

### TONGA GREETS THE QUEEN.

Tongabata, the southerly island of the Tonga group, prepares to welcome Queen Elizabeth who is journeying by flying-boat from the Fiji Islands for a two-day visit. Sunshine floods the islands as, across the bay, comes the launch bringing Her Majesty to the islands capital, Nukunolofa. Queen Salote Tubou, whose charm and dignity captured Britain's heart at Coronation time, is first to greet the royal visitors.

Her Majesty receives a bouquet from Queen's Salote's granddaughter, as the people's token of welcome. Queen Salote, (who braved the rain during the Coronation procession back to Buckingham Palace) joins our Queen in the shelter of an umbrella as rain sweeps in from the sea. But its not long before the sun comes out again to brighten the joyous scene of welcome. Tongans, who formerly greeted visitors in silence, have now adopted cheering at the request of Queen Salote who brought the idea back from Britain. And there's no doubt the idea sounds just fine to every Tongan on the island.

So to the Palace, where Her Majesty is to be Queen Salote's guest. A permanent guest is Tui Malila, a tortoise, which is it believed was a present from Captain Cook to a Tongan chief about 170 years ago. Holding the rank of a high chieftain, Tui has a special apartment in the Palace.

Thousands of flying foxes are a feature of Tonga. Although they do great damage to crops, none is killed as they are taboo. If they should leave the island it's believed it would indicate the death of a local chief. A superstitious people, the Tongans, but a hospitable happy race, and rightly have their islands been called "The Friendly Islands". To honour Queen Elizabeth, a sumptuous feast is held on the city green. More than a thousand guests are invited, but almost every islander has contributed to make this the greatest celebration of its kind ever held in Tonga.

For the royal visitor's, pleasure, 2000 pigs, and hundreds of chickens, lobsters, yams, fruits, turkey and fish have been prepared. At one of the three 150 yards long tables, the royal party sit cross-legged for the feast. The food is served on hugh banana leaves, and (as is the Tongan custom), eaten with the fingers. Daughters of some of the island's leading citizens, wait upon the royal guests.

Although the catering works out at about two pigs per head, the feast is soon ended. Then to complete the festivity comes the dancing composed in welcome to the Queen, Many are interpretations of nursery

rhymes taught to Tongans by British missionaries.

Several casualties followed over strenuous rehearsals for the island's most exciting and vigorous war dance.

#### PART TWO - ROYAL TOUR.

But soon the royal visit to Tonga ends. Once more Her Majesty and the Duke come aboard the s.s. "Gothic" to continue their journey to the countries of the Commonwealth. Another launch brings back members of the crew each bearing gifts from the people of the Friendly Islands. From the shore, children wave a last farewell.

Members of the royal party cast garlands of flowers onto the sea, a Tongan custom that signifies their wish to return. On towards New Zealand heads the royal liner through cold, rainy weather.

The coastline is ahead. Out from the shore hurry nearly two thousand little craft to escort Gothic to Auckland Harbour.

Guns sound a welcoming to the Queen, the first reigning sovereign ever to visit New Zealand.

A Naval guard of Honour waits at the quayside as, from the liner, steps the Queen to be welcomed by the Governor General, Sir Willoughby Norris, and Lady Norris.

Next to greet the Queen, is Mr. Holland, the Prime Minister, and his wife.

To hail the Queen, Maoris in their traditional costume, perform a Haka in front of the town hall in Auckland - an unplanned gesture of the affection they hold for their highest chieftain. At the town hall, on an open dais, the Queen stands in the rain to hear speeches of welcome. With true Elizabethan courtesy, the deputy mayor of Auckland, Mr. Keith Buttle, slips off his raincoat, and hands it to Mr. Holland who puts it about the Queen's shoulders. "Thank you Sir Walter Raleigh" says, Her Majesty.

Later, the weather improves, and the grounds of Government House are crowded as 2,500 people gather for a garden party. The Queen, who wears a sleeveless dress of shantung walks out to meet the guests.

In her Christmas message from Auckland the Queen said that, although she was parted from her children, she found herself completely and most happily at home in New Zealand.