

VICTORIA'S CROWN.

DESCRIBED BY HER MAJESTY'S MINERALOGIST.

This was made by Messrs. Rundell & Bridge in 1838 with jewels taken from old crowns, and others furnished by command of Her Majesty. It consists of diamonds, pearls, rubies, sapphires and emeralds, set in silver and gold; it has a crimson velvet cap with ermine border, and is lined with white silk. Its gross weight is 39 oz. 5 dwt. troy. The lower part of the band above the ermine border consists of a row of 129 pearls, and the upper part of the band of a row of 112 pearls, between which, in front of the crown, is a large sapphire (partly drilled), purchased for the crown by his Majesty King George IV. At the back is a sapphire of smaller size, and six other sapphires (three on each side), between which are eight emeralds. Above and below the seven sapphires are fourteen diamonds, and around the 8 emeralds 128 diamonds. Between the emeralds and the sapphires are sixteen trefoil ornaments, containing 160 diamonds. Above the band are eight sapphires surmounted by eight diamonds, between which are eight festoons consisting of 148 diamonds. In the front of the crown, and in the centre of a diamond Maltese cross, is the famous ruby said to have been given to Edward, Prince of Wales, son of Edward the Third, called the Black Prince, by Don Pedro, King of Castile, after the battle of Najera, near Vittoria, A. D. 1367. This ruby was worn in the helmet of Henry the Fifth, at the battle of Agincourt, A. D. 1415. It is pierced quite through, after the Eastern custom, the upper part of the piercing being filled by a small ruby.

Around this ruby, in order to form the cross, are seventy-five brilliant diamonds. Three other Maltese crosses, forming the two sides and back of the crown, have emerald centres, and contain respectively 182, 124 and 180 brilliant diamonds. Between the four Maltese crosses are four ornaments in the form of the French fleur-de-lis, with four rubies in the centres, and surrounded by rose diamonds, containing respectively eighty-five, eighty-six and eighty-seven rose diamonds. From the Maltese crosses issue four imperial arches composed of oak leaves and acorns; the leaves contain 728 rose, table and brilliant diamonds; thirty-two pearls form the acorn set in cups containing fifty-four

rose diamonds and one table diamond. The total number of diamonds in the arches and acorns is 108 brilliant, 116 table and 550 rose diamonds. From the upper part of the arches are suspended four large pendant pear-shaped pearls with rose diamond caps, containing twelve rose diamonds, and stems containing twenty-four very small rose diamonds. Above the arch stands the mound, containing in the lower hemisphere 304 brilliants, and in the upper 224 brilliants, the zone and are being composed of 88 rose diamonds. The cross on the summit has a rose-cut sapphire in the centre, surrounded by four large brilliants and 108 smaller brilliants.

ABOUT APPRENTICES.

It is unfortunate for American industry that the apprentice system has become obsolete. In the watchmaking business, for instance, it used to be that a boy went to learn the trade and was regularly indentured as an apprentice for five or seven years. For the first year he was employed mainly as a chore boy about the shop or house of the "master." He was fortunate if, in that year, he learned the names of the more important tools. The second year he would be set to filing, or performing some of the coarser work. As he showed capacity for it he was advanced by easy stages to regular work at the bench, and by the time he was out of his apprenticeship, he was a thorough workman, competent to do any work presented. If he was ambitious, he generally found opportunity to study the science of horology, and so became not only a skilled but a scientific workman. We have no such apprentices now-a-days, and, as a consequence, fewer thoroughly skilled workmen. Boys stray into the workshops by accident, and it is purely a matter of chance whether the workshop is a watchmaker's, a printing office or a blacksmith's shop. The necessity has come upon them to earn something, and they take the first opportunity that promises them a dollar or two a week, without any regard for the future, or any settled determination to master a trade. They retain their places as long as it suits them to do so and no longer. No consideration for themselves or their employer, who has paid them wages when they were virtually earning nothing, embarrasses them, but the boy that has commenced in a printing office, may at

the end of the year turn up in a hat shop or a watchmaker's. Not being apprentices, they are free to go and come, influenced by an extra dollar a week, and having no fixed purpose to learn any trade. Thus the majority of boys of to-day get a smattering of some trade, and finally pass themselves off as skilled workmen. Some of them may be experts in some specialty, but comparatively few of them are skilled workmen in all branches of the trade of which they are professed masters. There are hundreds of so called printers, who know nothing but plain type setting, that any boy of ordinary intelligence can learn in six months; they know nothing of job work, cannot run a press, and could no more impose a sixteen page form than they could reach the moon. What is true of printers is equally true of watchmakers: they have a superficial knowledge of the business, but are not to be classed as skilled workmen, familiar with all branches of the business. The watchmaker of to-day who expects a steady employment at good wages, must be competent to sit at the bench in a retail establishment and do any jobbing work that may be required, from supplying a "missing link" in a fine watch chain to soldering a pin on a new 10 carat brooch. Such workmen are exceedingly scarce, and, just now in great demand. It would be a great benefit to the jewelry trade, and, in fact, to all others, if the old apprentice system could be revived. The advantages to the present generation of boys, and to the next generation of men would be incalculable. A man with a good trade at his finger's end is comparatively an independent person, and with foresight and frugality, can readily acquire a competence. But a man without a trade or any legitimate occupation is never certain of obtaining employment, and is liable at any moment to become a soldier in the great army of tramps with which the country is afflicted. The apprenticeship system gave us good workmen, and good workmen made good citizens; the abrogation of apprentices gave us superficial workmen and thousands of men without employment.—*Exchange.*

Dr. R. J. Gatling, the inventor of the famous gun, was raised in a rough little log-cabin in the heart of the North Carolina backwoods. What in time became the Gatling gun is said to have sprung from a boyish attempt to make a corn-planter.