

[Bedford, Lemere.]

SANDRINGHAM.

From a Photo. by]



## The Prince of Wales at Sandringham.

[The Prince of Wales is, of course, precluded by his position from granting interviews like private persons, but His Royal Highness has been so good as to give us special permission to insert the following extremely interesting article, which we are happy to be able to present to our readers in place of the Illustrated Interview for the present month. The next of the series of Illustrated Interviews, by Mr. Harry How, will appear next month. Sir Robert Rawlinson, the celebrated engineer, whose work saved so many lives in the Crimea, has given Mr. How a most interesting interview, with special illustrations.]

“**F**AR from the busy haunt of man” might be fitly applied to Sandringham; so quiet, and so secluded, is this favourite residence of the heir to England’s throne and his beautiful and universally esteemed wife.

Not an ancient castle with tower and moat, not a show place such as would charm a merchant prince, but beautiful in its simplicity and attractive in its homeliness; yet withal, clothed in the dignity inseparable from its owners and its associations; in short, a happy English home, inhabited by a typical English family.

How often have we seen them in the country lanes all squeezed into one wagonette, looking like a jolly village squire and his family; or watched the young Princes and Princesses careering round the park on their favourite steeds, and listened to their merry laughing voices as they emulated each other to come in winner!

When at Sandringham, State and its duties, society and its requirements, are relegated to the dim past and shadowy future; and our Prince is a country gentleman, deep in agriculture and the welfare of his tenantry; and his wife and children pass their time in visiting the schools, the poor, and the sick, working in their dairy,

or at their sketching, art and useful needlework, etc.

Fortunately, the estate is above seven miles from King’s Lynn, its nearest town, so that the family are not subjected to the prying gaze of the curious. They have not, however, the inconvenience of this long drive from the railway station, as there is one at Wolferton, a little village of about forty houses, on the estate, and between two and three miles from the “House.”

In 1883 the Prince added a suite of waiting-rooms to the building already there: the addition consisting of a large entrance-hall, approached by a covered carriage way, with rooms on either side for the Prince and Princess. These rooms are handsomely and

tastefully furnished, and are used not only as waiting-rooms, but occasionally for luncheon, when the Prince and his guests are shooting in the vicinity of Wolferton. The station lies in a charming valley, and emerging from its grounds, you have before you a picturesque drive along a well gravelled road, bordered with velvety turf, and backed with fir, laurel, pine and gorse.

Rabbits in hundreds are popping hither and thither, pheasants are flying over your head, squirrels are scampering up and down trees, there are sounds of many feathery songsters



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES.  
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.



in the branches; while if you pause awhile, you may catch the distant murmur of the sea—certainly you can feel its breezes; and you seem to get the beauty of the Highlands, the grandeur of the sea, and the very pick of English scenery, all in one extensive panorama. The view from the heights is beyond description: an uninterrupted outlook over the North Sea, and a general survey of such wide range, that on clear days the steeple or tower of Boston church (familiarily known as "Boston Stump") can be plainly seen.

Proceeding on your way, you pass the park boundary wall, the residence of the comptroller, the rectory, the little church of St. Mary Magdalene, with its flag waving in the breeze denoting the family are in residence—take a sudden curve in the road, and find yourself in front of the Norwich gates, admitting to the principal entrance. A solitary policeman is here on guard, but he knows his business, and knows every member of the household by sight; and though his duty consists in merely opening and shutting the gates, you may be quite sure he will not open to the wrong one.

These gates are worthy of more than a passing glance, for they are a veritable masterpiece of design and mechanism. They were, in fact, one of the features of the 1862 Exhibition, and were afterwards presented to the Prince by the County of Norwich. On

the top is the golden crown, supported by the Prince's feathers. Underneath, held by bronzed griffins, are heraldic shields representing the various titles of the Prince, while the remainder is composed of flowers, sprays, and creeping vines. They are connected with the palisading by rose, shamrock and thistle. The maker was Barnard, of Norwich.

Although this is the chief entrance, it is necessary to proceed up the avenue and diverge to the left, before the front of the building comes into view; then it will be seen to be of modernized Elizabethan architecture; exterior, red brick, with Ketton-stone dressing. Over the door is a carved inscription as follows: "This house was built by Albert Edward Prince of Wales and Alexandra his wife, in the year of Our Lord, 1870." As a matter of fact, the estate had been purchased nine years previous to that date, for a sum of £220,000, but the Old Manor House was in such a condition that, after vainly trying to patch up and add on to, it was found desirable to pull it all down, and build an entirely new residence. Not only did the mansion need re-building, but also the cottages of the tenants and labourers; and much to the honour of the Prince and Princess, these cottages were their first care, and were all re-built and several new ones erected before they took possession of their own home.

An invitation to Sandringham is an honour

which few would lightly regard; and if it is your first visit you are in a flutter of anticipation and expectation, making it somewhat difficult to preserve the calm exterior that society demands of you. Now there are two distinct sets invited there; one from Friday to Monday, and one from Monday or Tuesday to Friday; the former generally including a bishop, dean, or canon for the Sunday



From a Photo. by

THE MAIN ENTRANCE.

[Bedford Leners.]



service, two or three eminent statesmen, and a sprinkling of musical, literary, and artistic celebrities. To this list I will suppose you to belong.

You have found carriages and baggage vans awaiting what is known as the "Royal train"—a special run just when the Prince is in residence—and you and your fellow-visitors have driven up to the principal entrance. There you alight, and are ushered by the footmen into a spacious hall or saloon, where you are received with the distinguished grace and courtesy for which your Royal host and hostess are so justly celebrated.

the tiniest of continental masterpieces, is kept half an hour fast. The ringing-out of the hour thirty minutes before you expect it is startling in the extreme; and your maid or man has a bad time of it until you discover the discrepancy.

At last, however, you are ready, and in due time find yourself amidst the company in the grand dining saloon, where dinner is served in state, although not with the frigid formality one is inclined to expect. A certain degree of nervousness *must* be felt by all on the first occasion they dine with Royalty; but your host and hostess are so extremely



From a Photo. by

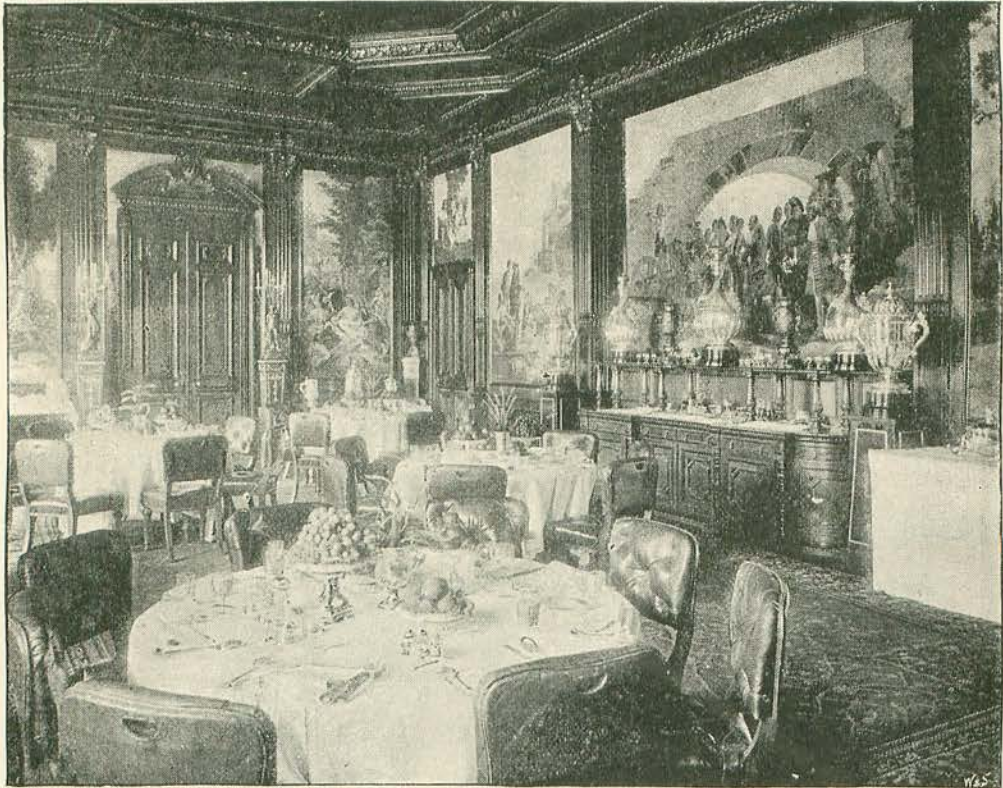
THE SALOON.

[Bedford Lemere.]

You have only time for a rapid glance at the massive oak carving and valuable paintings (chief of which is one portraying the family at afternoon tea, by Zichy) before you find yourself being conducted to the handsome suite of apartments you will occupy during your visit. A cup of tea and some light refreshment, and the dinner-hour being 7.30 it is time to prepare. If you have not been here before, let me give you a word of warning, or you will commit the dreadful sin of unpunctuality. Every clock on the place, from the loud-voiced one over the stables to

affable, and have such a happy gift of putting people at their ease, that you insensibly forget their august position, and find yourself chatting with comfort and enjoyment. You will notice the splendid proportions of this saloon, and the priceless Spanish tapestry with which it is hung—this was the gift of the King of Spain to the Prince. There is also a magnificent display of plate, much of it presentation. The tables are oblong, the Prince and Princess facing each other at the centre; the floor—as are most of them—is of polished oak, this one being freely scattered





[From a Photo. by]

THE DINING-ROOM, WITH TABLE SET FOR LUNCHEON.

[Botford Lenses.]

with costly Turkish rugs. I may here mention that adjoining this saloon is a spacious ante-room, containing a fine collection of tigers' skins, elephants' tusks, etc.: a good record of the travels of His Royal Highness, of much interest to travellers and sportsmen.

When you presently adjourn to the drawing-rooms—of which there are a suite of small ones in addition to the large one—you will find there is no lack of entertainment and amusement; such, indeed, as must suit the most varied tastes. First, however, we will take some note of the rooms themselves. These (the drawing-rooms) are all connected with the entrance-hall by a broad corridor, which is ornamented with pieces of armour, ancient china, stuffed birds, etc.; they face the lakes, and are on the western or front of the building, opening on to the terrace.

The large drawing-room is of beautiful construction, fitted with windows reaching from ceiling to floor. The walls are panelled with pink and blue, with mouldings of gold and cream. The furniture is upholstered in pale blue, with threads of deep crimson

and gold; the hangings are of rich chenille; the floor of polished oak, with rich Indian rugs distributed here and there. A plentiful scattering of music and books gives it a home-like appearance, while hand embroidery, sketches, painting on china, and feather screens show the variety of talent and skill of the ladies of the family. In the very centre of the room is a large piece of rockwork, with a tasteful arrangement (carried out under the care of the Princess herself) of choice ferns and beautiful roses in bloom, while rising out of the midst is a marble figure of Venus. The principal conservatory opens from this room. It is rich in palms and ferns, and contains a monument of art to Madame Jerichau, the sculptress, in the shape of a group of bathing girls.

Meanwhile, whatever amusement is to be the order has by this time commenced: perhaps it is music—the ladies of the family are all good musicians—perhaps it is *tableaux vivants*, or possibly a carpet dance. If your tastes do not lie in these directions, or after you have enjoyed them for a sufficient time, you have the choice of using the billiard-





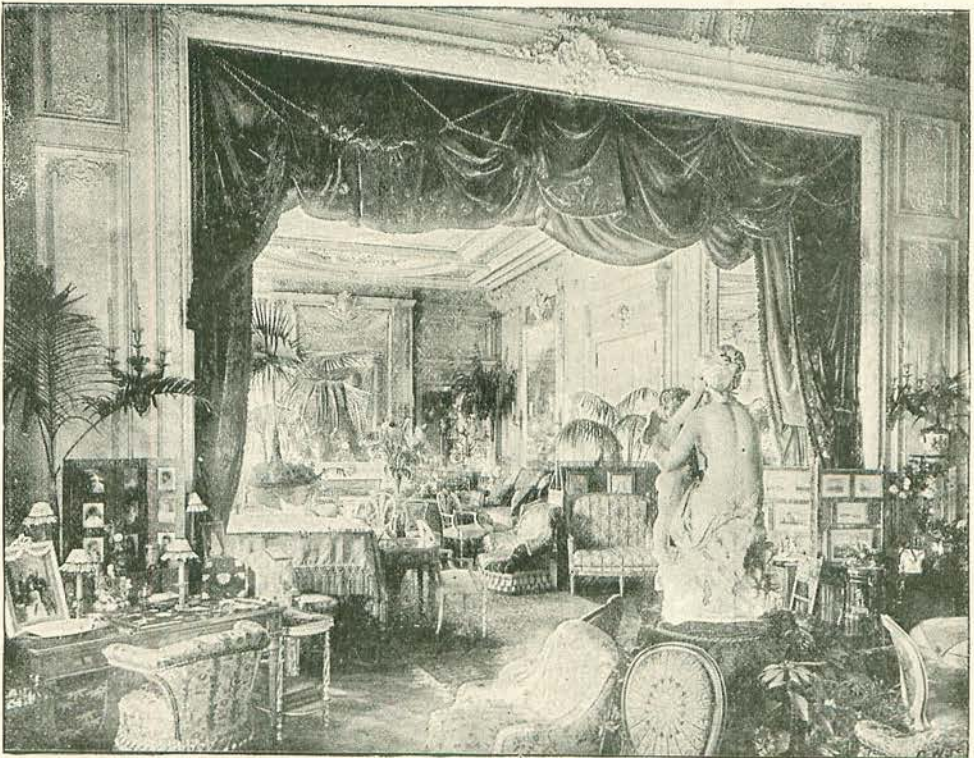
From a Photo. by]

THE DINING-ROOM, WITH TABLE SET FOR DINNER.

[Bedford Lemere.

room, the American bowling alley, or the smoking-rooms. The billiard-room will interest you vastly: it is literally lined with arms of all descriptions. The tables, of course, are of the best.

Another room you may perhaps find your way to to-night is the "Serapis" room; it is half library and half smoking-room; in it you will see the entire fittings of the cabin the Prince occupied on his journey to India,

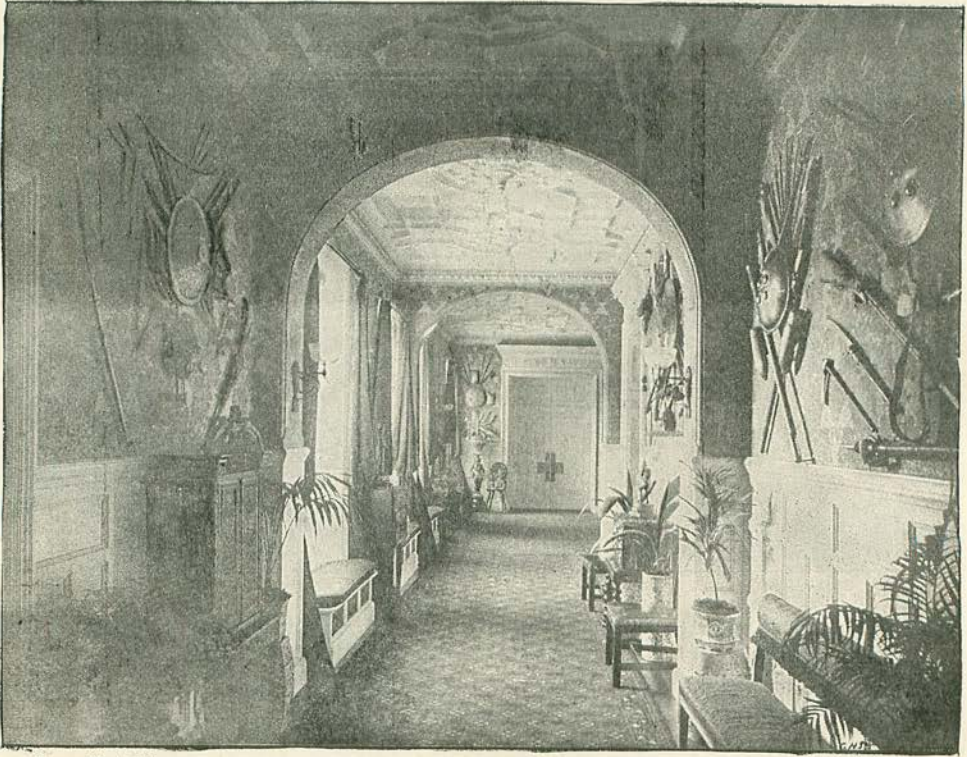


From a Photo. by]

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

[Bedford Lemere.





From a Photo. by]

THE CORRIDOR.

[Belford Lemeré.

in the vessel of the above name. One thing you may rest assured of—that neither on this evening nor at any other time while at Sandringham will you know a dull moment.

In the morning you will find breakfast served at nine o'clock in the dining saloon. As, however, the Prince and Princess generally take theirs in their private apartments, there is no formality, and you do not feel bound to the punctuality imperative when you meet their Royal Highnesses.

Perhaps you have letters to write; and I may as well here remark that the postal arrangements are first-rate. There is a post-office *inside* the house, which is also a money order office. Three deliveries per day come in that way, while mounted men meet the trains at Wolferton Station. There is also telegraphic communication with Central London, King's Lynn, and Marlborough House; and telephone to Wolferton Station, the stud farm, agents, bailiff, etc.

Before proceeding to out-door sights—which will not be possible very early, as your host has a multiplicity of business to get through—you had better take the opportunity of seeing some of the rare and beautiful treasures indoors. Of course, all are aware of the

extensive travels of the Prince in many countries, and will, therefore, expect to find many mementos of the same in his home; but I think few are prepared to find them so numerous and so valuable. Not only does one see them here and there in various directions, but one room of considerable dimensions is set apart altogether for them, and a day could be profitably spent in their inspection. It is not only their costliness and their beauty, but the associations which make them of so much interest. This one was presented by the King of this place; this one by Prince So-and-so; this by such a town, and this by such an order or society, until the vision is quite dazzled with beauty.

Perhaps as a strong contrast you may get a peep at the Prince's morning-room, a room plainly and usefully fitted and furnished in light oak. There you will see such a batch of correspondence that you will be inclined to wonder when it will be got through, but the Prince is a capital business man, and nothing is lost sight of.

The libraries must not be overlooked; there are quite a suite of them, well stocked with English and French literature more particularly. A large number will be noticed





From a Photo. by]

THE CONSERVATORY.

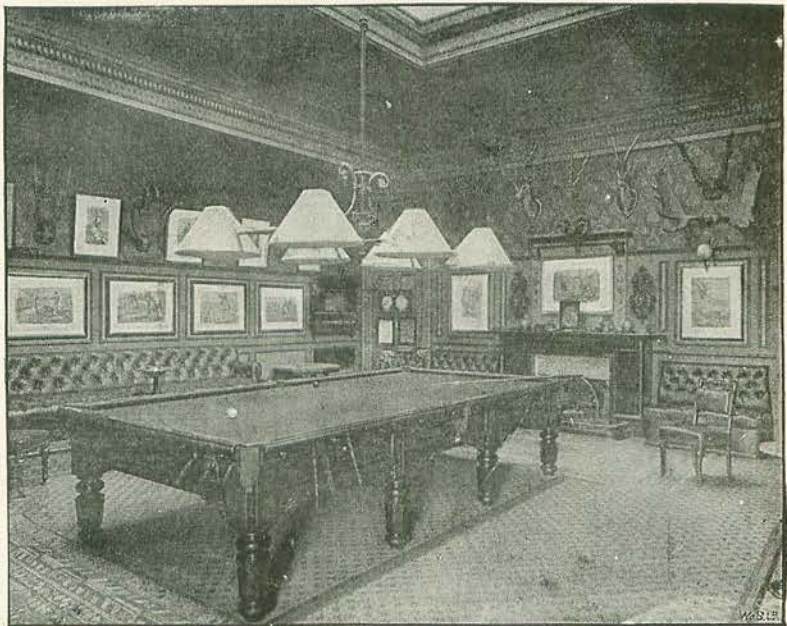
[Bedford Lemere.

as presentation volumes, in handsome and unique bindings. One of these rooms also contains many mementos of travel and sport in various climes.

Two additional stories have within the last few weeks been completed over the bowling alley and billiard-room, making a total of about eighteen apartments, henceforth to be known as "The Bachelors' Wing."

For some years the large hall at the entrance was made to do duty for a ball-room, and no mean one either; but the Prince thinking it not quite so commodious as

he would wish, he, some nine years ago, had a new and larger one built. This, and one

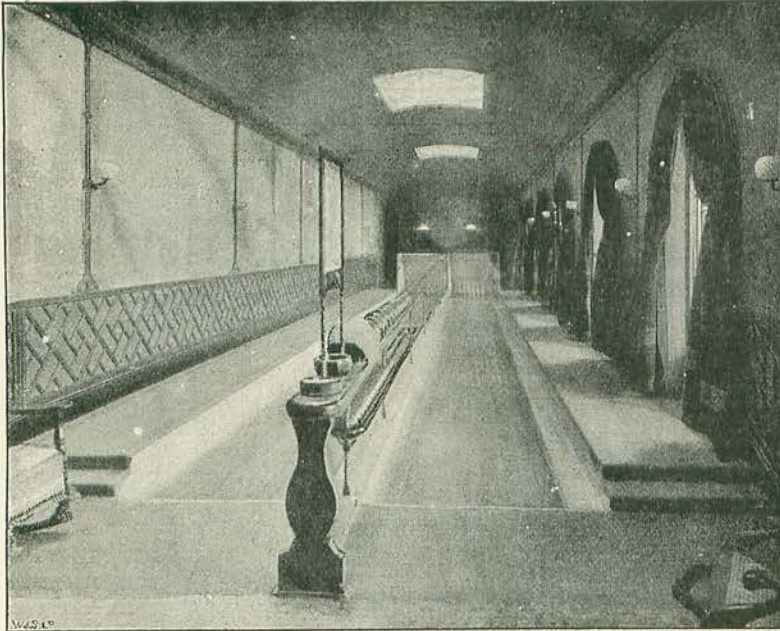


From a Photo. by]

THE BILLIARD SALOON.

[Bedford Lemere.





From a Photo. by]

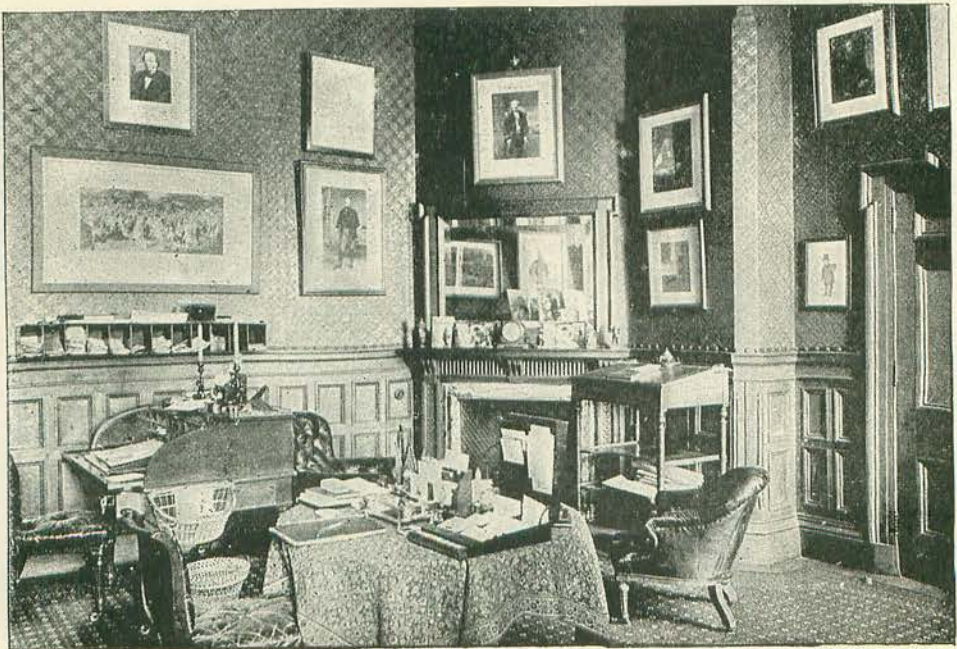
THE BOWLING ALLEY.

[Bedford Lenere.

or two other rooms, really constitute a new wing. The turret of this wing has just been raised, in order to place therein a clock purchased by the local tradesmen as a memorial to the late Duke of Clarence and Avondale. The ball-room is of immense size and lofty construction, with fine bay

windows at either end, and large alcoves on either side, one containing a magnificent fire-place, and the other windows. The walls are artistic triumphs, being finely painted in delicate colours, and on them arranged a fine collection of Indian trophies. The floor is of oak, and kept in such a condition of polish as to be a pitfall and snare to any dancer not in constant practice. More than one or two couples have been known to suddenly subside, even in the most select of the select circles there assembled.

If during your visit one of the annual balls should take place, you are most fortunate. There are three of such — the "County," the "Tenants," and the "Servants," the first, of course, bringing the *élite*;



From a Photo. by]

THE PRINCE'S BUSINESS ROOM.

[Bedford Lenere.





From a Photo. by]

THE LIBRARY.

[Bedford Lemere.

but the two latter sometimes presenting a curious mixture. The tenants, I may say, are allowed to introduce a limited number of friends, a privilege highly valued, and much sought after by the most remote acquaintance of each and every tenant on the estate. A most wonderful display of colours distinguishes these Norfolkites, bright of hue, too, and more often than not dames of fifty got up in the style of damsels of eighteen.

And what appetites these yeomen and cattle-dealers have got, to be sure! And if you had a few tramps across the "Broads" you would not wonder at it, for hunger is soon the predominant feeling. The dancing, too, is a study; country dances, reels, and jigs following each other in such quick succession, that the band in the gallery at the far end do not have any too easy a time of it. Through everything, the same kindly interest is displayed by the Royal host and hostess; their interest never wanes, and their courtesy never flags, but everyone is noticed, and made to feel as much at their ease as it is possible for them to be.

Perhaps the servants' ball is as pretty a sight as one could see in the room—the toilettes of the Royal Family and their visitors, the rich state liveries of the footmen, the scattering of Highland costumes, the green and buff of the gamekeepers, and the caps of the maidservants, all blending into

an ever-moving kaleidoscope, picturesque in the extreme.

Few that are familiar with Sandringham can enter this room without thinking of the occasion when the proud and loving mother entered, leaning on the arm of her eldest boy, on the day he attained his majority. The fairest and bravest of all England were there assembled to do him honour; and from all parts of the world "happy returns" and long life were wished for he whom all

regarded as their future King. Some of the associations of this home must of necessity be saddening, but on the other hand, much must remind of many little acts of kindness and loving attentions paid; and were this a biography of the late Prince, many little anecdotes of his great thoughtfulness for those around him might be told; but his monument will be in the memories of all who knew him.

To return, however, to description. After the Prince has dispatched his necessary business, he generally takes his visitors round to view the park, gardens, model farm, stables, kennels, or whatever His Royal Highness thinks may interest them most. If you are an enthusiast in farming, you will be immensely interested in the 600 acres of land farmed on scientific principles. Every known improvement in machinery, etc., is introduced, with results of as near perfection as possible in crops. The Prince looks a genuine farmer, as he tramps through the fields in true Norfolk garb of tweed and gaiters; and it does not require much attention to find from his conversation that he quite understands what he is talking about; so it behoves one to rub up his weak points in this direction.

In the stables all are disposed to linger; every one of (I think) sixty stalls being inhabited by first-rate steeds, many of them good racers. The prettiest sight of all is the Princess's stable—a smaller one adjoining;



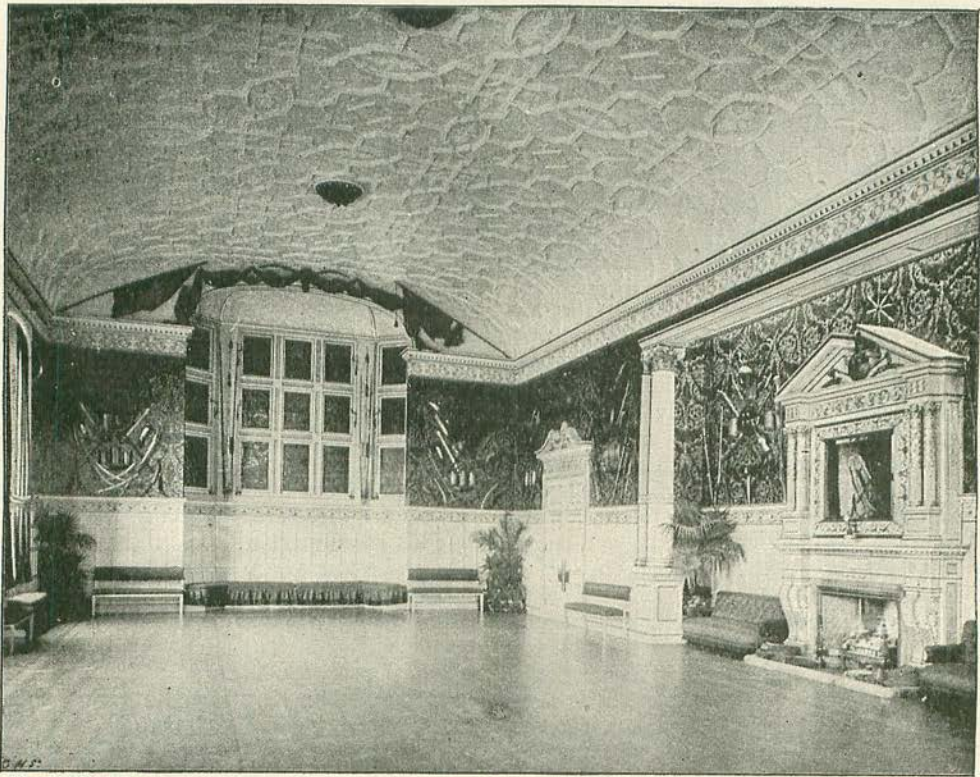
this is tiled white and green, with stalls ornamented in silver. Here are some charming ponies driven by Her Royal Highness, and her favourite mare Vera. On this mare, accompanied by her children on their mounts, the Princess may often be met in the lanes around Sandringham, occasionally also driving in a little pony carriage, and in both cases almost unattended.

The kennels come next in order: they contain dogs of every breed from all parts of the land. The younger members of the family especially have many pets—cats, dogs, and

a more distant inspection. To-day it is fine, and so we commence with emerging on to the west terrace, and into the western gardens.

The terraces are very handsome, and many of the rooms open on to them from French windows or conservatories. First you will notice a Chinese joss-house or temple, made of costly metal, guarded on either side by two huge granite lions from Japan, all of them the gifts to the Prince of Admiral Keppel.

The gardens are tastefully and artistically laid out, with such a wildness, yet with such



From a Photo. by

THE BALL-ROOM.

[Bedford Lemere.

birds; indeed, one of the first things you notice on your arrival is a parrot in the entrance saloon, that invariably greets you with calling for "three cheers for the Queen!"

It is now nearly luncheon time (1.30), and here you all meet again; some of the ladies perhaps having been honoured the first part of the day by spending some time with the Princess. Generally speaking, but not always, their Royal Highnesses join the party for lunch; but in any case, after that meal, forces are united, and the company entire start off, sometimes on foot, commencing with gardens, sometimes in carriages for

a wealth of shrubs and pines, aided by artificial rockwork, a cave, and a rushing cascade, that one might well imagine one was in another country.

The Alpine gardens contain flowers and ferns of the choicest; and you presently emerge on the shores of a lake of considerable size. Here boating in the summer and skating in the winter may be indulged in, the latter, especially by torchlight, being a most attractive sight. The illuminations in the trees around, the flaring torches, the lights fixed to the chairs as they glide about like will o' the wisps, and the villagers (who



are always invited) standing around, make up a picture not easily forgotten. This lake has recently been supplemented by the excavation of another in the centre of the park, a running stream connecting the two.

Chief, or almost chief, of the Sandringham outdoor sights is a famous avenue of trees. At some future time this avenue will be of even more interest than it is now, and will become, in fact, historical; for every tree there has been planted by some personage of note. On each one you will notice a neat label, stating name of planter and date of planting, chief of the names being Queen Victoria and the Empress Frederick.

The model dairy is a picture; but here again the preference must be given to that owned by the Princess. It is a Swiss cottage, containing five rooms, one of the five being a very pretty tea-room, and here Her Royal Highness sometimes favours her friends with the "cup that cheers," often, too, cutting bread and butter and cake with her own fair hands. Moreover, the same hands have often made the butter that is used—as each of the ladies of the family is skilled in dairy management, and capable of turning out a good honest pat of creamy Norfolk. Merry times they have had in this cottage, arrayed in apron and sleeves, doing the real *work*, not merely giving directions.

You would not be in any of the villages long before you saw some of the children attending some one of the various schools, clad in their scarlet and Royal blue; they look very comfortable and picturesque. There is a first-rate technical school, in addition to the ordinary ones of each village. The first was founded by the Princess herself, and in each of them Her Royal Highness and her

children take a deep interest; often visiting them, taking classes, and asking questions. These schools, then, are shown you this afternoon; and, as a matter of course, you proceed from there to the Working Men's Club—one of which is established in each village. These are open to men above the age of fourteen.\* Billiards, bagatelle, draughts, etc., are provided, and there is a good stock of newspapers and books. Refreshments may be obtained of good quality, and for a small outlay; and everything is done that can be done to make the men comfortable. Does it keep them from the public-house? you ask. Well—*there is not such a thing known as a public-house on the Prince's estate.* A man can get his glass of ale at the club—good in quality and low in figure—but he cannot get enough to send him home the worse for coming; so drunkenness is unknown in the villages.

On Sunday morning everybody goes to the little church of St. Mary Magdalene, in the park. The Prince and Princess set the example by their regular and punctual attendance—the Princess and ladies generally driving,

the Prince and gentlemen walking by private footway. A quiet, peaceful spot it is, entered by a lych-gate and surrounded by a small "God's acre." If you are wise, you have come early enough to look round. Simplicity is stamped on everything, there not being a single imposing monument there. Several stones have been erected by the Prince in memory of faithful servants of the household, and there are also several placed there by the former proprietors of the estate. To what you are most attracted is



H.R.H. THE PRINCESS OF WALES.  
From a Photo, by W. & D. Downey.

\* Small men; but is an actual extract from the printed rules hanging in the clubs.



the resting-place of the third Royal son. No costly sepulchre, but a simple grassy mound, surrounded by gilt iron railings with a plain headstone, recording the name and date of birth and death of the infant Prince, and the words "Suffer little children to come unto Me" added.

The church itself is of ancient date, and has been twice restored and enlarged by the Prince. It has a font of early times, and some half-dozen stained glass windows. The Prince has caused several monuments, busts,

ing inscription: "To the glory of God. A thank-offering for His mercy, 14th December, 1871. 'When I was in trouble, I called upon the Lord, and He heard me.'"

The space for worshippers is limited, and is generally quite filled by the household. The Royal Family occupy carved oak seats in the nave. The organ is a very fine one, particularly sweet in tone, and is situated in the rear of the building; it is presided over by a very able musician, who is also responsible for the choir—this consisting of school



From a Photo. by

THE PRINCESS OF WALES' BOUDOIR.

[Bedford Lemere.]

etc., to be placed there, conspicuous being busts to the late Princess Alice and the Emperor Frederick, a medallion to the late Duke of Albany, a stained glass window to the infant Prince, and monuments to the Revs. W. L. Onslow and G. Browne. The most noticeable of anything there, however, is a very handsome brass lectern, placed by the Princess as a thank-offering for the recovery of the Prince from his dangerous illness of typhoid fever. The event is within the memory of most of us, and needs only a brief notice to recall the national anxiety that was displayed on the occasion. The lectern bears the follow-

children, grooms, gardeners, etc. The singing is really good.

I have heard down there of a former organist, who was *not* a great musician, and, in fact, was more at home in the village shop, of which he was proprietor. Sunday after Sunday he made the most awful mistakes, and, in consequence, was continually warned of his probable dismissal. The Princess, with her invariable kindness, had been the cause of his staying so long as he had; but one Sunday the climax was reached and the Royal patience fairly exhausted. Mr. Gladstone (then in office) was on a visit, and his solemn, grim countenance as he





H.R.H. PRINCESS VICTORIA AND H.R.H. PRINCESS MAUD OF WALES.  
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

stood in the church quite frightened the poor man, inasmuch as he lost his head completely. The organ left off in the chants, persisted in playing in the prayers, and altogether acted in such an erratic manner, that it was no wonder that anger was depicted on one countenance, sorrow on another, and amusement on a few of the more youthful ones! The old institution had to give way to a new, however, and a repetition of such performances was thus avoided.

The Sunday afternoon is quietly spent in the house or grounds; then in the evening some may, perhaps, drive to West Newton or Wolferton Church—the Prince, Princess and family often do—while others may prefer to stay in for music or reading.

On your way to either place you cannot but notice the prosperous look of the villages and villagers, pointing unmistakably to the certainty of a good landlord. Had you longer time here, you would hear many an anecdote of the kindness and generosity of the Prince and the goodness of the Princess and her daughters. Hardly a cottager but has some anecdote to tell you of the

family: how the Princess visits the sick and afflicted, talking to them, reading to them, and helping them in their needs. Every child seems to know and to love the "beautiful lady," and every man and woman seems almost to worship her; and if you heard the anecdotes I have heard there, you would not wonder at it. "Think o' they R'yal Highnesses"—they would say—"making o' things wi' their own 'ands fer sich as us! Did yew ever heerd tell o' sich, says I; none o' yer frames and frimmicks (airs and graces) wi' they." And then they would go on with their "says I" and "says she," and tell you all about summer flower shows for villagers, treats on Royal birthdays, invitations to see sights in the park, how the family have given a wedding present to this one, what they have brought or sent the other one when ill; and so on, and so on, until you come to think what a pity it is a few landowners, with their wives and families,



THE DUKE OF YORK.  
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

cannot come here for the lessons so many need, and see how well this family interpret the words: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Sandringham has saddened associations for its owners, but "Joy cometh in the morning," and as we take our farewell of this favourite residence of the Prince and Princess, we will wish them a bright future and continuance of good health to enjoy their Norfolk home.