

## 《威廉夫妇出行乔治小王子成焦点》

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Prince George will be in the spotlight as he heads to Australia and New Zealand with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. What can they expect on their first engagements as a family of three?

He's not even nine months old yet, but he's already making a big impact.

George Alexander Louis is about to embark on his first official foreign tour - with his mother and father too, of course.

And it can reasonably be said that a good many people in New Zealand and Australia appear to be getting rather excited about the three-week trip, which starts in Wellington on Monday and ends in Canberra on 25 April.

The normally rumbustious, hard-edged Kiwi/Aussie attitude to visiting Poms seems to have been suspended for William, Catherine and George.

Barbs about alleged sporting deficiencies in the "old country" have been replaced by baby talk - about teething (is he?), crawling (can he?) and walking (might he, on this trip?).

In part, the Aussie/Kiwi sopiness (words which one wouldn't normally expect to find together) might be explained as being a perfectly normal reaction to a baby, the presence of whom is a pretty universal antidote to cynicism.

But there appears to be evidence of something else here.

Are we, perhaps, witnessing the emergence of a renewed enthusiasm for the long-term future of the monarchy in New Zealand and Australia?

Not so many years ago, real questions were being raised about whether these former British dominions wanted to retain a system whereby people who lived on the other side of the world and who visited infrequently were nonetheless regarded as "their" head of state and "their" royal family.

It was said to be an anachronism from the days of Empire that was no longer appropriate.

The doubts were at their height - in Australia at least - nearly 15 years ago in the constitutional referendum of November 1999 when 45% of those who voted expressed a preference for a republic.

But in the years since, Australia and New Zealand seem to have been swept along (and republican feelings largely swept away) by the impact of an increasingly venerated monarch and the emergence of a glamorous young couple





