

HOW PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND SENATOR HOAR SAVED TWO SYRIAN CHILDREN FROM DEPORTATION AND DESPAIR



PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, SENATOR HOAR, MRS. HOAR, TWO CHILDREN OF ROCKWOOD HOAR (NEXT THE PRESIDENT) AND TWO SYRIAN CHILDREN, AT SENATOR HOAR'S HOUSE, IN WORCESTER, MASS.

(Copyright, 1902, by H. Scherree, Worcester.)

TWO SYRIAN IMMIGRANTS.

GRATITUDE THEY FEEL TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND SENATOR HOAR BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT SENT BACK.

If the decisive votes for the Presidency of the United States rested with two little Syrian children now living in Worcester, Mass., President Roosevelt would hold that office for the rest of his natural lifetime. And as for Senator Hoar—the little folk have not just decided what place should be accorded to the senior Senator from Massachusetts, but it should be something fine and grand, they are agreed on that.

But, as it is, the little brown skinned pair up there in Worcester cannot shape the destinies of the President and the Massachusetts Senator; they cannot even vote. All they can do is to be thankful. And well they may be thankful, for had it not been for Senator Hoar and for President Roosevelt these same little brown skinned Syrian folk would now be back in Europe, separated from their friends, and victims of cruelty and oppression, instead of here in free America surrounded by every opportunity for advancement.

And this is the way it comes about that two little former subjects of the Sultan of Turkey count to-day among their closest personal friends the President of the United States and the senior Senator from the old Bay State. The little folk are Sophie and Azziz Namer, children of Sasine Namer. It is now over a year since their father came to this country. He settled in Worcester, and, realizing that America is, after all, the only country, declared his intention of citizenship and sent money to his wife to pay the passage of herself and children. She sold the household effects and, going across the Continent with the children, sailed for America, the land of promise, from one of the northern ports of France. The voyage was a successful one, and as the ship neared America the hopes of the trio increased, until at last, when New-York was reached, their joy knew no bounds. But it was a shortlived joy, for the immigration officials said that, although the mother was free to go ashore, the children could not land, and must go back on the same steamer the following Thursday. It was asserted that on the voyage they had contracted a disease of the eyelids, said to be contagious, and they must return. This was a terrible blow to the family. The money was exhausted, and it meant that even

if the children went back with their mother they must go back as paupers. The steamship company, compelled to take them back by the authorities, would not have been lavish with food, and when France was reached they would have been left at some port in that country absolutely penniless, either to starve or make a living as best they might by begging.

The husband and father was beside himself. All the joy faded from life; America was no better than any other country; nothing but cruelty and oppression everywhere. In his despair he went to a close friend in Worcester, Joseph J. George. The sympathies of Mr. George were at once aroused, and he recited the facts in the case to District Attorney Rockwood Hoar, son of the Senator. Mr. Hoar advised that a bond be offered the immigration authorities as a guarantee that they would be relieved of all trouble on account of the children. He then brought the matter to the attention of his father.

Senator Hoar was busy, but business could wait; this case could not. Laying aside some matters in hand, he yielded himself to the sympathetic promptings of his heart and worked for those children and grief stricken parents. He first communicated with the immigration authorities in New-York. The reply was that the law was explicit, that the hospitals are already full of such cases and that the children must go home on Thursday. Next Senator Hoar telegraphed to the officials in Washington. In reply he received information to the effect that nothing could be done for the children, and they must return home. His next step was to communicate the facts to his colleague from Massachusetts, Senator Lodge. Although this was in the Christmas holidays of last winter, Senator Lodge chanced to be in Washington. On receipt of the message from Senator Hoar, Senator Lodge went personally before the Washington officials in behalf of the children, but his appeals went unheeded. He was told, as Senator Hoar had been, that the law was plain in such cases, and that the children must go home.

On the Tuesday before the Thursday fixed for the sailing of the ship bearing the children, Senator Lodge telegraphed to Senator Hoar the news of his failure. That evening Senator Hoar was in Boston delivering an address. The message was repeated to him.

Beaten at every point, the resourcefulness of Senator Hoar was yet unexhausted. Wednesday came. The ship was to sail the next day; the children were aboard of her, and the distracted parents were almost beside themselves

with grief. That morning President Roosevelt received this dispatch:

To the President, White House, Washington, D. C.:

I appeal to your clear understanding and kind and brave heart to interpose your authority to prevent an outrage which will dishonor the country and create a foul blot on the American flag. A neighbor of mine in Worcester, Mass., a Syrian by birth, made some time ago his public declaration of citizenship. He is an honest, hard working and every way respectable man. His wife, with two small children, has reached New-York. He sent out the money to pay their passage. The children contracted a disorder of the eyes on the ship. The Treasury authorities say that the mother may land, but the children cannot, and they are to be sent back on Thursday. Ample bond has been offered, and will be furnished, to save the government and everybody from injury or loss.

I do not think such a thing ought to happen under your administration unless you personally decide that the case is without remedy. I am told the authorities say they have been too easy heretofore and must draw the line now. That shows they admit the power to make exceptions in proper cases. Surely, an exception should be made in case of little children of a man lawfully here, and who has duly and in good faith declared his intention to become a citizen. The immigration law was never intended to repeal so much of the naturalization laws which provide that the minor children get all the rights of the father as to citizenship. My son knows the friends of this man personally, and that they are highly respectable and well off.

If our laws require this cruelty it is time for a revolution, and you are just the man to head it.

GEORGE F. HOAR.

Within a half hour of the receipt of that message President Roosevelt had telegraphed an order to the New-York immigration officials directing that the children be allowed to join their parents in this country. Thursday, the day that had been looked forward to as a day of sorrowful parting, proved a day of glad reunion instead, and soon the whole family were settled in Worcester, where they now live.

That is how it comes about that two little ex-subjects of the Sultan now number among their friends the President of the United States and a leading member of the United States Senate. That the President's interest in the case is genuine, that he acted from sympathy and not alone because the appeal came from Senator Hoar, was demonstrated on his recent visit to Worcester in his New-England trip. At his personal request the little Syrian children, who, by the way, have entirely recovered from the eye disorder, were present at Senator Hoar's house, in Oak-ave., when the President called there. They met him in the big, old fashioned hall, and, although they could not speak a word of English, they looked all manner of thanks, and appeared not one whit ill at ease when the President stooped, and, lifting each in turn,

fondled the little Syrian boy and girl as he would children of his own.

A group photograph was taken of Mrs. Hoar, Senator Hoar, the President, the little Syrian children, and Miss Frances and Miss Louisa Hoar, daughters of District Attorney Rockwood Hoar.

Everything that can be done is being done for the advancement of little Sophie and Azziz Namer. They are learning American ways, and fast coming to the conclusion that, after all, America is not such a bad country. They have met many nice people since the story of their coming here was brought to light through the attentions shown them by the President, but they sometimes tell their parents in their musical native tongue that of all the nice people they have met, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hoar are the nicest.

HARD TO DEMOLISH IT.

FIRST STEEL RIVETED STRUCTURE IN THIS CITY TO BE TAKEN DOWN.

With the demolition of the Thorley, or Pabst Hotel, building, at Forty-second-st. and Broadway, to make way for a larger structure, a new phase of the unprecedented growth of New-York has presented itself to architects and builders. This is the first modern riveted steel fireproof structure to be taken down in this city.

It is no small job the George A. Fuller Construction Company has in hand, for the building, when it was built in 1898 by Charles Thorley, was built to stay. Standing nine stories high, with a cellar and subcellar, it is even now a building comparing favorably with the later skyscrapers. Money was not spared to make it firm, and it was among the first of the riveted steel buildings to be put up in this city.

"We can go through the old style plain brick buildings like so much cheese," said one of the contractors, "and we don't mind iron frames held with bolt and nut, but as for these"—

The rest of the remark was lost in the crash of falling timber. "You see, we can neither unscrew nor break the nuts off one of these bolts," he resumed, "because there is no nut to get off. These bolts were heated white hot, then put in place and headed down. All we can do is to saw off the head and then drive the bolt back. Yes, it is a hard job."

But, hard as it is, the contractors expect to have the building level with the ground within forty-five days. Builders all over the city are