

THE QUEEN IN BOMBAY.

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Bombay, historically the Gateway of India, welcomed the Queen and Duke not upon their arrival in the Sub-continent, but at a comparatively late stage of the Tour. For in this age of air travel, Bombay has lost some of that particular significance. Captain Todd, Head of the Master Mariners of India, presented an address bearing on India's importance at sea. To the Duke, the Deputy Master gave a wooden shield.

The Gateway at which the royal barge was waiting, commemorates the landing of George 5th and Queen Mary 50 years ago. British imperialism was then at its height, and the King described Bombay as a jewel of the Crown. Who then could have foreseen that the present Monarch would tour the Republic of India? Another sign of the times: Her Majesty was now taking the launch to Trombay to inspect India's Atomic Energy Establishment.

The holy city of Benares, where Buddha preached 2,500 years ago, was a contrast indeed to the nuclear age. **Some of the monks here are exiles from Tibet since the Chinese conquest.**

In contemplation of the Eternal, the Buddhist monks allow the centuries to drift by, apparently unheeded.

The Holy City has perhaps 2,000 temples. The Vihara enshrines the relics of Buddha, and is venerated accordingly. The relics were discovered 47 years ago in the Punjab. They were presented to Mahabodhi Society of India in 1931, and the present temple was built for their safe keeping.

At his palace the Maharajah of Benares was the Queen's host. And even on this Royal Tour, no days could have been more crowded with sights and wonders than these in the Holy City. Fort Ramnagar built in 1752, is evidence that even Benares has often had to defend herself. Happily not the faintest hint of warfare ruffles the fortress today. It is the home of the Maharajah.

Here the Maharajah awaited his royal guests, the personification of the superb hospitality which is no natural and unaffected throughout India.

14 elephants, richly arrayed, were prepared for the procession through the city, staged in the Queen's honour.

By this noble form of transport, traditional among the Indian princes, Her Majesty is becoming almost a veteran traveller. The animal chosen to carry the Queen and the Maharajah stands more than 13 feet high and is 45 years old. To get into the howdah nearly calls for a lift.

It's just as well to hold on when Mangal Prasad lumbers to his feet.

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Kusman Kamini carried the Duke. He is an elephant only a little less magnificent than the Queen's.

From the Fort the procession began to the Balua Ghat. In the silver howdah the Maharajah rode with his guest.

This was a facet of India unchanged since the Queen's grandfather came to the country in 1911, and for centuries before that.

Benares stands on a splendid curve of the Ganges, the Holy River. And safely disembarked from the state elephant, the Queen prepared to go by launch 4 miles along the waterside.

As the Ganges flows past the Holy City, Benares presents a spectacle of Temples, crowded as though shouldering each other for position on the river bank. To bathe in the sacred waters is the ambition of every devout Hindu. All who can, make the pilgrimage at least once in their lives. Benares is the Mecca of India. It is reported that half-a-million people crowded the ghats to see the Queen pass. Her Majesty said later on that she was spellbound by the Benares Ghats thronged with sightseers. Well may she have been. For though the Royal Tour of India and Pakistan has lavishly provided unforgettable impressions, none can have exceeded the marvels of Benares.