

LAS VEGAS AGE

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SATURDAY MORNING, JANUARY 10, 1930.

A HEALTHY GROWTH

WHEN THE talk of "hard times" is heard we naturally turn to the quarterly reports of our banks for an unerring index to financial and business conditions.

We observe with interest the report of the First State Bank showing condition December 31, 1930, especially in comparison with the statement of three months ago.

The item of cash and sight exchange has increased during the three months from \$391,360.38 to \$454,482.25, an increase of over \$63,000.

In the matter of deposits we also find a healthy growth of more than \$50,000.00 and in total assets we observe a similar increase of \$48,699.85, a record which in these days is something to be proud of.

Las Vegas is the "White Spot" of the country. While our growth has been so slow and intangible as almost to be lost to sight, yet we are going forward.

The only trouble with Las Vegas is that we had our expectations keyed up to too high a point and when things moved a little less rapidly than we hoped we just couldn't stand it.

SAD ANNIVERSARY

ONE YEAR ago today, to be exact, on Friday evening, January 10, 1930, Maury Graham left Las Vegas and tried to pilot his plane with its load of airmail through the blinding snow storm, over the high mountains to Salt Lake. He was never again seen alive and it was not until several months later that his dead body was found where he finally lost his fight to reach civilization after his ship had crashed into the side of the mountain.

The sacrifice of some lives is probably a necessary part of the development of aviation. We have just learned of the loss of five splendid Italian officers in the trans-Atlantic flight in which ten out of fourteen planes to start got across safely.

But we wonder if we are not paying too great a price in human life in our effort to force the development of flying. It just seems as though the fool-hardy stunts such as the Italian government just planned, are detrimental to the sane and orderly development of the game.

There will always be enough hazards in flying to give it zest without putting those whose business it is to navigate the sky to unnecessary danger.

Companies operating air craft should make sure that their pilots keep well within the bounds of safety. One such incident as that which ended the life of Maury Graham is a serious blow to a pursuit which must, by the very nature of the thing, be perfected by the slow process of scientific investigations.

And we just can't afford to sacrifice the lives of fine fellows like Maury Graham and the other pilots of the airmail.

THE CLEANING UP PROCESS

LAS VEGAS is in a position like that of the boy whose mother was finally forced to take him in hand and wash his ears for him.

We have known that the government does not look with favor on "wide open" conditions where they are planning works like Boulder Dam. We were given very plain warnings and failed to heed.

Nobody expects Las Vegas to become pure and spotless in morals. Even our beautiful capital city of Washington needs to have its ears washed. But we could and should relegate our bootlegging and our redlight to locations where they would not quite so much offend the public view. We may assume that a certain amount of vice is necessary to the average American city. But even Chicago does not make that its chief business.

It would have been better had Las Vegas been a little less open with its vice. We have just had our ears washed for us.

Which reminds us that there is hard going ahead for the nice new redlight district somebody seems determined to locate near the Boulder Dam highway.

USE DISCRETION

THE CITY board has been confronted with the question of what to do about Fremont street between Fifth and Eighth.

That street was, not quite two years ago, improved with a very poor job of oil-bound gravel surface. Now the government offers federal aid to the amount of 88 percent of the cost of construction of a 30-foot paved strip in the center of that street going as far east as the city limits. The question is, shall Fremont street be torn up again between Fifth and Eighth and the property owners subjected to another assessment for a better type of improvement?

It appears to the Age that the best policy for the board to adopt is to exclude Fremont between Fifth and Eighth, from the proposed improvement, leaving it until such time as the wear and tear of traffic calls for a better surface. By that time it is probable that the city will be in much better position to raise the necessary finances and can repair or improve that portion of Fremont without doing violence to the feelings of those property owners who have but recently been assessed for the present surfacing.

ANOTHER EVENT

NEXT MONDAY, January 12, at 10:00, at the court house, many engineers and contractors and material men will gather to witness the opening of bids on the government railroad.

The occasion will be another notable event in the history of the Boulder Dam project. And it will be one of those days we will look back upon in future years as the beginning of the great work.

Things really are moving very fast—faster than most of us realize.

Army Air Force Seen As Leader Of U. S. Safety

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9. (AP)—The air corps, baby branch of the army in age, is seen by General Charles P. Summerall in his farewell to arms as a Goliath in the making. In his final report as retiring chief of staff, he said that "the completion of the five-year program will bring our air corps to a much higher state of relative readiness than any other branch of the service."

Instituted in 1927, the five-year program has been budgeted for completion June 30, 1932, to give the flying arm 1,800 serviceable planes, 2,200 commissioned officers, and necessary enlisted men.

Both General Summerall and Secretary of War Hurley said, however, that the development of air corps man-power has been accomplished at the expense of curtailing other activities.

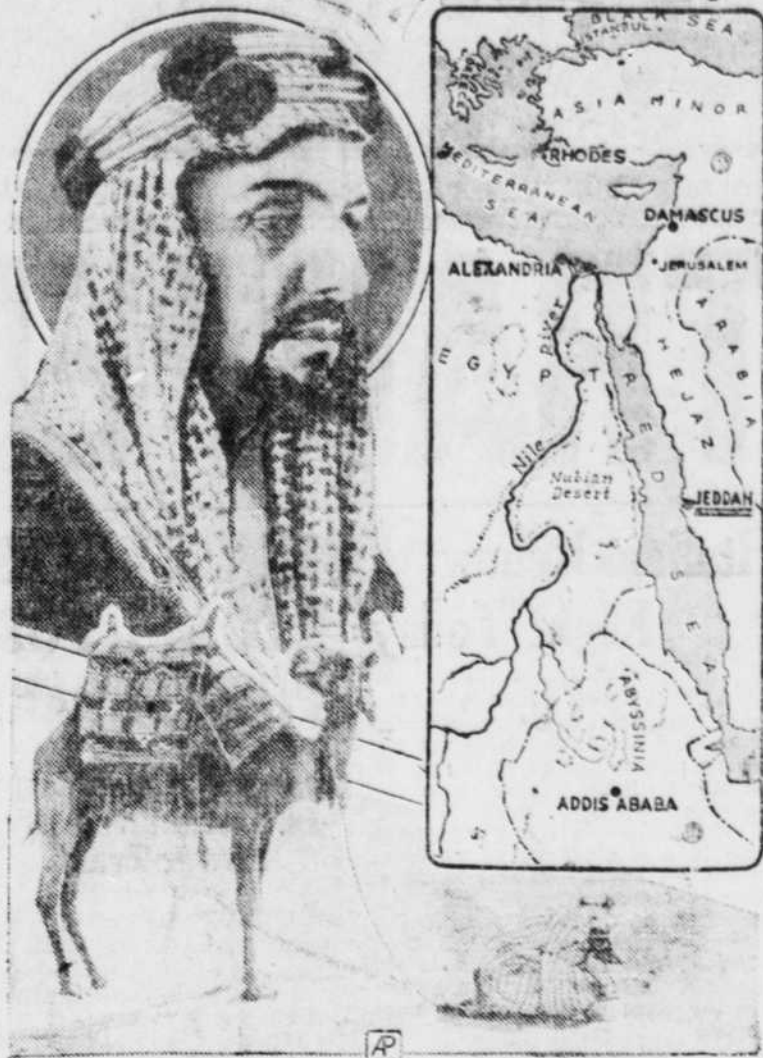
The rest of the army, General Summerall reported, has been required to reduce its troop strength to supply the commissioned and enlisted personnel for the annual rebuilding of the air corps since the total army man-power is limited by law.

Far-reaching reorganization has been necessary in other services, Secretary Hurley said, to the point that "if the policy of building up the enlisted strength of the air corps by transfers from the other arms is continued, the army will soon be unable properly to perform its many missions."

America's strength in the air, General Summerall found, is greatly enhanced by the rise of commercial aviation.

"In 1926 our greatest weakness in the air," he said, "was probably to be found in the fact that our aircraft industry was almost nonexistent, that but little production could be expected for more than a year after the outbreak of a war, and that there was no commercial aviation to develop trained fliers from whom an adequate reserve could be drawn."

MOSLEM PILGRIMS FILL THE COFFERS OF ARABIA



Ibn Saud (upper left) rules the territory which contains Mecca, the sacred city toward which faithful Mohammedans face when bowing in prayer. The chief port is Jeddah (see map) which James A. Mills, Associated Press staff writer, visited on his journey toward Bombay, from Abyssinia.

Jeddah, Principal State of Arabia, Collects Estimated Revenue of \$25,000 From Traffic to Sacred Cities

JEDDAH, Kingdom of the Hedjaz, Jan. 9. (AP)—The kingdom, principal state of Arabia, is starting to collect its yearly revenue, estimated at \$25,000,000, from pilgrim traffic to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina.

The money goes into the public coffers of Ibn Saud, who, besides being king of the Hedjaz is emperor of the Nejd. As such he is leader of the Wahabites, the fierce desert warriors who are the fundamentalists of the Mohammedan religion.

The pilgrimage season starts in January, and from far corners of the Moslem world, by steamship or train, on camel, horse or donkey, in ox-cart or automobile, or weary on foot, faithful followers of the prophet are beginning to stream into the country.

The flood of visitors will not subside until May. Jeddah, the clearing house and this squatty, terraced town on the burning shores of the Red Sea is one of the chief clearing houses for the traffic.

Its normal population of 30,000 is bustling with the business of caring for the vanquished of the 1931 pilgrimage, awaking from the drowsy atmosphere that holds the place through the last seven months of each year.

Jeddah is the port of Mecca. There are numerous foreign steamship agencies here and about a hundred Europeans are engaged in the business of importing and exporting pilgrims.

This year they have had to overcome effects of a tragedy of last May, when 600 pilgrims perished in a fire aboard the steamer "Asia."

Other Revenue Slim
Were it not for the pilgrim traffic it is considered doubtful if Ibn Saud would keep his government going.

The population, only a little more than that of New York City, is scattered over an area equal to one-third of the United States, and there are great stretches of desert, barren plains and mountainous waste in which not even the nomadic Bedouins can keep body and soul together.

The living which the tribesmen make by breeding camels, horses, sheep and goats, is scant. There is little left for taxes or other public revenue.

So when the followers of the Prophet begin to stream into the country, the government seizes its opportunity.

Fees—And More Fees
At Jeddah, for example, each arrival must go through quarantine, paying a fee of \$6 for the process of being thoroughly scrubbed, deloused and vaccinated.

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France Builds New Defenses On East Front

METZ, France, Jan. 9. (AP)—A cement defense chain, adapting its links to the ground along the 200 miles of France's new eastern frontier, is being built with four billion francs appropriated by parliament.

All the lessons of the World war are being put to profit in this work, along with any other ideas that may have come to the French staff since 1918.

The new first line contains no forts, such as the stronghold of Verdun. It is a rather a long line of field works, but it probably will not

automobiles, mostly of American make.

200,000 in a Year
King Ibn Saud profits here, for he receives \$250 as his share of each automobile fare and \$2 for each motor-bus passenger. There are nearly 300 cars and buses engaged in the traffic.

The pilgrims have numbered as high as 200,000 in one year and it is estimated that each leaves from \$250 to \$500 in the country.

A large part of this goes into the king's coffers. Besides the direct head taxes, he maintains a series of hospices, camps, restaurants and relief stations to care for weary travelers who cannot afford to speed across the desert.

Basis Purely Religious
The basis of all this business is religious. The devout Mohammedan believes that a single visit to the huge black Kaaba stone at Mecca and a drink from the sacred well of Zam Zam washes away his sins, while four visits to the holy of holies assures him a seat in paradise.

And, the Moslem paradise is a real one. It is a place of "perfumed gardens, filled with tall trees, fragrant flowers, luscious fruits, singing birds and cool streams, where a man is waited upon by many beautiful and virtuous wives, each as tall as a palm tree."

For 13 centuries the faithful have been flocking to the gate of this future life. Many, indeed, spend years to reach their haven of spiritual salvation, only to collapse from exhaustion at the end of the weary trek.

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he fully described until after the next war, if then. About all that can be said of it is that it is a continuous system that much of it is underground and some of it even under water. It embraces all that the French know about the ability of field works to resist modern arms. The new line also differs from the old in that it has no natural lines of defense, such as the Vosges mountains, as a foundation. It follows the Rhine and Saar river valleys from the Swiss border to the frontier of Luxembourg. After the war of 1870 the French found it would be too costly to construct a continuous system of frontier fortifications. So they built the forts of Verdun, Toul, Epinal and Belfort, with outlying batteries. Where they could not complete

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