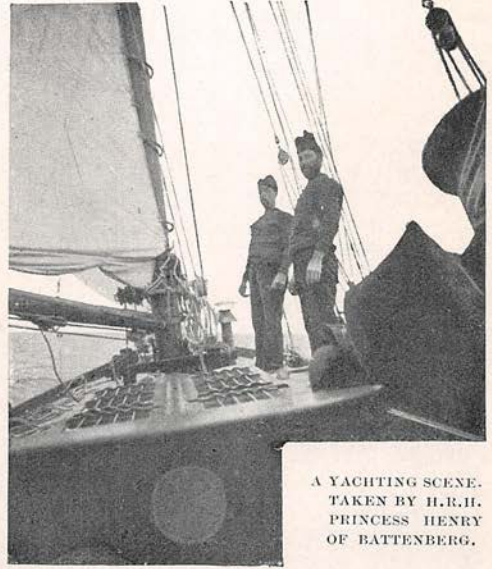


PHOTOGRAPHY AS A ROYAL HOBBY.

BY A. WALLIS MYERS.

IT is surely a gratifying sign of the democratic tendencies of the Royal Family when we find its members zealously taking up the hobbies and amusements in which the most ordinary individual amongst us may indulge. Nor is it the less pleasing to note that English Royalty, having once made up its mind to inveigle itself into the mysterious pleasures of a new hobby, will invariably master every detail of the game until something very near perfection has been attained.

The result is that the snapshot photographs, taken by members of our own Royal Family, which illustrate this article are specimens not only of the outcome of natural artistic taste, but are also the result of careful and minute study of a fascinating science. Since the days when a cigar box and spectacle lens were used to obtain an image on a sensitive plate the march of photographic art has been nothing short of wonderful;



A YACHTING SCENE.
TAKEN BY H.R.H.
PRINCESS HENRY
OF BATTENBERG.

public interest in the camera has never waned—it may, in fact, be said to have only just begun.

Looking back upon the last half century, the influence which photography has exerted over the sister arts of drawing and painting is seen to be immense, and at the same time



AN ALPINE SCENE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

it has been most beneficial. Glance where you may, the utility of the camera is brought vividly home to the mind. In scientific pursuits, in pathology, astronomy, and meteorology, to name only a few of the "ologies," its instrumentality to first discoveries is undeniable; in the Army and Navy it is a very faithful agent; to the traveller bent upon scientific research it is indispensable; and to the tourist abroad for

her Royal Highness has certainly brought her kodak to bear on the most artistic view of this picturesque house. It is not every amateur photographer who could have snapped with such effective portraiture and careful outline the picture of the peasant boy resting against the low stone wall, so characteristic of the land of hills. Were it coloured and on canvas, it might justifiably pass as an effort of fine art worthy of the attention

of any Hanging Committee at the Academy.

The Duchess of York, it is interesting to note, is a most enthusiastic amateur in the art of picture reproduction. In selecting her own subjects, in diligent study of point of view, in focusing—perhaps the most important point of all—and in releasing the shutter, Princess May has made herself quite proficient; and the Duke of York, who has himself "pressed the button" on more than one occasion, is nearly as interested as his popular wife in the final results of expeditions with a hand-camera.

In like manner, and with quite as much zealous interest, we find the "lens of life" employed by other members of the Royal Family. The Princess of Wales is a photographer of more than ordinary ability; she and her daughters keep their kodaks busily employed on every possible

occasion; and were the Royal portfolio of views and photos—which must now have reached the bulk of a large collection—to be thrown open to public view, the biographical work of our future historians and writers would be substantially assisted and, one ventures to think, uniquely benefited. At the time of Prince Charles of Denmark's visit to England before his marriage, Princess Maud's camera was kept continually busy. Often the Royal lovers might have been seen starting

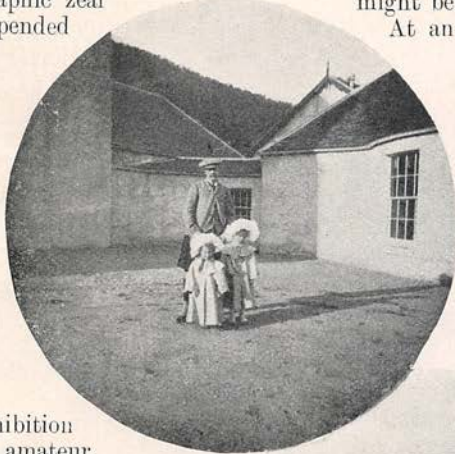


A SWISS VILLA IN WINTER. TAKEN BY H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

pleasure what more delightful companion and permanent record than the trusty camera?

Turning to the work of Royal photographers, one's interest is immediately aroused by the admirable series of Swiss views which H.R.H. the Duchess of York took some time ago when travelling on the Continent with the Duke. Both in artistic technique and in distinctive outline there is very little to find fault with in these photographs. In the one depicting a snow-covered Swiss villa,

for a ramble in the Norfolk lanes and fields, their cameras slung across their backs, and their trained eyes ever on the alert to detect a subject, be it pasture, peasant, or prince, on which their photographic zeal might be expended. At an



THE DUKE OF FIFE AND HIS TWO CHILDREN.

exhibition of amateur photos held by the Eastman Kodak Co., some short time ago, in Regent Street, there were exhibited many excellent specimens of kodak pictures taken by the Princess of Wales, the Duchess of York, Princess Henry of Battenberg, the Duchess of Fife, and Princess Charles of Denmark, besides an admirably executed set by Princess Victoria of Wales, for all the daughters of our future Queen are equally devoted to this fascinating pastime. Many distinguished Royalties have stood before the camera of the Princess of Wales, who, it can easily be imagined, would have but little difficulty in securing a numerous *clientèle*, while her winning, fascinating manner would immediately dispel all those traditional drawbacks associated with having one's photograph taken. The Prince himself has, of course, been captured by the Princess, likewise the Czar of Russia, the Duke of York, little Prince Edward of York, and many other important personages.

Princess Victoria of Wales, besides manipulating her kodak on land, has, like H.R.H. Princess Henry of Battenberg, taken the little leather-covered black box to sea with her on some of her yachting trips, and I

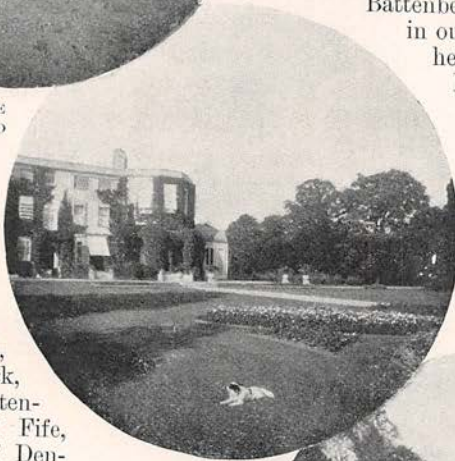
have been permitted to look through a series of sea-pictures that display a remarkable talent for marine photography, which would do credit to any of our professional photographers. On her father's boat, Princess Victoria "snapped" her sister very effectively, seated in a deck chair, while she has also taken several of the officers.

Speaking of water pictures reminds me that the Princess of Wales secured a fine impression of the harbour of her native place, Stockholm, with the small steamers plying here and there, and the masts and sails of the bigger merchant vessels clear in the background. Ships, indeed, appear to be popular subjects with our Royal amateur photographers. We find a very distinct reproduction of the deck of a yacht and two of its sailors, the work of Princess Henry of Battenberg, who is as much interested

in outdoor photography as any of her more juvenile relations.

Princess Beatrice is said to have much pleased the Queen by her prowess in taking good pictures, and there is little doubt that her Royal Highness inherits much of the late Prince Consort's love for pictures and everything connected with art.

Another Royal princess



MAR LODGE, N.B.



THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES STROLLING IN THE GROUNDS.

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF FIFE.

who has become a successful photographer is the Duchess of Fife. Both in London and in Scotland the eldest daughter of the Prince of Wales has manipulated her camera on the most varied subjects: she has taken a very pretty little group of the Duke of Fife in

Highland costume, and his small daughters in dainty white frocks and hats. Moreover, the Duchess, in a garden picture, has "snapped" the Prince and Princess of Wales together, the other members of the group being the younger members of the Duff family and a fine white spaniel, which appears to make an excellent "baby."

It has been stated that the pictures reproduced here were all taken by the kodak make of camera; it has also to be mentioned that the proprietors of this popular incubating instrument, the Eastman Kodak Co., are also responsible for developing, printing, toning, and mounting the Royal photographs—difficult and delicate work which is accomplished at their Harrow factory, in Middlesex. It was my pleasure to visit this remarkable building, which employs about four hundred hands, and to learn something concerning the method of producing the Royal and thousands of other photographs in their finished form. Mr. Harold Senior, the manager of the Harrow works, told me that a finished kodak print, before finding its final resting-place in the family album, or more imposing frame, had passed through a long and varied career.

It starts life in the cotton-fields of the Southern States of America, whence comes the raw material that eventually, after many chemical processes, becomes celluloid, and by ingenious machinery is formed into the thin, clear sheet which is the backbone of a kodak negative. After this has been duly coated with the sensitive emulsion, machines of almost human intelligence cut it and spool it into what is known pretty widely as "cartridge spools."

Eight thousand negatives a day

are what the skilled operators at Harrow have to deal with in developing alone; and oh, what a variety of negatives!

Some exposed an absurd fraction of the correct time; some done to death in the matter of exposure—and all unknown to the poor developer, who is expected to produce charming results from every negative alike.

A visit to the developing, printing, spotting, and retouching rooms, and a glance at the many adept fingers deleting a smudge here and painting in cloud effects there, would dispel any illusion that the final result of the snapshot is wholly dependent on the ardent photographer who works the camera. It is satisfactory to hear, however, that the Royal negatives give but little trouble, and though, it is needless to say, great care

and minute precision are bestowed upon them, they would rank—indeed, *did* rank at the recent exhibition—among the foremost amateur efforts which have been entrusted to Messrs. Eastman to develop.

But to return to our brief historic sketch. After being duly retouched, if required, the negative is ready for the printer, or, to be more exact, printeress. Here again, in some instances, dodges known to the art are employed to make the "best possible."

White and blank skies are relieved by judiciously adding white or grey clouds; unevenly exposed negatives are so shaded during printing that perfectly even prints are the result.

After the print has passed through the hands of the "toner"—who can also, by a careful selection of bath to suit the subject, very considerably change the colour of the final picture—it is necessary to decide



PRINCESS OF VICTORIA WALES.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY PRINCESS CHARLES OF DENMARK.



PRINCE OF DEN- CHARLES MARK.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY PRINCESS CHARLES OF DENMARK.



But after all is said and done in regard to the expert treatment of certain of these exposures, it remains to be admitted that ninety per cent. of the innumerable film and kodak photographs sent for development and printing require only plain, straightforward treatment such as could be carried out with perfect ease and certainty by any intelligent person.

To give some evidence, in conclusion, of the enormous extent of business done at Harrow, which is, of course, a direct index to the ever-widening advance popular photography is daily making, one has simply to state that the paper-coating departments are capable of an output of sixty-nine miles of coated paper, forty-one inches wide, per week, which, if cut up into

what surface the finished print must have, whether matte or glossy; and of these two kinds there may be several degrees. Then ensues the trimming and mounting, at which final stages many original defects may be reduced or entirely overcome. Horizon lines that exhibit a tendency to climb up hill may, by cutting down the picture, be forced to resume their normal position: a badly balanced picture may be substantially improved; too much sky or a superfluity of foreground may be corrected, and then the whole made to harmonise by a proper tint or shade of mount. And even after mounting the hand of the alert artist may detect a little spot or blemish which may be judiciously eliminated, a wrinkle here which can be deftly painted over.



A LANDSCAPE AND STUDY OF A PEASANT BOY. BY H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

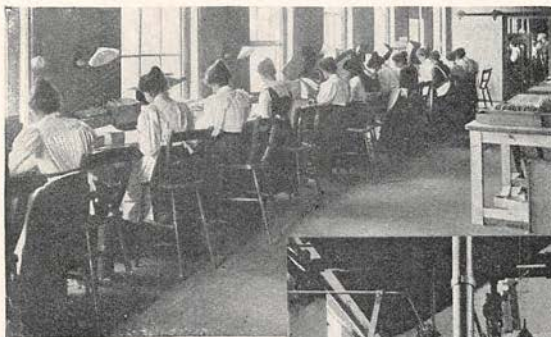
cabinet size, the sheets laid end to end, would cover a distance of 690 miles. In the summer months over 7,000 prints are produced every day. What a powerful factor is the sun!

Quite recently the many branches of the Eastman business in America and in England have been amalgamated under the catchword "Kodak" Limited.

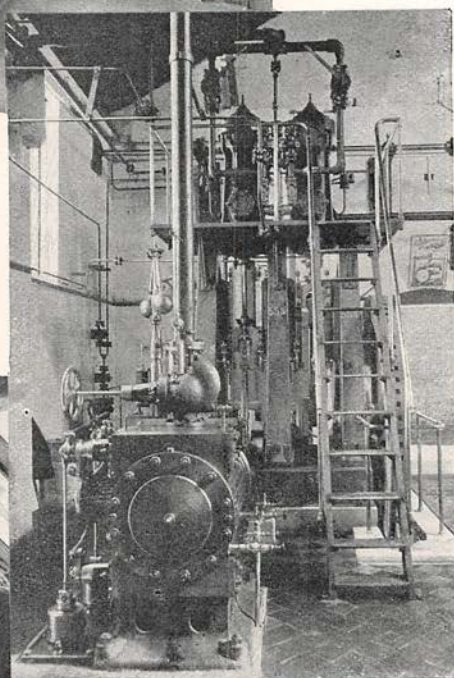
That the Royal picture-makers are not ashamed of their work is fairly evident from the fact that many of the snapshots they have created figure in frames on the walls of Royal residences, where distinguished visitors may inspect and admire them. The Queen herself has a special bureau at Windsor in which repose morocco-bound albums containing a whole series of snapshots, the work of her daughters and grandchildren. And all the Royalties whose photographs are reproduced here have a gold-embossed album, in which copies of their own and their relatives' snapshots are beautifully

day by day, it would be a difficult task to discover more effective snapshots than those which fill the pages of this unique *édition de luxe*.

In a subsequent article it is intended to reproduce some of the best amateur efforts in photography of well-known people. It need only be mentioned at present that, amongst others, the Duchess of Bedford, Lord Battersea, the Earl of Dartmouth, Lady Gertrude Molyneux, the Princess



TOUCHING UP THE ROYAL NEGATIVES.



THE REFRIGERATING MACHINERY.



PRINTING OFF THE ROYAL NEGATIVES.

engraved. This little book is marked "Royal Edition," and was prepared exclusively for Royal patronage; such being the case, I refrain from describing it further. There are, of course, more photographs—and some of them magnificent works of art—passing through the portals of palaces than perhaps anywhere else in the world; but if one dipped into the extensive heap

de Poix, Sir Thomas Bazley, and Sir James Pender—a group of enthusiastic photographers—have all kindly lent specimens of their own handiwork for reproduction in these pages. The simple statement that the subjects pictorially treated were found in all quarters of the globe is an index to the versatility and popularity of the present-day camera. The day is not far distant when the *entourage* of a luxurious traveller will be incomplete without a silver-plated dark-room on wheels.



THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK AND PRINCE EDWARD
OF YORK ON BOARD H.M.S. CRESCENT

Photo by West & Sons, Southsea.