

SANDRINGHAM, NORFOLK.

IT is matter of no common gratification to be able to include in this volume a very beautiful and complete series of pictures of the interiors of rooms at Sandringham House. Both the King and Queen are very deeply attached to the beautiful house and estate in East Anglia. One might almost say of it that it has everything in its favour. It is approached through natural moorland, well-planted, but not over-planted, with conifers and other trees, up a sharp hill from which there is a fine prospect of the Wash. Sandringham is not a palace, for there the King and Queen are the squire and the lady of the manor.

Certain special characteristics are particularly noticeable. First, both the King and Queen have been great travellers, and collectors while they travelled, and there is not a corner in the house, not a passage nor a corridor, which is not full of mementoes of days of travel. Next, of mere splendour there is not much, but of substantial comfort there is a great deal. The sunlight penetrates everywhere; the rooms are bathed in it. Then there are flowers and plants in every place where room can possibly be found for them, stately palms in the flower court, cut

flowers and plants without number in the Drawing Rooms, so that the air is sweet, but by no means heavy, with their scent.

There is no particular reason for describing the rooms in the house in any order of precedence, and they shall be taken in the order in which the writer saw them. First came the Ball Room, which is really noble in its proportions, with its grand coved ceiling in geometrical patterns. Over the musicians' gallery hung a magnificent white tiger skin presented to the King by the Maharaja of Kuch Behar, and the trophies of the chase were many. For the rest, the Ball Room needs scarcely more of description; but it is perhaps permissible to point out that the armour and weapons on the walls, collected by the King during his travels in the East, are of quite exceptional beauty. There is a large window immediately opposite the fireplace, and by it stand some camel-drums, reminiscences of the Soudan, presented by Lord Kitchener, and the gorgeous caparison of the elephant ridden by the King when, as Prince of Wales, he was present at a great occasion of State in India.

Hardly less interesting than the Ball Room are its anteroom and corridor, of which the



THE EAST FRONT.

*THE GREAT SALOON.*



THE SCREEN IN THE SALOON.

latter is very long. In the anteroom is Mr. Herbert Johnstone's well-known picture of the King engaged in tiger-shooting. In the corridor is Emil Adam's picture of the King shooting in Austria. As for the corridor itself, it is a veritable museum, full of very fine armour and weapons, and remarkable for a large collection of ivory tusks, some of them exquisitely carved. Here, too, are busts in white marble of various members of the Royal Family.

Of the Dining Room the picture gives as good an impression as it is possible for photography to render. The feature of the room is the tapestries, which were a present from the King of Spain, but their colouring was originally

picture of the marriage of Princess Charles of Denmark, which occupies a very prominent position. There is also Winterhalter's picture of Queen Victoria, a good likeness. Noticeable also are Sir Edwin Landseer's portrait of himself with two dogs, which is quite in his best manner, and a famous picture by Mr. Val Prinsep. In the Drawing Rooms (that is the way to describe them, for they open into one another) is a great deal of Danish china, remarkable for its fine glaze and purity of design; but the most striking things about the Drawing Rooms are the numerous collections in show tables and in cabinets, not only of china, including much fine Dresden, but also of pretty little curios. Very fascinating,



THE DINING-ROOM.

somewhat crude. As time has gone on, however, they have mellowed not a little, and they now impart real character to the room.

The pictures of the various Drawing Rooms, of which the particularly handsome ceilings are a marked feature, will, no doubt, possess a special interest, for they are full of evidence of the personal tastes of Queen Alexandra, whose portrait by Edward Hughes is their proudest ornament. Generally throughout the Drawing Rooms is to be traced, in addition to the "sweetness and light" which are characteristic of the house, the set policy of preferring those pictures which have associations to those which have merely artistic merit. There is, for example, a huge

too, are endless little green frogs with ruby eyes, and dogs' heads and jewelled heads for umbrellas or parasols, and countless white elephants and pigs which are to be found in the rooms. Among the statues are two very pretty "Bathing Girls" by Madam J. Jérichaud, "Cupid Blind-folding Venus," and a "Puck on a Toadstool." Mention must also be made of a magnificent portrait of the Empress of Russia and of a very striking collection of miniatures, including one beautiful "Charles I." In fact, the Drawing Rooms are emphatically the Queen's rooms. Outside, and looking on to the terrace, is a space sheltered by an awning, which is frequently used for afternoon tea.

The Hall, or Saloon, is an emphatically noble room, lofty and well proportioned, with its grand fireplace, its gallery supported upon fluted columns and round arches, and its deeply panelled ceiling. A huge brown bear, stuffed and standing on its hind legs, salutes

which fell to the King's rifle years ago, and two wicked-looking bears' heads. The pictures include a portrait of the late Duke of Clarence and the present Prince of Wales in their midshipmen's uniforms, and an excellent portrait of Dean Stanley.



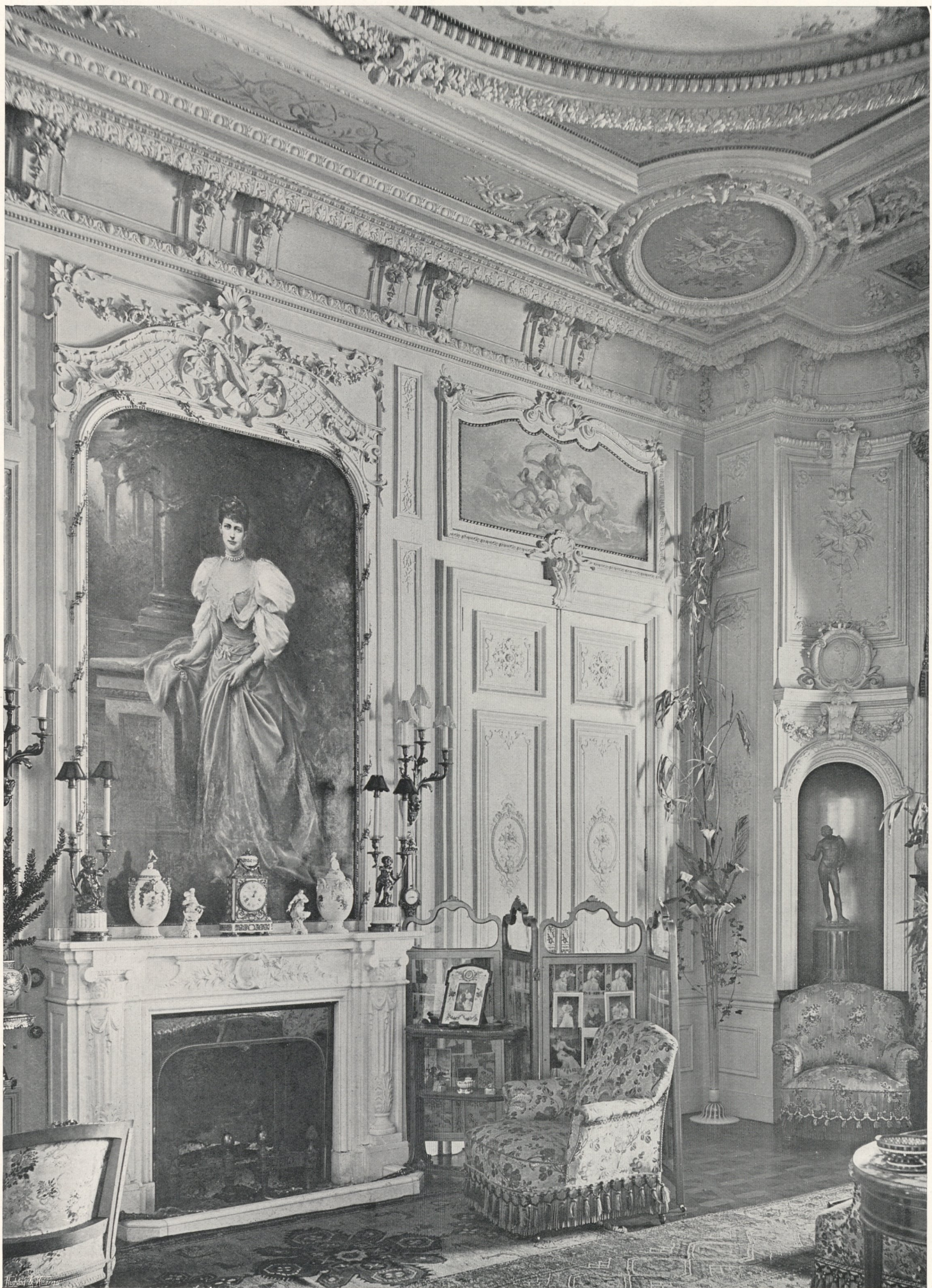
THE DRAWING-ROOM, NORTH END.

the visitor as he enters, and over the door is an inscription simply stating that the house was built by the King and Queen Alexandra in 1870—that is to say, it was rebuilt then. Here, too, are numerous trophies of the chase, including the fierce head of a Chillingham bull

Somehow or other there seem to be more long passages or corridors in Sandringham than in most houses, except Osborne, and a week might be spent in merely cataloguing the objects of interest on the walls of any one of them. This is especially true of the Billiard Room



THE PRINCIPAL DRAWING-ROOM.



QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S PORTRAIT.

corridor, which is literally crammed with ivory and trophies of the chase, and all sorts of weapons. There, between two Crimean shells, stands a shell which was fired into Mafeking. There, again, is a very curious collection of odds and ends belonging to the Queen, including the revolver covered with rust, which "I picked up" in the Crimea in 1869. This was on the occasion, of course, when the King and Queen made their famous cruise in H.M.S. *Ariadne*, visiting the Sultan and inspecting the field of the Alma under the guidance of Dr. Russell, afterwards Sir William Howard Russell. Here, too, close by the Billiard Room door is a large gong, a present from the East, which is used but once a year to ring out the old year and welcome the new one.

The Billiard Room itself is quite one of the brightest rooms in the house, and just what a billiard-room should be. All the pictures are sketches by John Leech, and they are all familiar friends—one cannot have too much of John Leech. The trophies here are good, especially the moose heads, some of which are very fine; and a small table near the window, made of rhinoceros hide, cannot fail to attract notice.

Space will hardly permit a detailed description of some of the other rooms of Sandringham; of the North Hall, which contains one piece of exceptionally good oak carving; of the Serapis Room, so called because its chairs are

the same that were used in the Serapis on the occasion of the King's Indian tour; of the Equerries' Rooms, which are in the nature of libraries; of the private telegraph office and the telephone exchange (for the telephone is very much used in the Royal Household); of the Flower Court, where, under the shadow of palm trees, the occupants of Sandringham from time to time may enjoy the post-prandial cigarette. But there remain two rooms of special interest, because they are the special territory of the King. First of them is his Library, furnished in oak and dark blue leather, and communicating with the Equerries' Rooms, remarkable mainly for its simplicity of equipment and for its air of business-like order. Here it is that the main part of the King's business is conducted. Finally, a more intimate room, if the phrase may be used, and one of infinite charm, is the King's Breakfast Room. It is a room in two parts, so to speak, a room in which are countless personal photographs, many of them in a large and movable oak screen near the door. Noteworthy are the pictures of Persimmon and Diamond Jubilee, and a remarkably fine series of sporting sketches by illustrious English artists, and the whole room breathes the atmosphere of quiet comfort.

Much else might of course have been written about the beauties and interests of Sandringham, but the pictures will make good any omission in what is said here.



THE BALL-ROOM CORRIDOR.