

## THE CONCLUSION OF THE ROYAL TOUR OF INDIA.

### THE DEPARTURE FROM INDIA.

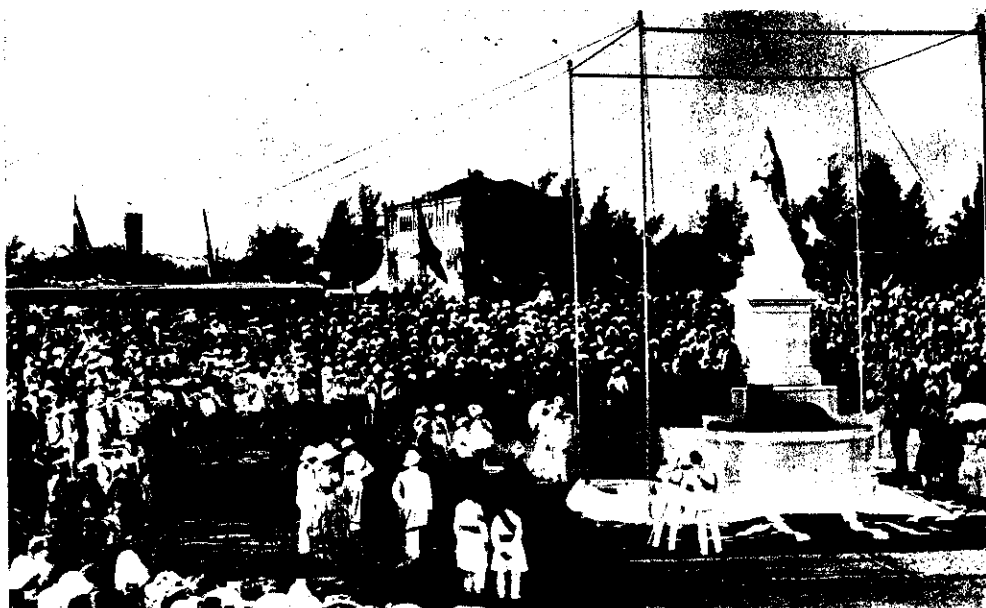
Readers of the "Graphic" have been able to follow the wanderings of the Prince and Princess of Wales through a good part of their journeyings through India. Accounts are now to hand of the closing scenes of a remarkably successful tour. They show that there was much that was picturesque and interesting about the closing days of the Royal progress. After crossing from Rangoon to Madras the route was through the native States of Hyderabad and Mysore through Central India to Benares, the sacred city on the Ganges, some of the more interesting phases of which were recently briefly sketched in the "Graphic." Thence the route lay north till the vicinity of the frontier was again reached at Quetta in Baluchistan.

The Quetta plateau flows into the Peshin Valley through Baluchistan, and the Peshin Plain washes the Khwaj Amran mountains which constitute the real frontier again Western Afghanistan. Here the Prince and Princess of Wales stood, a span or two from the actual limit between India and Afghanistan, and looked out over the great stretch of prairie whereon Britain's legions will mass if ever India is menaced from this quarter. It was their first glimpse of the actual Frontier, as the boundary on the Peshawar side is not visible from the fort of Landi Kotal, where they halted after their drive through the Khyber. And what a frontier! From Cape Comorin to Peshawar there is nothing more typically illustrative of the unpretentiousness of Indian administrative methods. From the railway station a well macadamised road leads to within a mile of the whitened pillars which mark off India from Afghanistan. Thence the old highway Kandahar meanders through the plain and, unless you were told that the boundary marks existed, you might be pardoned for wandering into forbidden territory. Not a soldier, not even a chowkidar, place a bar upon your progress. Not a Customs' barrier, not an "octroi" post, warns you that the Amir's possessions must not be infringed upon. The prairie rolls on until it strikes the low ochreous hills a dozen miles away. Half that distance from you, there rises a little ridge crowned by three tiny towers like khaki oil tanks. That is Spin Baldak Fort where the Amir's Governor keeps watch for intruders, and for subjects who disobey his own peculiar laws. Towards Quetta, the oldest station buildings are barely discernible, nor the mud brick barracks that shelter the battalion in garrison. The fort that stands on the outskirts of the cantonment scarcely deserves that name. With good glasses you may trace the passage of the railway as it laboriously climbs the spurs of the Khwaj Amran before plunging into its vitals through the Khojak Tunnel, but apart from these almost illegible signals to its real purpose, the veldt might be the undisturbed possessions of the picturesque horsemen galloping over it of the nomadic goat herds and wild camel-men who lazily emerge from their skin hovels to gaze at the strangers.

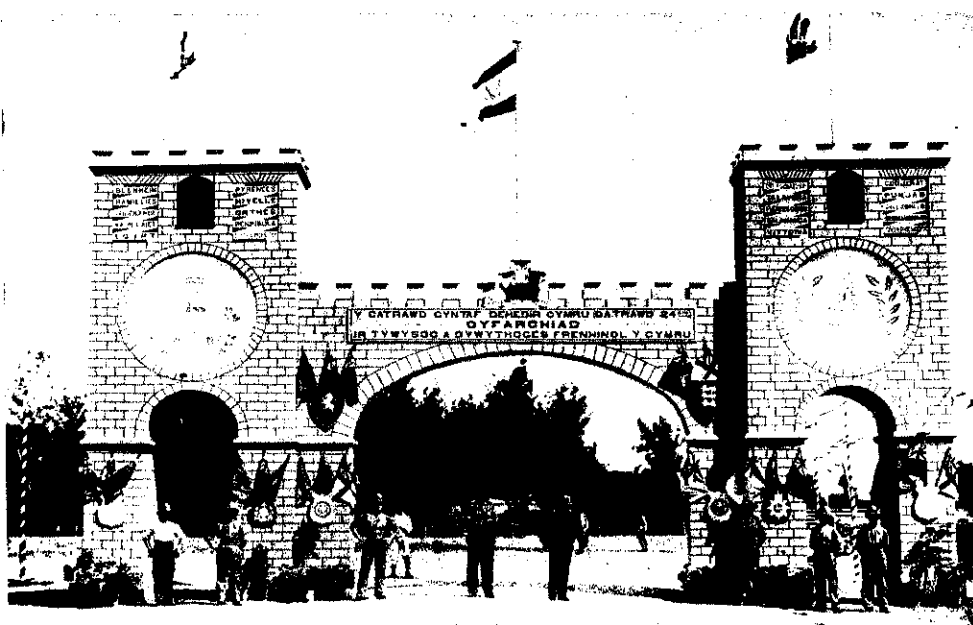
Nature designed the Khwaj Amran to be the frontier between neighbouring States. From these snow-capped hills there is no other great natural obstacle, not only as far as Kandahar, but far beyond the Herat and the southernmost limits of the Russian advance. She also spread out this campaign to be the campaign ground for armies. Not divisions but army corps might be cantoned with ease. If you care to look beneath the surface, there are already many signs for those who would read of the important military purpose to which it has already been put. The railway station differs in no material respect from scores of others in India, but from it radiate the sidings which would enable the biggest force that could be mobilised to detrain as fast as the double approach massed at Chaman. The streaked herbage of the down-like land is studded with red blobs. These mark the sites of the camps which are prepared for the reception of two divisions whenever they are required. The fatigue party of Sappers at work are repairing the water pipes that would supply the camps, and which the predatory Afghan is constantly cutting for the sake of the metal. And at the station yard are assembled the rails and sleepers, the wires and the girders, that would rush the rail-road forward to Kandahar at record speed if



THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KARACHI.



THE QUEEN VICTORIA STATUE AT KARACHI.



DECORATED ARCH AT THE GATE OF THE SOUTH WALES BORDERERS REGIMENT, KARACHI, IN HONOR OF THE ROYAL VISIT.