

The Duke of Saxe-Coburg's Palaces.

BY MARY SPENCER-WARREN.



THE old Castle of Coburg, around which the town has really grown up, is situated on the summit of a hill, nearly six hundred feet above the level of the town, and has perhaps the most interesting and historical associations of any castle in the Duchy. For a considerable period it was a Royal residence; and during the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, it was a house of refuge for Luther, and one may now see the rooms which he occupied in exactly the same state as they then were. The little iron bedstead on which he slept, the table at which he studied and wrote, and other articles are indissolubly connected with the religious struggle of the period. Early in 1600 Wallenstein laid siege to the castle; but successful resistance was made, and he had to retire defeated.

At the end of the last century, or early in the beginning of this, the castle was turned into a prison, but in 1838 it was completely restored, and is now practically a museum, to thoroughly inspect which would very well occupy a day or two. Of the immense solidity of the building you can form some idea by the accompanying picture, which shows the spiked and strongly-guarded entrance. Situated as the castle is at such a great height, you can as well imagine as I can describe the steep approach thereto; but it is charmingly picturesque, and the view from the summit well repays the really arduous climb.

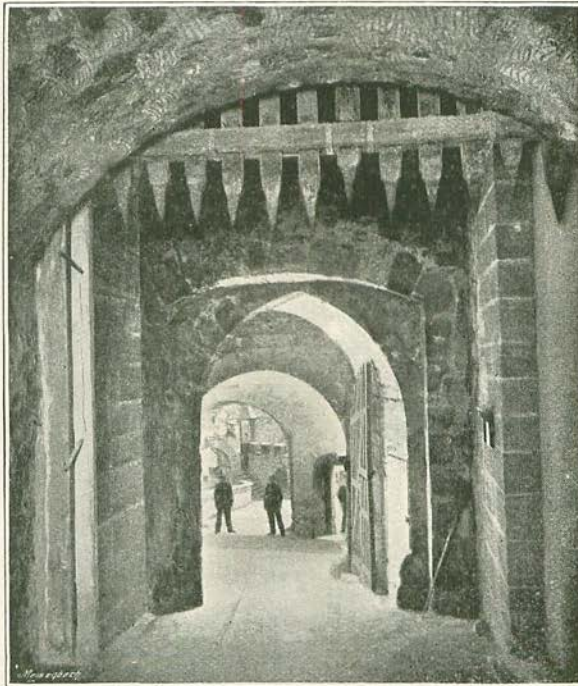
At the foot of
Vol. viii.—6.

the hill is the Schloss Ehrenberg, a handsome palace in the Early English Gothic style, the original part of which was formerly a monastery. It was rebuilt and much added to by Duke Ernest I. in 1549, and was then at once converted into the chief Ducal residence of the town, a position which it has since maintained. In the centre of the platz in which it is situated stands a statue in bronze of Duke Ernest I., executed by Schwanthaler; surrounding which are some prettily laid-out beds and colonnades, one side of the platz having two flights of steps leading up to what is known as the "Hofgarten." In this "Hofgarten" may be seen a pavilion with a cast of the Prometheus group by Müller, also the mausoleums of Duke Francis and the Duchess Augusta Caroline. This is also the road to the old castle of which I have already spoken.

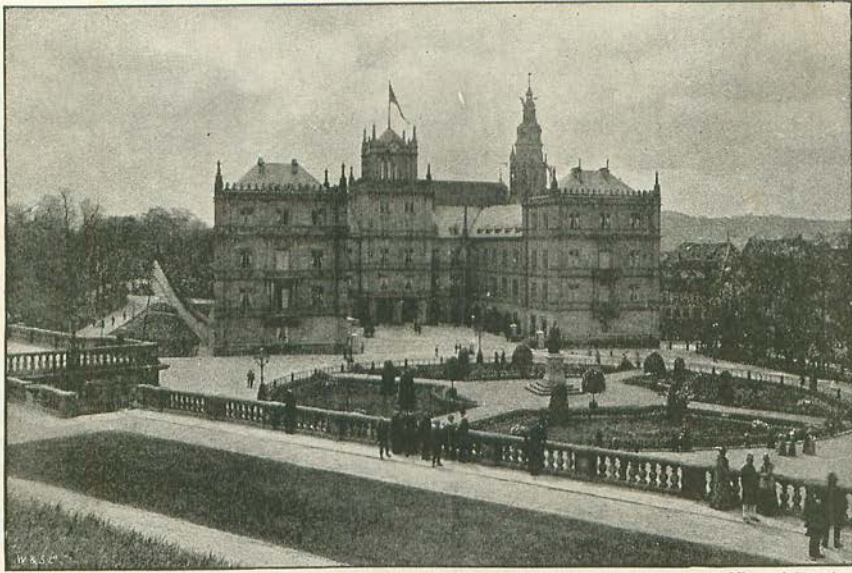
Passing across the courtyard, and entering beneath the archway, I immediately mount the grand staircase, with roof and walls of marble, the stairs being hand-

somely carpeted in green plush with a crimson border; balustrades in white and gold, with the hand-rail covered in green plush. Several marble sculptured figures, some bronze statuary, vases and urns of palms and ferns, and in each corner, and on each lobby, banks of the same, with beautiful camellia trees in full flower—all combine to present a very effective appearance.

From here I go first through the picture gallery, and direct



GATEWAY OF THE OLD CASTLE OF COBURG.
From a Photo. by Gunn & Stuart, Richmond.



From a Photo. by]

SCHLOSS EHRENBURG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

into the "Risensaal"—or Giants' Hall; truly the most magnificent apartment of the palace. Right round the room are columns faced by twenty-eight caryatides, each supporting candelabra of crystal and ormolu, containing wax candles. In addition there are also three immense ormolu and crystal chandeliers, and in two of the corners lofty porcelain

candelabra on pedestals. Quite within the last few weeks the electric light has been carried into the hall. The painting and sculptured relief of the ceiling are truly exquisite. The centre painting shows the noonday sun with an eagle flying in its direct rays; smaller paintings surrounding representing the clouds; outer-painted panels



From a Photo. by]

THE GIANTS' HALL--EHRENBURG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

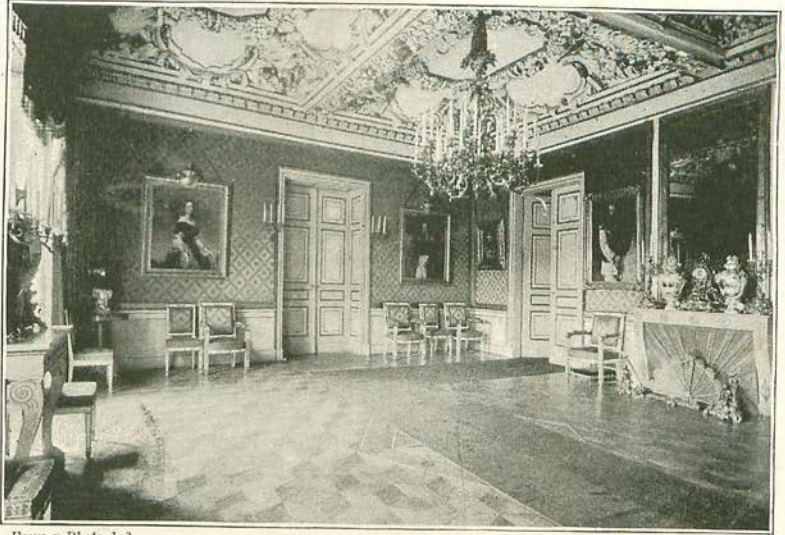
showing the arms of all branches of the family.

At one end of the room is a large tablet recording a visit of Queen Victoria and the Emperor Joseph of Austria, in 1863. A large number of beautiful mirrors, the sculptured busts of the Duke and Duchess, and the handsome tapestry curtains depending from the gold cornice-work, the rose-wood, crimson and white and gold

furniture, all present a very brilliant effect. The floor is of inlaid oak, kept in a highly polished state for dancing. The hall, however, is used for other purposes, and comes much into requisition now—the week of the Royal wedding. As I write, a large stage is erected at one end for a theatrical performance, at which the Queen and the entire

number of Royal personages in Coburg will be present.

The first room I enter, called the State drawing-room, seems to be really the ante-room to the throne-room. It has a beautiful ceiling, with decoration of fruit and flowers in relief. The walls are hung in red, with frame-work and beading of gold, on them



From a Photo. by]

STATE DRAWING-ROOM—EHRENBURG.

[Gunn & Stuart.



From a Photo. by]

RECEPTION-ROOM—EHRENBURG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

being portraits of the Emperor and Empress Frederick, the Duke and Duchess of Kent, the late Duke of Albany, etc.

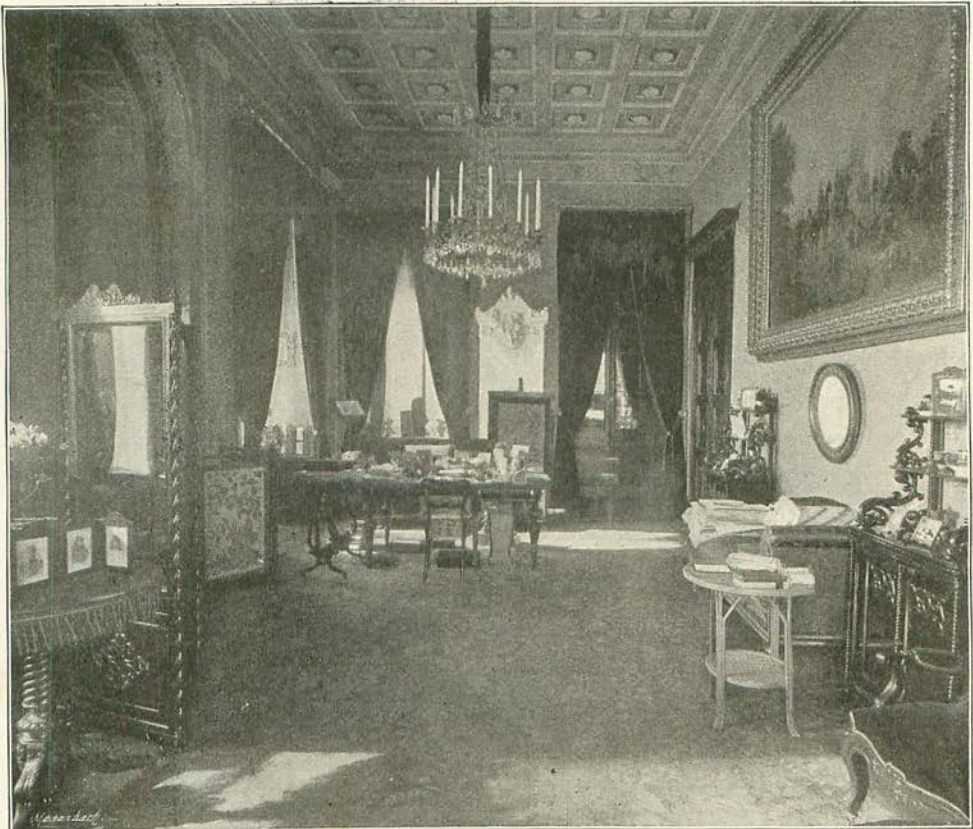
When I entered the throne-room, every table and every spot was filled with basket-work of every description, size, and shape. One of the Queen's officials had been commissioned to make large purchases in the town, and Her Royal Highness the Princess Beatrice was busy arranging the collection in readiness for Her Majesty's inspection. It is well known that both the Queen and her daughter take much interest in straw and basket work, more especially, perhaps, in the former; the Queen, indeed, has been wont to occupy some of her very few leisure moments for years past in the manipulation of this article, and I have it on good authority that the Princess Beatrice has so successfully mastered the art that she has just turned out a very serviceable hat for her husband. But this is rather a digression, and I will now call your attention to the State reception-room.

This is hung in very fine Gobelins tapestry, the figures thereon reminding one of Her Majesty's Indian Empire. The

ceiling is in relief, showing crowns, roses, and figures. The walls are marble, fronted with Corinthian marble columns.

The carpet is Axminster, with pattern of roses and leaves. The furniture is white and gold frame-work, upholstered in gold and blue satin; curtains are to match, with inner ones of real lace.

Her Majesty's sitting-room opens from this, and when I enter one morning soon after seven, I feel that this is the most important room in the whole palace. It is a very beautiful room, but looks also a business room, for despatch boxes and documents of formidable aspect are prominent. The ceiling is of imitation marble, with a painted floral centre; from it hangs a costly chandelier of crystal and ormolu, the upper part being draped in crimson velvet. The floor is covered in crimson and pale green Axminster. The doors of the room are rosewood, with black beading; the furniture also of the same, and covered in crimson velvet to match the hangings. On the chiffonniers I note some rare pieces of Sèvres, several portraits of Her Majesty's grandchildren, and also some of



From a Photo. by]

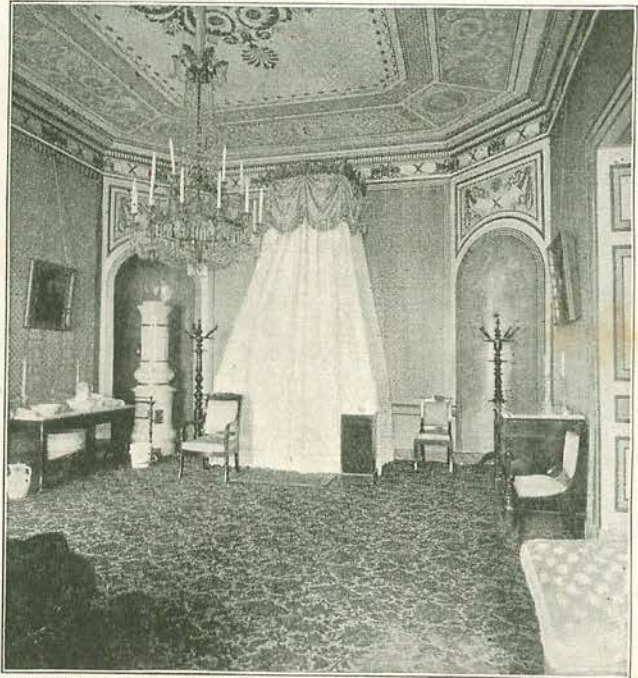
QUEEN VICTORIA'S SITTING-ROOM—EHRENBERG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

the favourite dogs. The writing-table stands nearly in the centre of the room, and without, of course, making a close examination, I note a handsome gold ink-bottle, surmounted by a crown, several miniatures and portraits of the Royal Family, a quantity of roses, tulips and lilies, in exquisite specimen glasses; and a mass of correspondence in neat piles. The chair in front of the table is of gold over-burnish, upholstered in gold and cream brocade, having also a back pad; the whole being covered with lace.

On another table is a collection of periodicals, illustrated and otherwise; several handsomely bound volumes, amongst which I notice "Echoes from a Sanctuary," with markers inserted at presumably favourite passages. Two very beautiful screens are worth notice: one of floral handwork in a rosewood frame, and one exquisitely painted on glass. On a chair lies the handsome shawl and lace scarf which I had seen Her Majesty wearing late in the day yesterday, and I certainly do look at them and note their beauty.

In the same wing is the suite of apartments



From a Photo. by]

THE KAISER'S BEDROOM—EHRENBERG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

set apart for the Kaiser, comprising two handsome and commodious rooms.

The bedroom has a ceiling painted in gold, cream, and pale blue, with walls hung in blue silk brocade, relieved with marble alcoves in each corner.

In the centre hangs a brass and crystal chandelier, and in various parts of the room are eight tall and massive silver candlesticks. Some fine paintings are on the walls, and a very large mirror in white and gold frame. The suite of furniture is in rosewood, with carvings to match walls; the chest of drawers is Amboyna. The bed is quite a feature; it is surmounted by a crown, fitted in blue silk brocade, and hung with white curtains of real Brussels lace.

The sitting-room



From a Photo. by]

THE KAISER'S SITTING-ROOM—EHRENBERG.

[Gunn & Stuart.



From a Photo. by

THE HOUSEHOLD DINING-ROOM—EHRENBERG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

had used them ; in front of which stands a carved oak and tapestry covered chair.

From here I go on to the household dining-room : this having a cloud, flower, and fruit painted ceiling, interspersed with figures in stucco relief. The chandeliers are very massive—of brass ; the furniture of white and gold ; the walls are of marble, on them being large and beautifully framed mirrors, with plaster casts over the doorways, showing crowns, wreaths, etc. ; the

adjoining is decorated in much the same manner ; the walls, however, being hung in red silk brocade, with curtains of the same, but lined with gold, and having inner ones of real lace. The furniture is also covered in red silk with rosewood frames. Under a large mirror between the windows is a splendid marble-topped ormolu table, having thereon a timepiece and two candelabra of the same metal. At one side of the room is a rosewood piano of German make, and opposite is a mosaic table supported by columns of marble and platinum mounts : on this table stands a beautiful hand-painted vase. His Imperial Majesty's writing-table is large, and handsomely furnished with all necessaries, with gold crowns and in-scriptions ; blotting-books, pens, etc., just as the Kaiser

hangings are all in rich crimson. The tables are just laid, and very pretty they look, with the plate, flowers, and other accessories.

Stepping out of this room you come to a door immediately on your right hand—this is the entrance to the suite occupied at the present time by the Prince of Wales. It is



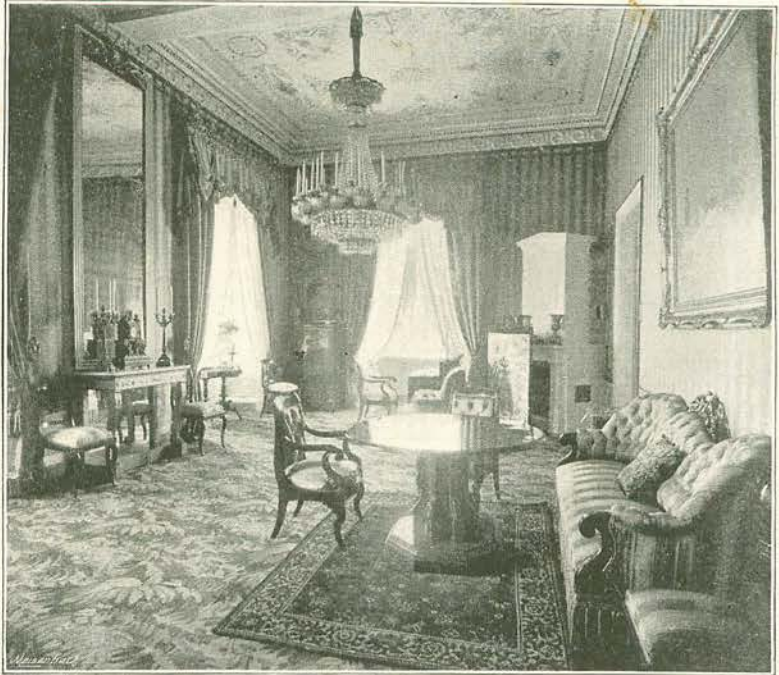
From a Photo. by

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S SITTING-ROOM—EHRENBERG.

[Gunn & Stuart.

exactly what His Royal Highness likes — a quiet corner, with an extensive view of town and country from its windows. The two rooms are quite plain, with oaken floors, ceilings in plaster relief, and walls covered with green flock-paper. I notice in the sitting-room a bust of Voltaire, some old paintings, a fine tiger skin, writing, smoking tables, etc., and the usual collection of articles found in such rooms. But as there is not much worth mention beyond the fact that they are in the occupation of the Prince, I just secure one photograph and hurry off elsewhere.

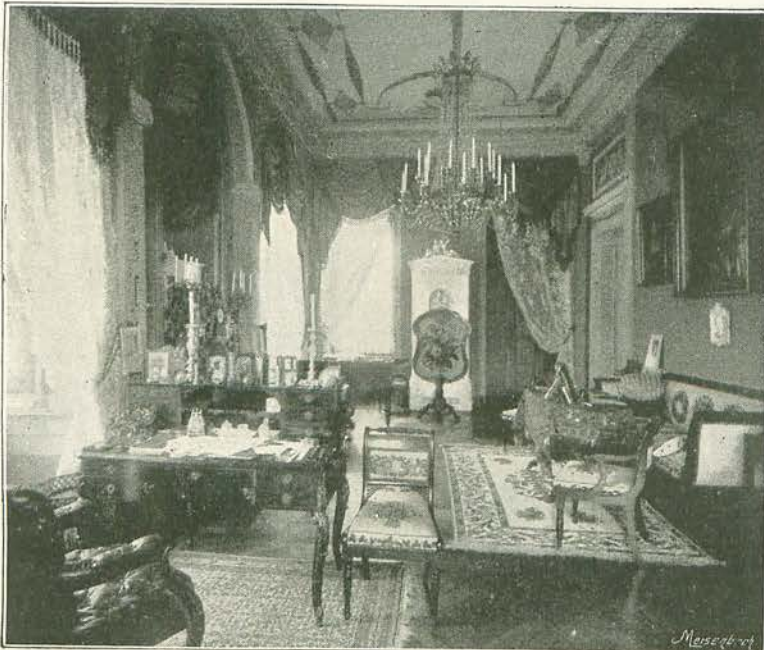
The next suite I enter is that of the



From a Photo. by] THE EMPRESS FREDERICK'S SITTING-ROOM—EHRENBERG. [Gunn & Stuart.

Empress Frederick. The sitting-room has a very prettily hand-painted floral ceiling; the walls are draped in satin of alternate stone and navy stripe, with curtains and furniture all to match, the windows also having inner curtains of real lace. The furniture itself is all of walnut, with ormolu mounts, the writing-table en suite showing a blue satin top. There is a bust of the Prince Consort, two or three good paintings, and a very handsome screen with art needlework and hand painting in combination. The floors in this suite are covered in Brussels.

The bedroom is decorated in much the same character, only that the walls are here hung in



PRINCESS HENRY OF BATTENBERG'S SITTING-ROOM—EHRENBERG.
From a Photo. by Gunn & Stuart.

grey and green. All the doors are in white, with gold beading. There is a very handsome chandelier—not of the ordinary type, as it is of alabaster with metal mounts. The bedstead is quite a work of art, having very beautiful gold carving, silk coverlets, and real lace hangings. Quantities of flowers make the rooms look bright and pretty.

I have another room on the opposite side to visit—the sitting-room of Her Royal Highness the Princess Henry of Battenberg. This apartment has a beautiful outlook right over the Schloss Platz; it is charmingly pretty—every recess and every available corner being crowded with flowers. Birds and flowers are painted on the ceiling, the relief of which is also very fine. The floor is inlaid, scattered with Persian rugs. The hangings are of stone and blue silk, with inner ones of real lace. Over at one side is a boudoir grand, open and scattered with music; near it being indications of quite another sort of occupation, namely, a large basket of knitting; the sort of work all our Princesses do in their spare moments for the benefit of the needlework and other guilds with which the

majority of them are connected. Lots of portraits may be seen in every direction, numbers of which represent the very pretty children of their Royal Highnesses.

You will understand that it was not here that the Duke and Duchess were actually residing. They were on the other side of the platz, at what is known as the "Schloss Edinburgh." Here I made my way early one morning—before the family were really up, being compelled, as they were in residence, to attend either at a very early hour or when they were out for any photographic purposes. It is a pretty but not large house, standing in its own grounds exactly opposite to the other Schloss.

I enter from the garden, and proceed by a covered veranda direct to the glass room.

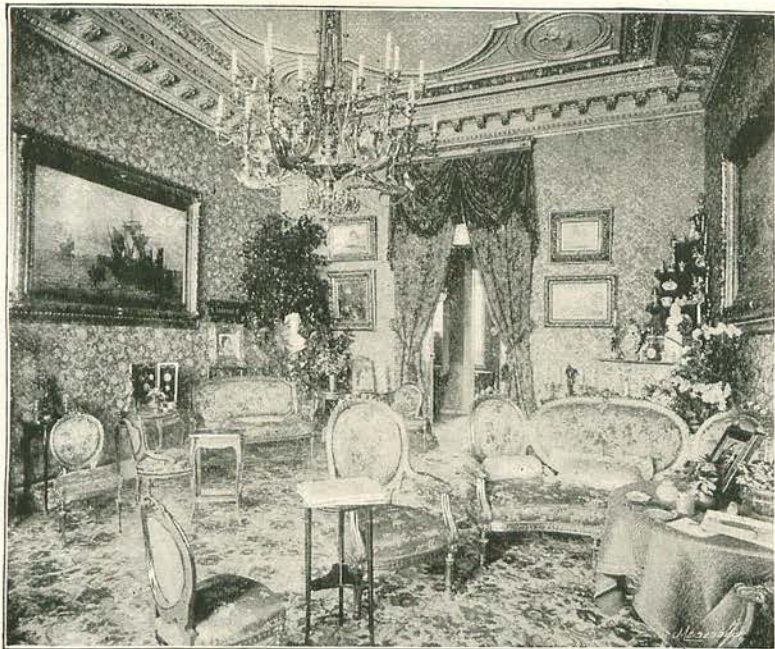
This is an antique-looking apartment with carved oak ceiling and walls, midway on the latter being a projecting shelf widening out at the mantel-piece to beautiful carved projections. On all of these shelves is a wonderful collection of glass. It seems to be one of the hobbies of His Royal Highness the Duke to collect glass from



From a Photo. by

THE GLASS ROOM—SCHLOSS EDINBURGH.

[Gunn & Stuart.



From a Photo. by

THE DRAWING-ROOM—SCHLOSS EDINBURGH.

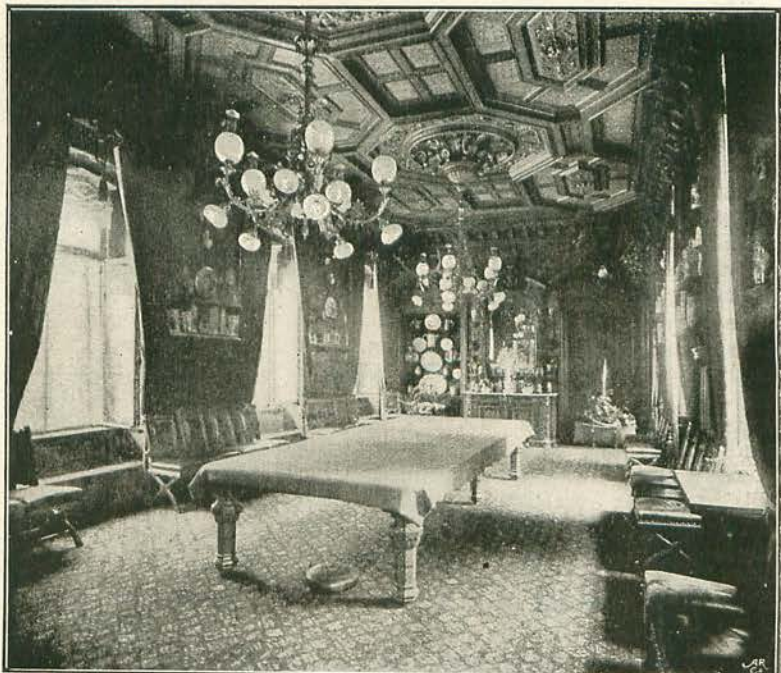
[Gunn & Stuart.]

The drawing-room is wondrously pretty. Note the very admirable arrangement of the statuary, ferns, and flowers; the tastefully arranged curios, portraits, medallions, and all the little accessories of a well-appointed drawing-room. The same cream and gold decoration of ceiling and Persian floor covering prevails in the smaller room, the furniture being of over-burnished gold and floral velvet of a strawberry hue. On the walls are some fine landscapes and a naval picture.

every quarter of the globe, the result being a large number of specimens both unique and costly. Over the mantel is a fine painted panel, the mantel itself being composed of rare china. Glass cabinets and cupboards are filled with such costly curios as is customary in these Royal houses, many of them presents in commemoration of some civic or official ceremony. There is a fine painting of the Duke on one side of the room and another of one of his daughters taken some few years back. Choice wood tables with ormolu mounts, and octagon tables inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and quantities of flowers (of which the Imperial Duchess is very fond) are everywhere *en evidence*.

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The dining-room has a fine ancient carved oak ceiling, with walls in flock-paper. Here, too, is a part of the wonderful collection of glass and pieces of plate for which the Duke is famous. I take



From a Photo. by

THE DINING-ROOM—SCHLOSS EDINBURGH.

[Gunn & Stuart.]

up several goblets and tankards, finding in each of them records of time and place of purchase. Within the last few weeks the electric light has been carried into this palace, and here you see costly new fittings for the same. It is not only that new lighting arrangements were needed, but varieties of repairs in all directions, and in every castle appertaining to the Duchy; and I am told that His Royal Highness is spending considerable sums of money in carrying out the absolutely necessary alterations.

Just before the Royal wedding this room was crowded day after day with members of the various Royal Families then assembled in Coburg, who dined at this table, unless a State dinner was being given in the opposite Schloss; whilst outside the bands, alternately of the Prussian Dragoons and the Thuringians, discoursed sweet music. The hangings of the room are of green; the furniture being upholstered in leather of the same colour. It is a particularly light and pleasant room, the windows on one side looking out into the very tastefully laid-out gardens, and on the other, on turf-covered banks, quantities of fine trees, the Greek Church, of which you know Her Imperial Highness is a member, and the distant hills in the background.

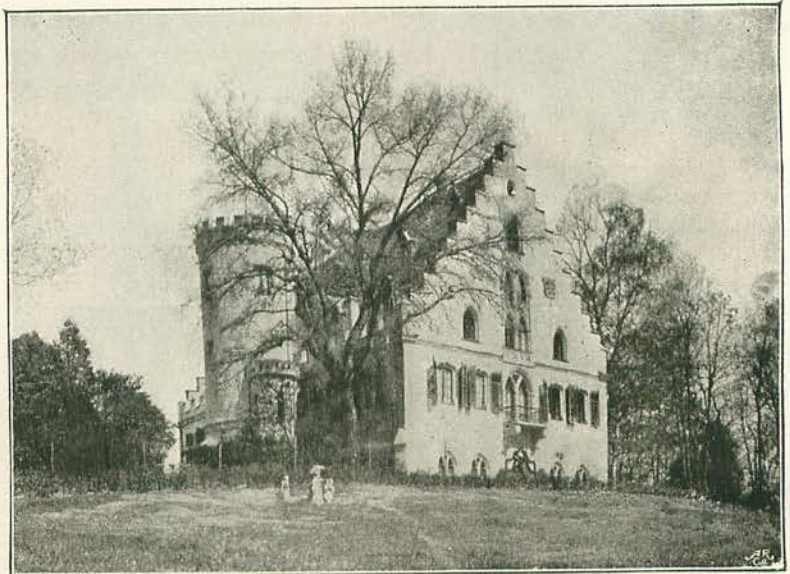
On the other side of the staircase, and passing through the serving-rooms, you enter immediately into the billiard-room. Here you are greeted with evidences of the great love for sport which is characteristic of the Duke and his brothers. Three large bears stand erect in various corners, shot in Russia by the Duke in 1883, while all around the walls, as well as from the top to the bottom of the staircase, I noted quite a multitude of deer-horns, which testify to the prowess of the Duke in his shooting expeditions. Each of these bears a small plate recording date and place.

This Schloss is not particularly large; what it has not in size it certainly makes up for in

comfort. But as I have now one other palace to describe, I decide not to further linger here, as the Schloss Rosenau is a palace which must not be dismissed in a few words.

This Schloss is situated in one of the most picturesque parts of Saxon Germany. When I say that it was the birthplace of His late Royal Highness the Prince Consort, I am sure of at once commanding your interested attention.

From its gardens the view is simply magnificent, and one that must really be seen to be understood. Beneath the terraces runs a winding stream, with the sounds of a waterfall in the distance. On the left, and in the grounds, is a castellated tower with porter's lodge. Shrubs and trees are in profusion. Over the fields is seen a village lying beneath the shelter of towering hills. I should not



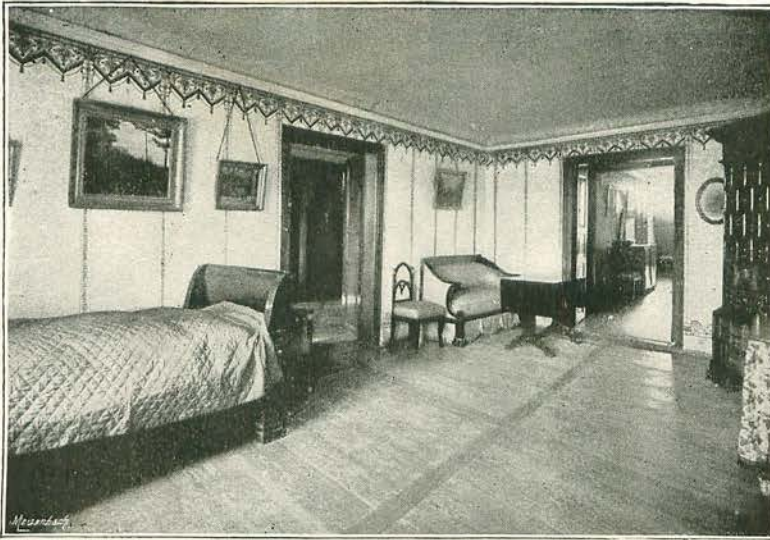
From a Photo. by

SCHLOSS ROSENAU.

[Gunn & Stuart.

like to give an estimate of how many miles one is able to see, but certainly the view is one of the finest of the very fine ones of the locality.

Walking round the grounds I pause to admire the scenery, and at the same time secure one or two good exteriors. Then I enter by a small iron gate, and bearing in mind the connections of the place, proceed direct to the room in which the Prince Consort was born. Simple in the extreme, an oaken floor, with papered ceiling and walls, and plain furniture with chintz covers. On one side stands a very antique wooden bedstead,



ROOM IN WHICH PRINCE ALBERT WAS BORN—ROSENAU.
From a Photo. by Gunn & Stuart.

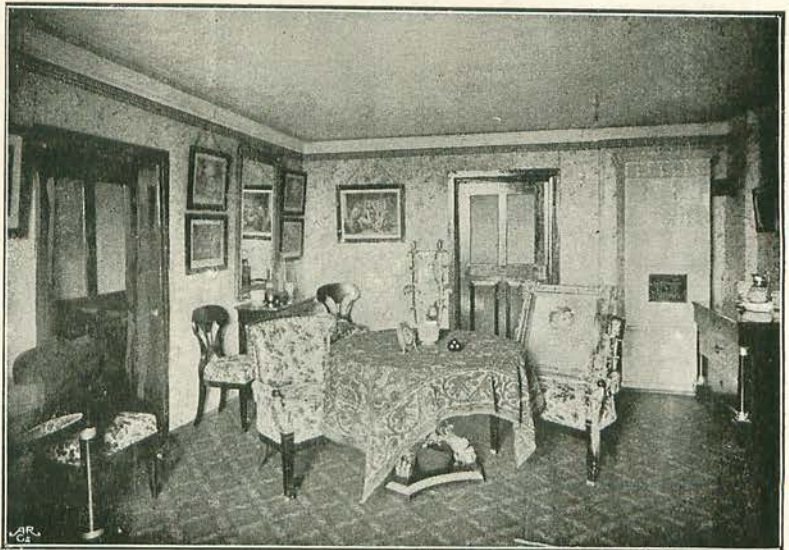
with a coverlid of quilted magenta; on the other an antique cabinet and chest of drawers. Several old paintings are to be seen on the walls, the chief one of which is descriptive of a hunting scene immediately near the old castle; in it are several figures that are really portraits; the principal ones being the Prince Consort and his brother the Duke Ernest, and Prince Leopold—he who is known to us as having married the Princess Charlotte of Great Britain, and afterwards became the King of the Belgians.

After leaving this room I go to the one where the two brothers studied together many years ago; this is situated right at the top of the house, and of course has a most charming outlook. An oaken floor and a plastered ceiling, with pink-papered walls, and a number of prints thereon, with some walnut-framed furniture, nearly black with age, are the predominant appointments. On a small table at one side stands the delft toilet set formerly

used by the Prince Consort, and a fine painting of His Royal Highness is hanging in close proximity. Also a painting of Her Majesty when an infant—which I place on a chair for greater prominence. Here the two brothers spent many happy hours, none the less so for the real work which they had to get through, for both the Princes possessed abilities and intellect of no mean order; abilities which were

destined to shine in the world's history. Of the splendid services rendered to art and science in all its branches by the one who came over to wed Victoria, Queen of England, it is not necessary for me to speak—it is indelibly recorded in the pages of England's history.

Going into another room in the upper part of the house, I find on the wall a painting of Her Royal Highness the Princess Victoria, now our Queen, representing her as a wee child cuddling her favourite dog. This seemed to me to be well worth photo-



From a Photo. by

STUDY OF PRINCE ALBERT WHEN A BOY—ROSENAU.

[Gunn & Stuart.

graphing; carrying one back as it does over a period of seventy years, when the parents of the little Princess scarcely dreamed of the future exalted position their little daughter would be called upon to take.

Passing down the staircase I enter some of the State apartments of the castle, making indeed an entire circuit of these rooms, but only photographing one as a specimen: this one being a drawing-room now used by Her Imperial Highness the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, but formerly known as Queen Victoria's drawing-room. It is now about fifty years since the Queen first visited

this castle soon after her marriage to the Prince Consort; intermediate visits have been paid, but as I write this Her Majesty has just left from what I suppose will be her last visit for some time to come.

One can easily imagine that the memories which this place must bring before the Queen must be many and varied; perhaps predominantly saddening. It is well known that she is very much attached to the place, for reasons which will be readily understood by everyone. This

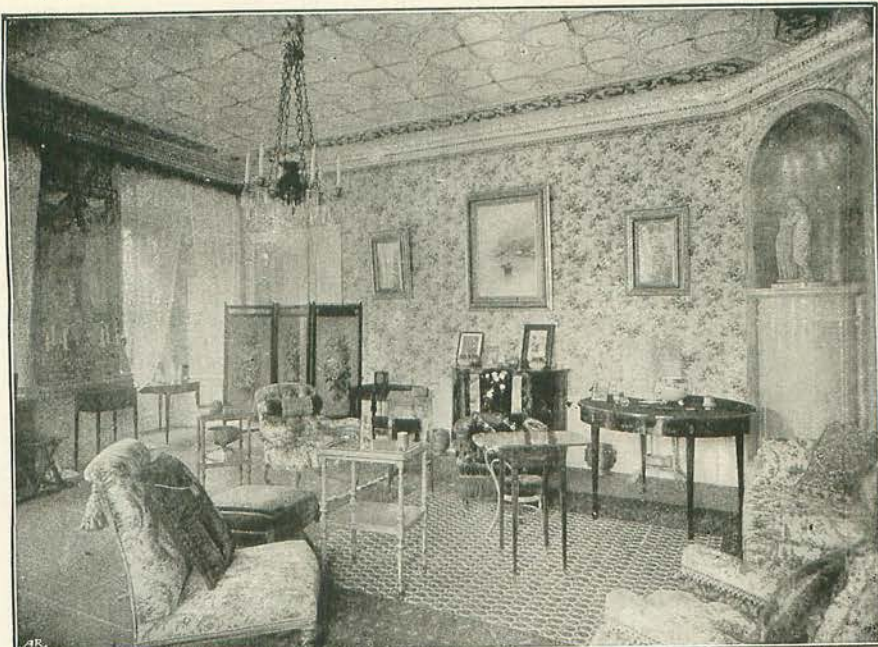
apartment is essentially a summer one, and appointed as such. Windows curtained in real lace look out on to tennis lawn and



From a

QUEEN VICTORIA, AGE 4.

[Painting.]



From a Photo. by

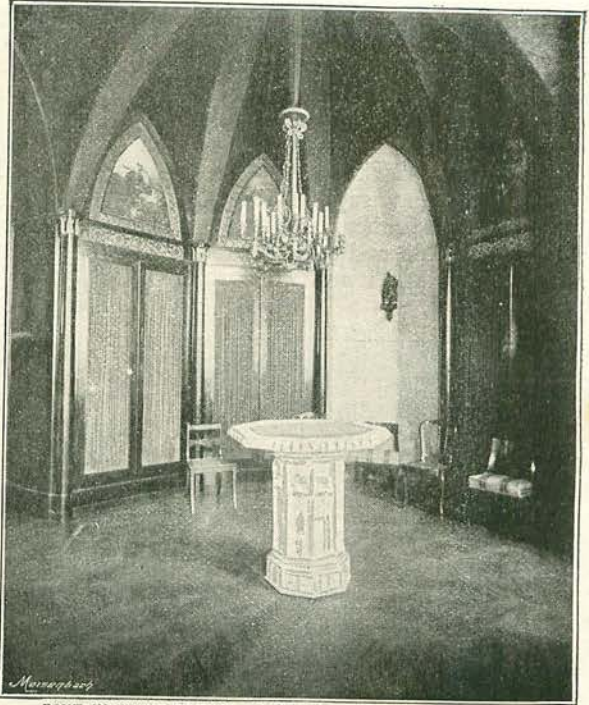
QUEEN VICTORIA'S DRAWING-ROOM—ROSENAU.

[Ginn & Stuart.]

shrubberies ; the ceiling and walls are papered in a pretty, light manner ; the floor is covered with Indian matting, with here and there Persian rugs.

I note one or two very beautiful tables with inlaid floral wreaths thereon ; an exquisite hand-painted screen, evidence of the talent of the young members of the family, and also specimens of their skill in art needlework, in the very beautiful antimacassars of velvet worked in silk. Standing at one side of the room is a glass case full of gold and silver curios, a handsome writing-table, evidently used by the Duchess, a few landscapes, and various articles of vertu—all combine to make a very elegant looking apartment.

Down a flight of stairs again as far as the iron gate from whence I started, then still lower, apparently to the basement. Proceeding along a dimly lighted corridor I come to a small apartment, in which from time immemorial the Princes of the House of Coburg have been christened. The font used for the ceremonies is shown in the centre of the room : it is of pure alabaster, very finely carved. The decorations of the room are purely Gothic, and of oak. Rosewood frame cupboards, with green silken fronts, surmounted by painted panels



FONT IN WHICH PRINCE ALBERT WAS CHRISTENED—ROSENAU.
From a Photo. by Gunn & Stuart.

interspersed with arched recesses, form part of the background of the octagon-shaped room.

In one of the recesses is a small statue of the late Prince Consort, and an old-fashioned

bronze chandelier, with branches for wax candles, depends from the centre of the mitre-shaped ceiling. I take an opportunity of inspecting the contents of the cupboards, finding such highly interesting — inasmuch as not only is much antique china shown, but also the small tea services, etc., used by the Prince and his brother at a very early age, when the size of the cup was not an object : these are of the lili-putian order.

Then I go to the Gothic dining-hall,



From a Photo. by

GOTHIC DINING-HALL—ROSENAU.

[Gunn & Stuart.

a really magnificent apartment of immense proportions, and entirely of marble. The ceiling, beautifully ornamented in gold and white, is supported by fifteen quadruple columns, with caps ornamented to match the ceiling. The room is effectively lighted by eight hanging candelabra and some immense bronze side-lights, supported by figures of black slaves. At either end of this huge apartment are marble and ormolu mantel-pieces, and on one side of it are two beautiful lofty

volubly to me of days that are gone and events big with importance.

Then I step out again on to the lawn, and am just in time to witness the arrival of the Crown Prince and Princess of Roumania, and her sister the Princess Alexandra of Saxe-Coburg, who have driven over from Coburg. They are presently followed by the younger sister, Princess Beatrice, mounted on her pony. The opportunity is too good to be lost, a request is made to which a



THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF ROUMANIA, AND PRINCESSES ALEXANDRA AND BEATRICE OF SAXE-COBURG.
From a Photo. by Gunn & Stuart.

stands, composed of marble with ormolu mounts, containing some fine specimens of old china. At the top end, amidst waving palms, ferns, and baskets of flowers, stands a cosy little tea-table, on it being a silver service and other five o'clock tea appointments. Her Majesty has just occupied the chair on the left of the table, and enjoyed her cup of tea in her customary manner. The old gentleman in attendance has lived here all his life, and his father before him, and he chatters

smiling assent is given, and before you you have the Royal party posed in easy attitudes under the trees, together with the pony and dogs. This finished, I drive away from Rosenau, having most thoroughly enjoyed my visit to this historic Schloss.

The following day I turn my face to England, for the festivities are over; the Queen is going home, and Coburg is again settling down to its quiet, everyday existence.