

third day the pilgrims went to Mecca. Shortly after their arrival a mild form of influenza appeared among the pilgrims and spread rapidly. The course of the fever, its duration, and its symptoms were characteristic of grippe. Several pilgrims had to go to bed, but no serious complication was noticed.

The Comité d'Ein Zubeida saw to the provision of water for pilgrims. This committee made every effort to assure the well-being and safety of the pilgrims. The following tasks were accomplished: all six reservoirs at the interior of Mecca were filled; all the wells of Muzdalifa were cleaned; all the reservoirs of Arafat, as well as the reservoir at the Namera mosque, were cleaned and filled. Several other improvements for the benefit of the pilgrims were made. The committee placed green lights on all reservoirs between Mecca and Arafat, so that pilgrims could find them during the night. A caretaker was stationed near each reservoir to distribute free water to all pilgrims.

Last year was particularly rainy. Heavy rains had fallen everywhere in Hedjaz at different periods since December 1933, the water running away in big torrents in the valleys. As a consequence of these rains, the springs furnished water in abundance and the inhabitants of the valleys were able to cultivate wheat, barley, melons, etc., and enough pasturage to feed their cattle. At Mecca a heavy rain fell two days before the first day of the ceremonies, and the principal street of Mecca was converted into a torrent. Pilgrims crossing the streets were carried by Takrouis.

As for the temperature during the days of the ceremonies, the official meteorological report below indicates the maximum and minimum temperatures:

	Maximum	Minimum
Day of Arafat .....	36° C.	24° C.
First day of Mouna .....	32° C.	21° C.
Second day of Mouna .....	33° C.	21.5° C.
Third day of Mouna .....	33° C.	22° C.

The temperature during the pilgrimage season in the four principal cities of Hedjaz, situated in four different

parts of the country, namely Mecca, Medina, Jeddah, and Yambo, was mild in general.

The new road from Baghdad to Medina was not open to pilgrims last year; several requests were made by certain pilgrims abroad to arrive by this route, but the government of Hedjaz refused permission. This road is 1,200 kilometers long. It is divided into two parts: 500 kilometers in Iraq and 700 kilometers in Hedjaz. Wells dating from the time of Haroun El Rashid are found along this road.

One can go from Baghdad to Medina in six days by automobile. This year two large busses arrived from India with forty Hindu pilgrims. They left Delhi February 16, passing through Afghanistan, Persia, Iraq, Kuwait, and crossing the Nejd via Riadh to Mouna. They arrived at Mouna March 25, having covered the distance in thirty-seven days. Unfortunately they arrived the day after the Day of Arafat, thus missing the pilgrimage.

The projected road through the northern part of Persia to Mecca, passing through Basra, Kuwait, and Riadh, has been abandoned for some time. It is used only by certain caravans to the north of Nejd. It passes through Hafeir-Nubah-Farha-Darba-Dafeina-Beni Amer and Mecca. It is possible that this road will be used in the future by pilgrims coming from Persia, since it is the shortest road to Mecca.

Thirty-three ships, the majority of which were of British, Dutch, and Italian registry, arrived at Jeddah bringing 25,291 pilgrims, including 893 children. Some of these ships came from ports as far distant as Bombay, Singapore, and Cape Town, and some came from European ports.

Pilgrims coming from different countries numbered as follows: India, 7,403; Egypt, 4,302; Java, 3,168; Afghanistan, 1,720; Algeria, 1,660; Persia, 1,053; Takrounia, 891; Buchara, 847; Syria, 725; French Morocco, 540; Sudan, 540; Tunisia, 449; Palestine, 384; Yemen, 277; Hadramout, 267; Iraq, 173; Turkey, 104; and Cape Town, 98. Countries represented in smaller numbers were: Senegal, Zanzibar, China, Persian Gulf, Morocco, Kurd, Somali-

land, Abyssinia, Jugoslavia, Albania, Japan, and the Balkan States. There were 513 natives, making a total of 25,291.

The medical records show the following statistics: dysentery, 1,030 cases, 49 deaths; typhoid fever, 13 cases, 9 deaths; small pox, 57 cases, 41 deaths; puerperal fever, 40 cases, 32 deaths; and tuberculosis, 77 cases, 36 deaths. There were no cases of paratyphoid, measles, or diphtheria, as there had been in previous years.

After the religious ceremonies the pilgrims returned from Hedjaz. The Egyptian pilgrims travelled almost exclusively on board the *Zamzam*, which made three voyages, during the course of which it carried a total of 4,306 pilgrims. The ships *Taif* and *Talodi* made three trips. They took 432 pilgrims to Tor, all of whom, like the preceding, submitted to the regulation three-day quarantine. Five ships transported a total of 4,246 pilgrims. At their arrival at Tor, they requested and obtained the benefit of exemptions of article 142 of the Convention, departing the same day and passing through the Suez Canal.

From April 10 to May 1, 1934, six pilgrim ships coming from Tor discharged the pilgrims who had passed quarantine at Suez. They carried a total of 4,848 pilgrims. This number included 4,310 Egyptians, 387 Palestinians, and 151 foreign pilgrims authorized to land in Egypt.

Those who came from the South, however, were quarantined at the island of Kamaran. Here the pilgrimage season opened with the arrival of the S. S. *Peisander*, November 14, 1934, from the Dutch East Indies; the season closed with the departure of the S. S. *Rizwani* March 17, 1934. The season thus lasted a little more than four months. During this time 13,519 pilgrims passed through Kamaran. As for traffic from the Dutch East Indies, Straits Settlements, British India, and Arabia, twenty-two ships brought 9,082 men, 3,526 women, and 911 children, a total of 13,519.

*Translated by* PHILIP BLACKWOOD.

## CURRENT TOPICS

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### Criticism of the Koran in Turkey

In the Turkish paper *Fikir Hareketleri* last year there appeared a number of articles and editorials in criticism of the domestic life of the Prophet of Arabia and the character of the companions of the Prophet. This is another indication that the Turkish nation has turned its back on the old religion and is mercilessly exposing its weakness. We give two examples of this destructive criticism:

"The Prophet does not refrain from proclaiming to his followers to the end of his life the commandments of God. Was it not necessary to bring these sayings together and compile them just as they were delivered? It seems that Mohammed himself did not give to the Koran the importance accorded to it later on. In fact, one has to grant that the principles of philosophy of religion in the Koran can be summarized in four or five lines. Mohammed considered these principles enough for Islam and did not feel it necessary to teach all the other verses of the Koran. Some verses simply echo the talk that arose over certain private matters. There could be no reason why the whole Moslem community should know about these.

"From some of these verses we understand that a misunderstanding arose between Mohammed and some of his wives; they troubled his mind, and deprived him of what God had decreed lawful. Mohammed must have been hard pressed that Allah comes to his rescue, puts an end to these wife-and-husband quarrels, and insinuates to the wives the threat which Mohammed, out of politeness, had not dared to utter. A tradition in the commentary "Tefsir Tibyan" brings us near to the true events.

"When Mohammed was in the house of his wife Hafsah, he entered into relation with the maid Mariyeh, while the mistress was not at home. When Hafsah was aware of the matter, she started to weep and to wail. Mohammed vowed to her never more to have relations with Mariyeh, and then advised her not to tell anything of the matter to his other wives, lest they raise the same hue and cry. Then later, as if the prophet's words were just to the contrary, she soon went and told Ayisheh about the whole matter. Of course the prophet had to undergo the same annoyance at Ayisheh's house. Mohammed must have become pretty angry, and either divorced or attempted to divorce Hafsah. Gabriel intervened, fortunately. At last Allah put things right.

"First of all He released Mohammed from his hasty vow not to continue his relations with Mariyeh, and then He called the wives to repentance, reminding them of the possibility of a divorce. All of which goes to prove that men will be men, even if they are

prophets. Luckily, the prophets have an Allah to save them from dire distress, and so they can live in some peace.

"Mohammed's wives must have disturbed him in some other cases too, since the Koran contains other verses calling them to mend their ways. Famous also are the verses that aim at putting an end to the gossip which had arisen when Ayisheh, having lost her necklace, put to flight the whole tribe when looking for it, and returned alone with a camel driver. They are so well known that one does not need to do more than remind the readers of them.

"We thus see that the Koran is not only a book of religion and ethics. It reflects also the events that took place in the twenty-three years of Mohammed's prophetic life. It contains material in the form of history and diary, which have nothing to do with religion. Since the Koran explains very clearly what religion is, it would not be difficult to differentiate such passages from the rest."

HUSEYIN DJAHIT.

In an earlier issue of the same paper we have the following comment on the companions of Mohammed:

"These companions number up to a hundred thousand. The *hodjas* consider all of them as 'righteous', and believe that not one of them has told anything false, so whatever they say about the thoughts and deeds of the Prophet is absolute truth and the basis of a tradition.

"Huzeyfe bin-al Yemen, a famous companion, used to say, 'the Apostle of God told me all that happened and would happen till the day of judgment', and in that way won himself honors. Is it not possible to see the absolute untruth of his claim? That Mohammed did not and would not know the future is mentioned in the Koran clearly and with finality.

"The Koran testified also to the cowardice of some of Mohammed's companions. They forsake the field of battle, and God's curse is pronounced on them, yet they are 'companions', and serve as examples in the traditions!

"There was no such ridiculous belief among the first Moslems that all the 'companions' of Mohammed would be 'infallible' people of absolute veracity. When the Koran was compiled into a single book, the testimony of at least two companions was necessary to make a verse accepted. The ordinance about stoning which, according to Omar, was pronounced by Mohammed, they did not accept.

"There are not a few of Mohammed's companions who appropriated great wealth for themselves by looking after worldly riches. But even these are infallible. The history of the early years of Islam gives us a dark picture of many Moslems. Putting aside a small minority of truly pure and noble men, the great number of those around Mohammed were selfish, ignorant, and foolish men. But to the *hodjas* these are all honorable 'companions of Mohammed', whose every word is true. For there is a purpose behind this. It is to create a science by the name of 'science of tradition', to put into those traditions what they please, and to make the people accept these 'traditions' as true, on the authority of their having been delivered by one or other of 'Mohammed's companions'."

### Resistance to Communist Propaganda among the Moslems

Every one knows that to communists "religion is the opiate of the people" and God is "a myth." By their godless organization they fight religious ideas all over the world.

How can one explain the fact that religious Moslems have allied themselves with communism, which denies Islam's own beliefs?

We have a reply to this interesting question from Emir Chekib Arslan, a Syrian emigrant in Switzerland, where he leads a very active anti-French campaign. Speaking to Moslems, he declares: "Decidedly, you do not know what communism is. It is impossible for you to find the least agreement between it and Mohammedanism." Then he reveals the communist lie in all its hypocrisy.

At the beginning of this dangerous campaign the communists led many Moslems astray by persuading them that without the help of Red Russia they would never free themselves from colonialism and slavery to Europe. But in reality communism proposed to arouse the Moslems against the colonizing countries to force them to conform with the demands of the communists, to recognize the Soviet government and deal with it.

Emir Chekib Arslan vigorously shows that Islam is fundamentally opposed to communism and those who think it well to ally themselves with Soviets in order better to resist colonial powers are mistaken. It is interesting to note this opinion of a Syrian politician, who is certainly not guilty of "imperialistic" prejudices or Christian tendencies.

*L'Agence Univers (Lille)*

### Western Civilization in Medina

We learn from *The Near East and India* through their correspondent at Medina how the forces of Western civilization are changing the character of Saudi Arabia.

"The Haram al Nabawi, or Prophet's Mosque, is at the moment in the hands of the decorators, and a great part of the enclosure resembles a lumber yard and carpenter's shop. The minarets have been or are being repaired and repainted, while the painting of the forest of columns has now been completed—the colour being a darkish flesh pink, which should in due course tone down to a reasonably mellow hue. The replacement of the pavement in the covered parts of the mosque with marble slabs is progressing slowly, but steadily, while the 'Cage' or section of the mosque reserved for women is being entirely refitted with new 'Mashrabiya' screens. The work is being undertaken by the Egyptian Waqfs Department and is said to be likely to cost over £20,000 by the time it is completed. On the whole it is being done quite well, and a delegation of officials from the Department arrived here to-day to supervise and hasten the completion of the task.

"Otherwise Madina seems to have changed but little since 1931, although it still hopes that in the near future the Hijaz Railway will be restored to activity and bring some of the old-time prosperity. The main grievance of the district, which produces masses of fruit and vegetables, besides its famous dates, is that it has no market for its products. That trouble can be cured only by the restoration of