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Baghdad,

2nd May, 1953.

The varied ceremonies which are taking place in Baghdad this week-end in celebration of the accession to the Throne of H.M. King Faisal II of Iraq began today with a short but impressive ceremony in the Mejlis - the House of Parliament. At 7.30 a.m. the house was full of Senators and Deputies in full evening dress, and the gallery was packed with the members of foreign delegations, in court dress, and resplendent uniforms.

The King and the Regent drove in State from the Royal residence to the Mejlis, in an open state landau.

His Eminence MOHAMMED AL SADIR, the head of the Iraqi Senate and a religious leader of the Shia's Sect of the Muslim faith, read a short Arabic text.

Then the King, in a white and gold uniform, came on to the dais of the house, followed by Prince Abdul Illah, who has for so long been Regent of Iraq.

The King read the oath of kingship firmly and clearly, and His Eminence MOHAMMED AL SADIR afterwards spoke with dignity, while the notabilities from many parts of the world stood silent and intent.

From the Mejlis His Majesty drove in state to the Royal Palace, and there he received the delegates representing the heads of State of 35 countries.

Tomorrow, May 3rd, His Majesty will review Army and Police Units in a march-past.

On Monday, May 4th, His Majesty will see school students in a pageant.

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## HISTORICAL NOTE

Today, 2nd May, 1953, King Faisal II of Iraq assumes his constitutional rights. King Faisal II, who succeeded to the throne of Iraq on the death of his father King Ghazi in 1939, was born in 1935, son of King Ghazi and Queen Aliyah. During King Faisal II's minority Iraq has been ruled by the Crown Prince Emir Abdul Illah, the King's uncle. King Faisal II has been educated in England, at Harrow, and has travelled in the United States and Europe.

The young king - he was four years old at the death of his father, and is now just over eighteen - is a member of the Hashimite family, the family of the prophet Mohammed, who belongs to the Koreish, the most distinguished of the Hejaz tribes. The family were custodians of the Holy Kaaba at Mecca long before the advent of Islam, and continued in that capacity almost without interruption up to 1926.

The Kingdom of Iraq was established in 1921 under King Faisal I, the present king's grandfather. It was then that Iraq regained her political entity which she had lost in 1258 as a result of the Mongol invasions, and had never regained during the long centuries of Ottoman rule.

Under the wise rule of King Faisal I, who had led the Arab forces against German-organised Ottoman troops during the first World War, Iraq became a nation once more, firmly allied to Great Britain. She was admitted into the League of Nations in 1932.

King Faisal I died in 1953, and was succeeded by his only son, Ghazi, the father of the present King.

Faisal II assumes the kingship of a State that is still young and vigorous, struggling to modernise herself and find a better way of life for her people without sacrificing the great traditions of culture and social grace which are part of the Arab heritage.