

3. THE QUEEN'S GIFT TO MR. PEABODY.

The following is a description of the portrait of Queen Victoria, which Mr. Peabody recently received in Washington. The picture itself is interesting and curious, both as a work of art and as showing to what a high pitch miniature painting can be carried. It is hardly appropriate to speak of it as a "miniature," nor does that word give a correct impression as regards the size of the likeness, for though only half-length the painting is only fourteen inches long by nearly ten inches wide. At the taking of the likeness, for the first time for the presentation of her portrait to a private individual, the Queen sat in the only robes of state she has worn since the death of the Prince Consort—the costume in which she opened Parliament. It is a black silk dress trimmed with ermine, and a long black velvet train similarly adorned. Over her Mary Stuart cap is the demi-crown, while the Koh-i-noor and one rich jewelled cross, presented by Prince Albert, form her only ornaments. To complete the portrait, she gave the artist many and long sittings. It is said that in fidelity of portraiture the likeness is not to be surpassed, and the Queen has expressed her unqualified approval of it. The portrait is done in enamel, on a panel of pure gold. Enamel paintings, to bring out all the brilliancy of their colors, have to be burnt in a furnace at least five, and generally six times. The heat to which they are subjected is so intense as to be only short of that which would fuse gold. The most exquisite care is necessary neither to let the picture heat too soon, nor above all, cool too rapidly, as in either case the enamel would crack. So large an enamel portrait was never before attempted in England. It was, therefore, found necessary to build a small heating furnace specially for the execution of this work. The burning was successfully performed, and the result is the most exquisite enamel painting ever seen. The picture is mounted in a most elaborate and massive chased frame of pure gold, surmounted with the royal crown enamelled on the same metal in colors. It is Mr. Peabody's intention to exhibit it publicly here and in the provinces, one-half of the proceeds being destined to go to the Southern Relief Fund, and the remainder to some local charity. •

4. HER MAJESTY AND CONFEDERATION.

The following is the extract from the speech of the Hon. Mr. Tupper, in the Parliament of Nova Scotia, already referred to by us: "The Hon. gentleman has taunted me with having made use of the Queen's name, and he and his friends had stated in a state paper which they sent to the Colonial Office that this measure had been carried by the abuse of our Sovereign's name. The reference was clearly within the constitution and such as is made within the Parliament of England. From the lips of our Royal Sovereign I have heard the warmest approval of union. The Province I represented, had the great honor and distinction of my receiving Her Majesty's command to wait upon her at Buckingham Palace, and upon that occasion Her Majesty congratulated me upon the success which had attended our efforts; and when I expressed the gratification with which her loyal subjects would learn the deep interest she had evinced in this measure, she replied: "I take the deepest interest in it, for I believe it will make them great and prosperous." (Cheers).

5. OPENING OF TERM AT WESTMINSTER.

Tom Hughes, the London correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, in a letter dated the 3rd inst., gives the following description of the opening of term in the ancient halls of Westminster:—

"Yesterday was the first day of Michaelmas term, always a great function in the legal world with us. The chancellor entertains all the judges and Queen's counsel, the registrars of the superior courts and the judges secretaries at a full dress breakfast at noon. They then drive down in solemn procession to Westminster Hall. Palace Yard is, of course, crowded to witness the descent of all these great folks in full bottomed wigs, silk stockings and tights, and their splendidly gold embroidered state robes. There is, however, little of popular demonstration as a rule. Yesterday, indeed Sir Hugh Cairns, appearing for the first time in judicial robes, was warmly cheered, both outside and in the hall; but this is the rare exception. As each judge descends from his carriage he falls into the procession, and marches solemnly into the hall of the Henry's and the Edwards, followed by his secretary. The hall is pretty well crowded with the bar, in wig and gown, waiting for the opening of the courts, solicitors and their clerks and unfortunate lay clients. These make a lane up which judge after judge marches to the door in the side wall, which admits him to his own court. For, as most of our readers are probably aware, there are now no sittings in Westminster Hall itself, but it is kept as a splendid passage room, with communications on one side with the House of Parliament, and on the other with the Law Courts.

"This method of opening the legal year suits us; there is no shoddy about this procession, as there is about that of next week, on Lord Mayor's day. These elderly men in full wigs (which are the most satisfactory head-dress of a solemn kind yet invented) are now day by day going to deal with the huge interests of the empire, its awful accumulations of wealth, and the lives and liberties of its subjects; and there is not one man among them on whose ermine the faintest professional smutch rests; not one whom the most luckless of suitors would accuse of wilful bias or partisanship in doing his duty five minutes after he had been dismissed with costs, or sentenced to penal servitude. This is no small thing for a people to be able to say, after all; and even the unlucky parties following the great men in big wigs and uncomfortable feelings, are all good hard-working barristers. No, there is no man in armor in that procession; no buncombe at all about it, and I would advise any American not entirely converted to justice in shirt sleeves, to make a point of being present at it for once when he chances to be over here. It occurs three times in a year, so the chances of attending are numerous."

VIII. Short Critical Notices on Books.

— **HISTORY OF JULIUS CÆSAR.*** By the Emperor Napoleon III. Vol. II. (The 1st. Vol. has not reached the editor). This is a most beautifully printed edition of a famous book. The Messrs. Harper have, indeed, brought it before the trans-atlantic public in a style befitting its royal origin. As to the merits of the book itself, the opinion of critics is very decidedly in its favour. It deals with the facts of the great Cæsar's life much more thoroughly and minutely than was expected from the imperial author; yet, at the same time, it abounds with many striking passages of great force and beauty. Statesmen and politicians look in its pages for indications of the emperor's views on questions of internal and foreign policy; but, thus far, the author has but slightly realized their expectations or rewarded their labours in the study of his book. The present volume treats of "the wars in Gaul, after the 'commentaries,'" to the "year of Rome, 705." The type is large and clear, and the mechanical execution of the book excellent.

— **HOMES WITHOUT HANDS;*** being a description of the habitations of animals, classed according to their principle of construction. By the Rev. J. G. Wood, M.A., with new designs, by W. F. Keyl, and E. Smith. This is a clear and beautiful reprint of a fine edition of a valuable English book. The numerous illustrations, and letter-press, are printed in Harper's latest and best style. The grouping together, in one volume, of so much relating to the higher instinct of various kinds of animals, birds, and reptiles, as shown in the construction of their dwellings, renders such a book doubly attractive, not only to the general reader, but, also to the scientific observer and student; and, the amateur lover of natural history will find, in the book, most pleasant and agreeable reading.

— **VAMBERY'S TRAVELS IN CENTRAL ASIA.*** This is a most interesting and exciting book. It records the adventures of M. Vambery, a member of the Hungarian Academy of Pesth, by whom he was sent, in 1863, on a scientific mission to Central Asia. M. Vambery travelled as a disguised dervish from Teheran across the Turcoman desert, on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, to Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand. He was first impelled to indulge in Eastern researches for philological reasons—the Hungarian language being of the Tartaric or Finnish Altaic stock. Several years' residence in Turkish houses in Constantinople prepared him for assuming the character or disguise which he so admirably sustained during his travels. Often on the point of being discovered (and, if so, put to death), M. Vambery submitted to great privations, and suffered innumerable hardships in the accomplishment of his self-imposed task. But he succeeded, and has written a most interesting and instructive book, and has disclosed much that was unknown of the every-day inner-life of the natives of the interior of Central Asia. The work contains a number of illustrative engravings.

— **MARCY'S THIRTY YEARS OF ARMY LIFE ON THE BORDER.*** This is a lively book of gossip and adventures among the western Indians, illustrative of their habits and mode of life. The author, having been engaged in various government expeditions, in the territories, and across the rocky mountains, has given a graphic account of the privations and hardships which he and his companions had often to undergo—relieved, here

* New York: Harper, Brothers. Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co.