass, every head being bared in homage. Those inside the building fell on their knees the moment the stately figure of the Bishop appeared. Then ensued a touching ceremony.

One by one the kneeling men were approached by their spiritual leader, who bowed over them and pressed a benedictory kiss on their heads, bent low before him for the purpose. Finally, every one had been blessed, and the Bishop entered the courtroom, where the defendants, their friends, and their counsel, Charles Le Barbier, were waiting.

The defendants were N. N. Maloof, J. H. Macksoud, N. K. Hatem, E. A. Macksoud, and N. A. Makorzel. Assistant District Attorney Garvan appeared for the prosecution, assisted by James W. Osborne as personal counsel for Bishop Hawaweeny. The charge was based on a petition sent to Commissioner McAdoo by the five defendants, which was produced in court. The document contained a request for police protection for the defendants on the alleged ground that Bishop Hawaweeny, in open church, threatened their lives.

The Bishop took the stand to deny this allegation. When the case had got that far an adjournment was asked and granted. Just as the whole crowd that jammed the courtroom was about to depart Mr. Le Barbier told the court that his clients were not safe on account of the mob of hostile Syrians gathered outside. He asked that protection be given them until they reached Brooklyn. Magistrate Mayo ordered Sergt. Walsh to look to the matter.

A police escort was formed and the five defendants marched down Centre Street guarded by bluecoats, while their countrymen had to be satisfied with darting fiery glances at them as they passed or muttering threats in a language not intelligible to the ordinary New York policeman.