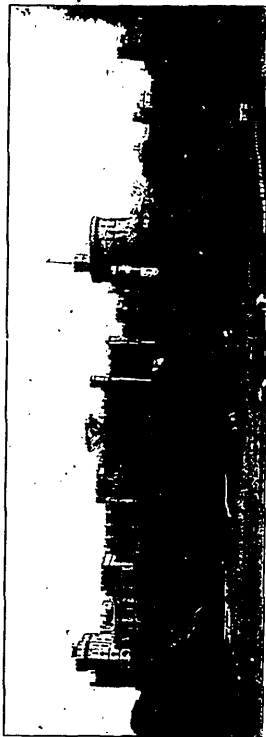


from the dining-room by folding doors, I was served with refreshments. I am not in the habit of lunching from silver plate, nor having two men to wait upon me, but I enjoyed the exquisite little meal spread before me, and was especially struck by the beauty of the glass on the table, so thin and so finely engraved, and by the thoughtfulness that had been shown in providing three kinds of mineral waters, as well as wine for me to drink at my choice.

Luncheon over, I was taken through the corridor, a long, narrow room decorated in French gray and filled with beautiful statuary, delightful cabinets, charming lacquer work and glorious flowers. I waited awhile in the grey drawing room, and immediately began to examine the Queen's water-colors, with which it is hung, and understood then how very talented is Her Majesty in this delightful art, and of what really high merit are her works. Presently Prince Arthur came in, and I had a chat with him, and then I heard a whispered discussion between three of the ladies-in-waiting, as to who should accompany the Queen on her drive.

Tea was then served, and I had a good look at the lovely Sevres china and gold-mounted service from which Her Majesty was to take her cup of tea ere she went for her drive. A moment or two later the Queen was announced, and her private secretary presented me, and I was in the presence of my much-loved sovereign, who was good enough to say she was glad to see me.

It is far easier being with the Queen at Osborne than at Windsor. She is much more approachable, and there is but little state; but she herself is always gracious, always kindly and most generous in her tender thought for others. Princess Beatrice was with the Queen when I was at Osborne, and behind was her Indian servant; the Princess suggested that I might like to see some of the rooms, and I was shown the great Indian room, richly decorated in Sikh work, at which the native workmen were busily engaged. The house is homely and charming, neither grand nor stately. The pictures it contains are many of them the work of the Queen, the Royal Family, and Lord Ronald Gower. The statuary is a feature of the house; the cabinets, lacquer work and bronzes are very good; but the



WINDSOR CASTLE FROM THE HOME PARK.

house is not a palace, but a home; not a show place, but comfortable, and nothing impressed me more than the sight of needlework, toys, etc., left lying about in this most homely and comfortable of the residences of the beloved sovereign, whose heart is in the keeping of her affectionate people."