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ROYAL DIARY.

King Gustav of Sweden leads Queen Elizabeth into the ballroom of Stockholm's City Hall for the last brilliant social event of the Queen's visit - a dance given by the Order of the Amaranth. This 300-year-old Order is far from solemn; its only function nowadays is to hold an annual ball.

Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands joins in the dancing - and the British royal party includes Princess Margaret and the Duke of Gloucester. All eyes, of course, are on Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Apart from these social occasions, the climax of the Queen's visit is the final event of the Equestrian Olympic Games - the Grand Prix jumping contest. Here's Britain's Peter Robeson on Scorchin tackling a very stiff course. And Bernard de Fombelle of France.

Birk Elgason of Norway is one of many who find that one fault leads to another.

Pen Sang of Cambodia is in trouble, too.

And Pen Sang's compatriot Ganthi fares no better - his mount doesn't refuse, but perhaps he wishes it had.

Peter Robeson again, on Scorchin. The British team are doing better than most, but not quite well enough to meet the excellent performance of the German contingent. As always, Pat Smythe on Flanagan gives of her best, although she too, drops some points on a very difficult course. But for Pat Smythe's brilliant recoveries, Britain might have been farther behind the Germans.

Individual winner is Germany's Hans Winkler on Halla, who delights the crowd with a faultless second round - even though he's in great pain from a muscle ruptured in the first round. So Germany wins both the team and the individual gold medals.

Italy is second, only three points ahead of Britain - but our gallant trio add a bronze medal to the gold one Britain already holds.

On her return from Sweden, one of her Majesty's first engagements is at Windsor Castle, where she invests three new Knights of the Garter. Sir Anthony Eden, the Earl of Iveagh, and Earl Attlee. Sir Winston Churchill walks with them in the procession to the chapel. The Queen Mother is here, too, by tradition the head of the Order walks last of all - the Sovereign with her consort.

At the south door of the chapel, the Duke of Cornwall and Princess Anne watch with Princess Margaret.

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The investiture and the installation service are based on ceremonies handed down through six centuries. And the robes worn by Sir Winston Churchill and the Prime Minister, by Lord Portal and Earl Mountbatten have changed little since the Order was founded.

For the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, a solemn and dignified homecoming.

But not everything on the royal programme is solemn. Next day sees the Queen and the Duke at the opening of the most elegant and colourful of all race meetings - Royal Ascot. This is no day for arriving by car - the Queen and her husband open the meeting by driving along the course in an open carriage, as the spirit of Ascot demands. For at Ascot, people - and clothes are even more important than the horses. Princess Alexandra arrives in time for the Gold Vase, which is just under way with Bob Sawyer, Rich Bloem, Greenhill, and French Beige making the running.

And now it's French Beige in front, with allowed up the action to show how he holds his lead to win from Rosati and Trevato.

Next on the card is the Ascot Stakes over two and a half miles.

The Queen and the Princess Royal walk to the paddock to inspect the field. Twenty-three horses are running - including a strong French challenge - while Norman Hartnell passes a tip to a friend.

And there's Zarathustra, with Carr mounting.

Nearly time - and if you've a last-minute fancy, keep it under your hat.

A clean start, with most of the field well bunched together.

First time round it's Burlington Gardens, setting a good pace with Ring 'o Roses, Devonport, the Black Horse, and Ballycastle close behind.

Burlington Gardens still holding his lead, but there's quite a way of go yet.

And as they come into the final straight, Black Horse has taken first place, with Gads Hill on his heels.

But here comes the surprise - Carr brings Zarathustra past the leaders in a magnificent burst of speed - Gads Hill moves into second place behind him, and Black Horse is left standing!

And at the post it's Zarathustra, Gads Hill, and Bally - a thrilling finish, and the French challenge has failed.