

## BRITISH PILGRIM TO MECCA.

### LORD HEADLEY'S EXPERIENCES

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

CAIRO, AUG. 28.

King Fuad to-day received Lord Headley, who recounted to his Majesty his experiences as a pilgrim to Mecca.

Writing on August 22, our Cairo Correspondent gave the following account of the experiences of Lord Headley, who is a Moslem:—

Lord Headley, who has just returned to Cairo after completing the pilgrimage to Mecca, has brought back with him two pieces of the Kiswa, or Holy Carpet, presented to him by King Hussein. One of the pieces, the larger, is destined for the mosque at Woking, the other for his drawing-room at Twickenham.

Lord Headley is not only the first British peer to perform the pilgrimage, but, so far as is known, the first Englishman who has made the journey to Mecca under his own name and as an Englishman. Burton, Wavell, and others went in Oriental disguise.

Of King Hussein and his hospitality, Lord Headley is loud in his praise. The King sent his motor-car to Jeddah to convey him to Mecca, and to take him back to the seaport when the pilgrimage had been completed. The King's private doctor was deputed to drive the car, doubtless as a double precaution—first, against accidents; and, secondly, if misfortune should be encountered, to ensure that medical aid should be immediately at hand.

Lord Headley and his companion, the Khoja Kamel el Din, Imam of the Woking Mosque, were during their stay in the Hejaz the guests of King Hussein, who displayed the utmost solicitude for their comfort. On one occasion, when the pilgrims were encamped in the desert, the King learned that Lord Headley had no bed. He immediately sent his own camp-bed, himself sleeping on the ground.

From the time that the pilgrims reach the outskirts of Mecca until they have completed the object of their journey, it is obligatory to wear the *ehram*, the pilgrims' dress, consisting simply of two linen sheets, one worn around the loins, and the other cast over the shoulders, and during the performance of certain rites the head must be bare. The wearing of the ceremonial garments was somewhat irksome, but standing bareheaded in the scorching sun was a terrible ordeal. Lord Headley told the King that a grave had better be prepared at once, for no English head would survive the trial. Eventually a compromise was effected in the shape of a large turban.

Mecca impressed Lord Headley as a fairly well-cared-for city of about sixty thousand inhabitants, but very hot and dusty, and most undesirable as a place of permanent residence. All that was observed of the local administration went to show that King Hussein's Government is a progressive one.

Lord Headley highly praised the Egyptian Government's arrangements for the pilgrims, especially the quarantine station at Tor, where everything possible was done to mitigate the tedium of the three days' enforced confinement.