FILMING THE MIGHTY

Illustrated from sections of the films

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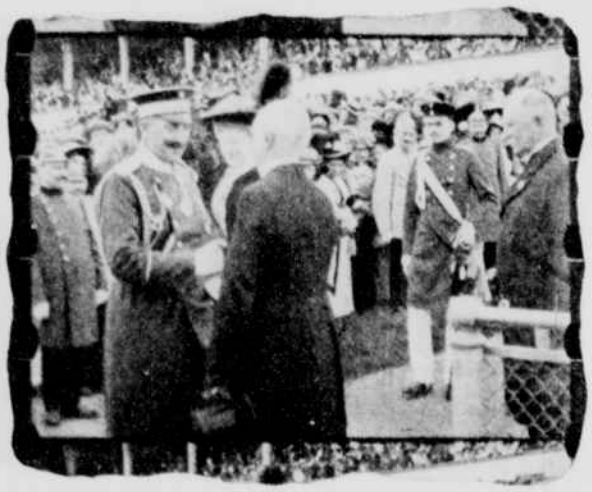

"The Kaiser is the great master of the movies."

A SHORT time ago the newspapers carried a brief item from Rome announcing that moving picture films had been made of Pope Benedict, and that the cinematographer who had succeeded in getting these pictures had also made pictures of Pope Pius shortly before the latter's death.

This brief announcement chronicled the completion of the moving picture man's victory over the great men of the earth; for Pope Pius was the last notable figure who had not been pictured by the movies. Oddly enough, his predecessor, Pope Leo, was one of the first. Pope Leo's picture was taken in the Vatican nearly twelve years ago, before the so-called news movies had been developed, and was widely distributed by the Cines Company, a foreign concern. Pope Leo readily gave permission to have his picture taken; Pope Pius was besought for two years before he finally consented. James Slevin, an American, took the picture of Pope Pius, and both pictures of Pope Leo and Pope Pius were taken at times when the illustrious subjects were unaware that they were being photographed; for in this manner only did the operator feel that pictures could be made that would be absolutely natural and free from self-consciousness.

Within less than ten years every crowned head, every President, every ruler of every civilized nation under the sun, and quite a few uncivilized rulers to boot, has been persuaded by the moving picture man to pose. They all held out against the camera for a time, most of them on the ground that it was unbecoming the dignity of royalty; but they all capitulated, and some of the chief monarchs, notably the Kaiser, have found the films an excellent medium to advertise themselves to advantage through their kingdoms, and do not hesitate to use them.

THE first European ruler to see the great value of the films as an advertising feature for royalty, if one may use the term bluntly, was the King of Spain, and he was introduced to the innovation by a lesser potentate of whom comparatively little is known in this country, King Louis of Bavaria. It is related—and the camera proves the truth of the story—that King Alfonso was the guest of King Louis at one of the latter's country estates in Bavaria, and that the two Kings were to spend a morning shooting wild boar. A stand was built in the woods and a space cleared before the stand for the wild boar—wild, after a manner of speaking only—to rush past. As the boar ran over this cleared space it was supposed to furnish a target for the royal shotguns.

Hunting wild boar is a sport of which King Louis, an elderly monarch, is very fond. Although an exciting pastime in olden times, it may be classed among the sedentary sports nowadays; for the boars are generally tame. If one of these so-called wild boars were stood up beside a North Carolina razorback hog, it would be hard to say which was the boar and which the razorback. The sport did not appeal greatly to King Alfonso. His interest lagged, and glancing backward he was surprised to find himself the target of a strange-looking sort of box on a tripod, the moving picture camera. King Louis, who had seen the movies and liked them, had given permission to a photographer to get the picture. King Alfonso had never been photographed by the movies before, and was immensely interested.

He forgot his shooting for a time to investigate the movie camera. He examined the mechanism, and he turned the crank, focusing the lens on his host, King Louis. It is doubtful if a worse picture, mechanically, was ever produced. After awhile he told the photographer to go ahead with his picture of the shooting, and went back to his shotgun.

The picture which that photographer took of the King of Spain is still in existence. Copies of it have been shown pretty well throughout Europe and in the United States. The pictures show the King as a very nervous young man, a smoker of innumerable cigarettes, and a proprietor of burning curiosity to see if the photographer was attending to his business. King Alfonso's face was as much in evidence on the negative as his back; for he glanced around every few seconds, even once or twice when he was aiming, to see if the photographer was getting the picture. The whole thing, of course, was reproduced on the screen.

When the picture was taken to Madrid it was shown in the palace, and afterward in the moving picture theaters of the city. Thereafter King Alfonso encouraged the movie men. Spain is flooded with pictures of the King and his family. Nearly all of them show the King to advantage, of course. And when the King travels he often takes with him a cinematographer, who takes pictures which are sent back to Madrid for the edification first of the Queen and then of the King's subjects.

"President Poincaré was photographed with a famous screen comedian."

In addition innumerable pictures have been taken of the Queen of Spain and the royal family. A recent picture showed two of the little Princes at the zoo, feeding the animals peanuts. Such pictures, shown throughout the kingdom, help greatly to retain the popularity that King Alfonso possesses among his people.

KING LOUIS of Bavaria is one of the most extensively photographed rulers in the Old World. If there is any pose in which he could be photographed to advantage that he has overlooked, the person who thinks of that pose will confer a favor on him by notifying him. King Louis recently had his picture taken when at prayer in the observance of a religious festival. Several pictures have been taken showing him saluting members of his court. One picture has shown him barefooted. His favorite pictures, however, show him shooting wild boars or pheasants. One of the pictures showed several dozen so-called wild boars piled in a heap, all the victims of his aim; another showed the better part of a good-sized field covered with dead birds that he had brought down in the morning. In the background of this picture there was a cart, drawn by a horse, which was in use to remove the birds from the field.

THE Kaiser, however, is the great master of the movies. Years ago an enterprising firm of French cinematographers sent their best men to Berlin to get his picture; but the photographers tried in vain to get him to pose. Their appeals were always rejected by underlings, and the matter was not even broached to the Kaiser. Notwithstanding, the movie men persisted, and finally hid themselves one day along the line of march of a parade that he was to lead, and got his picture as he passed.

This circumstance was brought to the attention of the marvelously efficient Berlin police, and one of the movie men was arrested. He had already developed his negative, however, and it was on the drums drying when the police nabbed him. He was thrown into jail, and doubtless would have been sent to prison but for an unusual happening. The Kaiser himself heard what had happened, and sent for the photographer.

The interview was memorable. It ended with the Kaiser's seeing his own picture on the screen. The photographer was released forthwith, and thereafter no moving picture camera man was denied permission to snap the Kaiser. In fact, the police aided the photographers as zealously as they had attempted to thwart them before. Generally there arose, in a manner never investigated, some friend of the movie man at court who notified the photographers in advance whenever the Kaiser would appear in public, and told them the best place to wait for him. The movie men always got a good picture of him. Somehow, his helmeted figure, flanked by followers, is seldom blocked from the camera by anyone passing between him and the lens.

The word has gone through Europe that the Kaiser has added the moving picture art to the arts of war as well as the arts of peace; that the daily progress of his big guns over the road to the front is written on the tiny celluloid film of the movies; that the cinemas sweep with their unforgetting eyes the enemy's country and parts from the dizzy heights of the Taubes' flights; that the story of many a battle in the great campaigns in France and Russia has already been flashed on the screen of the royal palace in Berlin in pictures sent back post haste from the front at the command of one whose command is not to be disobeyed.

In times of peace the Kaiser's picture is widely distributed throughout the world in fresh poses almost every day. Indeed, the military figure of Germany's ruler is almost as well known in this country as in Europe.

NEXT, perhaps, to him ranks the Czar. Czar Nicholas is seldom seen except in uniform, and his likeness to King George of England in animated pictures is so great that it is difficult to distinguish them. With the Czar the cinematographer has been granted unusual privileges. He is one of the few monarchs who have deliberately posed their families for the movies. This picture, incidentally, was taken rather for its political effect than for sentiment, and while it was intended to refute the oft repeated story that the Czarevitch had been maimed for life, it proved to be anything but a refutation.

The picture showing the little Czarevitch was taken on the Czarina's birthday, when she was presented with

"Emperor Francis Joseph does not object to being filmed."