

parallel, seem heavy and insufficiently relieved; the dome, being modern, is unsightly; and the minarets do not balance. For a very different specimen of a mosque of the same cruciform plan, let us glance at the illustration (frontispiece) of the mausoleum of Kāit Bey, another Mamlūk Sultan, and the prince of Cairo builders. This mosque is situate in that wonderful wilderness of exquisite domes and minarets known as the great or eastern Karāfa or cemetery, and also as the Karāfa of Kāit Bey *par excellence*. Here we see the dome and minaret in their utmost perfection, and the proportions of the cruciform mosque most admirably displayed. The exterior is fluted with shallow recesses like Sultan Hasan's, in which the windows are set, and is striped red and white, in imitation, no doubt, of the ancient Roman buildings of Egypt, where courses of red brick alternate with a row of white stone. The effect is not so unpleasant as might be imagined; for when time has softened the red ochre, the zebra-like walls seem suited to the character of the architecture.* The door is set in a deep recess like that of Sultan Hasan, but on a smaller scale; and the details of such doors may be better seen in the engraving (fig. 10), which represents a gateway of another mosque of the same Sultan within the city of Cairo. Kāit Bey's mosques, and those generally of a late period, are much more elaborately decorated than early cloistered mosques like Ibn-Tūlūn. We have seen that the ornament in the latter consists chiefly in bands and friezes running round and above the arches, and in the mosaics in the sanctuary. In Kāit Bey's mosques the triangular spaces between the arches and the square of the court are filled with arabesque scrolls carved in stone; the keystone and every alternate stone in the arch is similarly ornamented; the interior doors are surmounted by

* It is worth noticing that the courses of stone in a mosque or house are always 13 or 14 inches high, and are hardly ever subdivided. The windows, doors, and ornament are therefore regulated by the courses, and are four or six courses, or whatever the number, and not four-and-a-half, &c. It is thus easy to calculate the height of a building of stone by counting its courses.

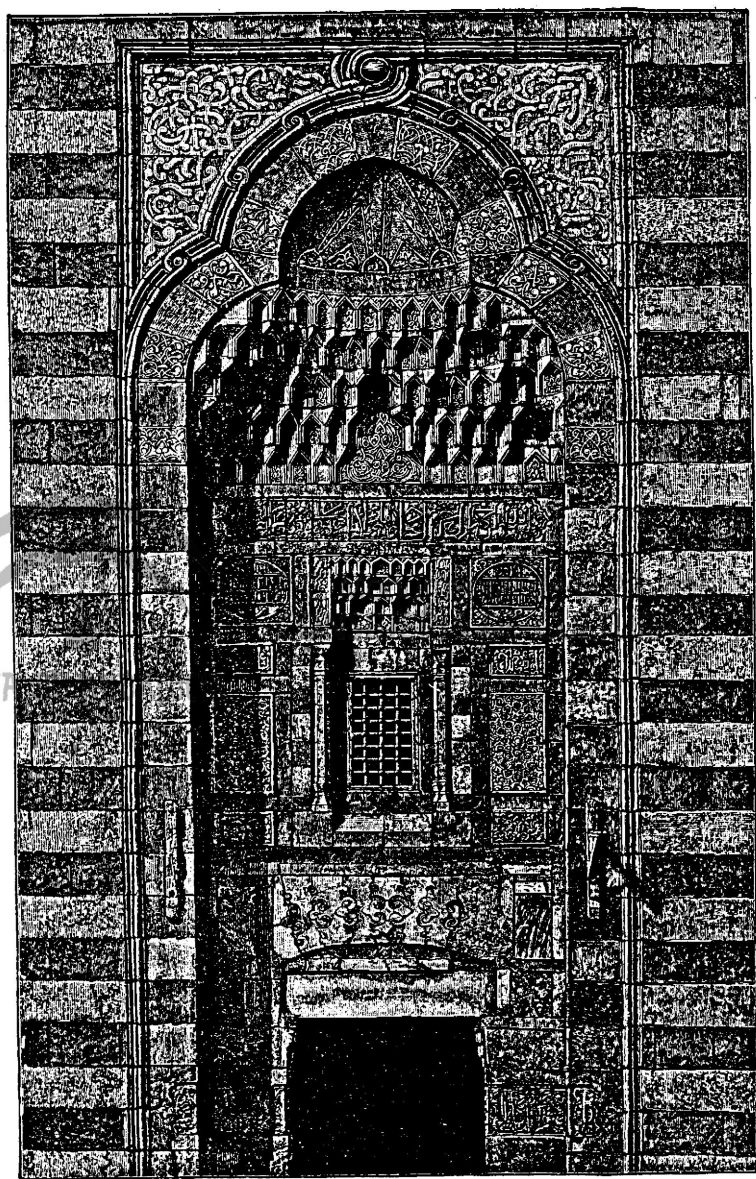


FIG. 10.—DOORWAY OF SMALLER MOSQUE OF KAIT BEY.
Fifteenth Century.

carved architraves, and over these are little windows between pillars, and surmounted by stalactites. Medallions occupy the centres of large expanses of ornament, and are filled with the name and titles of the Sultan who built the mosque, with a prayer,—"Send him victorious!" Marble inlay covers the lower portions of the walls, and marble slabs are arranged in the pavement. The whole interior surfaces wear the aspect of a beautifully woven and embroidered carpet, and however much we may criticise the structural vagueness of the edifice, it is impossible to refuse our admiration to the details of the ornament. These complexly-decorated mosques are naturally of the smaller cruciform shape, for the large extent of wall in the cloistered style would not only demand an almost impossible quantity of costly material and time, but would not repay the artist in the effect.

The two general types of mosque described above, with their usual styles of decoration, will give a sufficient idea of the purposes to which the arts of the Saracens are applied; but they do not by any means exhaust either the architectural character or the modes of decoration of the religious buildings of Cairo. It is not possible in a limited space to enter into the varieties of Cairo mausoleums, dervish convents, and other buildings; but a few examples will serve to show that, while the majority of mosques fall under one or other of the categories above described, there is infinite variety among those that depart from the ordinary outline. Among these, one of the most remarkable is the mausoleum of Kalaün. This is attached to the northern side of the great hospital or Māristān, built by that Sultan in the Beyn-el-Kasreyn, and separated from it by a vaulted passage entered through a splendid black and white marble portal.* The Māristān originally comprised an infinity of chambers, lecture-rooms, theatres for operations, surgeons' rooms, mortuary, pro-

* For illustrations of Kalaün's Māristān and mausoleum, see my *Social Life in Egypt*, 91; Ebers' *Egypt*, i. 247-50. Both these works contain several large engravings of mosque interiors, which should be studied in connection with this chapter.

fessors' lodgings, cells for the mad patients, a mosque, and many other features, of all which little now remains. But the tomb of the builder, which is entered from a gateway in the passage opposite to that which admits one into what is still standing of the once extensive Māristān, is in extremely fine preservation, and contains many peculiar and beautiful features. It is built of stone, and consists of a vestibule or antechapel, and a square chapel, covered originally by a dome, but now only by a flat ceiling. The support of the dome is an octagonal inner structure, resting upon eight arches, of an elongated and slightly horse-shoe form, supported by four piers and four massive granite monolithic columns. The arches are surrounded by a border of very delicate and lace-like arabesque tracery, in plaster, which terminates over each of the eight arches in a rose of arabesque open-work. Above each arch is a window composed of two round-headed lights and a circular light above. The niche is decorated with beautiful dwarf arcades, the arches being delicately chiselled in a very graceful shell form, and supported by little pillars. Bands of coloured marble separate each tier from the next. The marble tomb is in the centre of the chapel, enclosed with a wooden railing of coarse lattice work; but the magnificent carvings on the doors of the Māristān (figs. 46—48) atone for any shortcomings in the tomb itself.

The exterior of the mausoleum is coloured red and white in squares like a draught-board, and is peculiar in other respects. At the base, half a dozen dwarf columns, surmounted by tall piers or pilasters, support lofty arched recesses, running nearly the full height of the wall. The recesses are not of equal size; and the larger are occupied by a single window between columns (divided into two lights by a column surmounted by a round light, giving the effect of a trefoil), and the smaller by a similar window over a small pointed window of a single arch. The windows are filled with grilles of geometrical open-work, and the arched portions of the recesses in which they are set are coloured in radiating bands

of red and white; and even the columns share in this zebra decoration. Beneath the row of windows, running across pilasters and recesses alike, is a fine Arabic frieze, painted red, and at the top of the wall is an embattled parapet of remarkably fine zigzag teeth filled with geometrical ornaments. The cornice is a mere double line. Over the top are seen the windows, set in pointed arches, of the internal octagonal structure, which ought to be crowned by a dome; and on the right-hand side is a massive square minaret (of somewhat later date) in three stories, each with its plain gallery supported by very simple stalactite cornices, the first checkered red and white, the second in red and white bands, the third cylindrical, ornamented with striped columns surmounted by interlaced arched tracery.

The domestic architecture of Cairo, varied as are its details, possesses certain general features common to all examples. The first and all-important object of the Mohammadan architect was to screen the women of the house from the view of strangers. Cairene building rests on the principle that the inmates of the house must neither be seen of passers by, nor see too much themselves of the outside world. Hence the prime condition of domestic architecture was to build the rooms round an interior court, into which the chief windows looked, and to make as few windows as possible, and those few closely latticed. As a result, those streets of Cairo which are lined with private houses exhibit a somewhat monotonous aspect. The houses are generally two or three stories high—in the old Mamlūk days they were of five stories—and are built of stone on the ground floor (coloured in alternate red and white courses with red ochre and limewash), and of brick tied with wood and coated with white plaster on the upper stories. The doors are often very tastefully ornamented (fig. 11); but there the external decoration generally ends, for the windows on the ground floor are generally but small rectangular apertures closed with lattice work, and set high above the reach of curious eyes, and even those on the

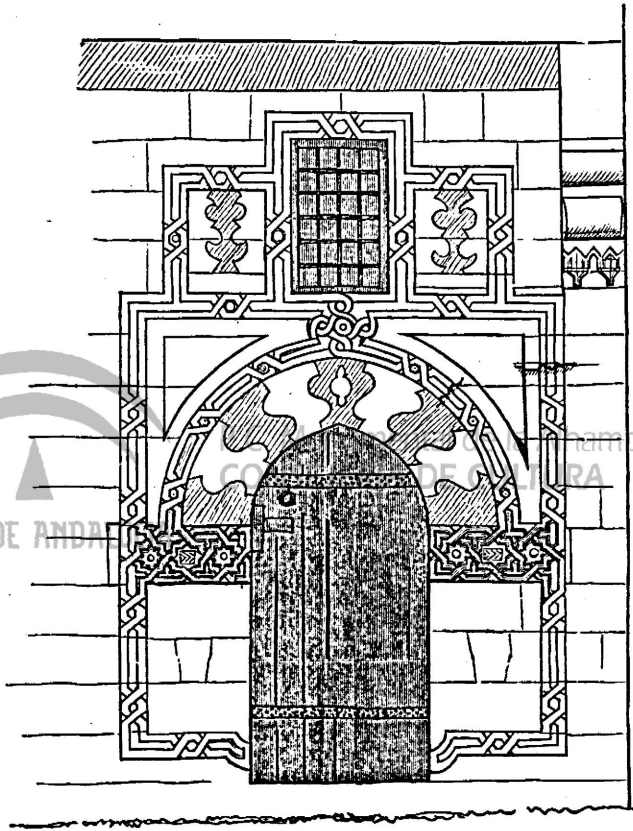


FIG II.—DOORWAY OF A PRIVATE HOUSE.
(From a Sketch by J. W. Wild.)

upper stories are commonly small and plain, and arranged with no regard to symmetry, though there are still some examples of streets where the higher floors of the houses are furnished with richly-ornamented lattice windows (fig. 12). These lattice windows are called *meshrebiyas*, "drinking places," from the semi-circular or semi-octagonal bow, which commonly juts out from their centre, in which the porous water-bottles of the house are placed to cool by evaporation in the air. Unlike the mosques, there are no friezes of ornament or inscriptions on the outer walls of houses.

The door generally opens flat against the side wall of the passage inside, turning upon a pivot in the lintel and threshold, and is confronted by the *mastaba* or stone seat (sometimes replaced by a *dikka* or chair of lattice work) on which the door-keeper (*bawwāb*) sits. Thence a passage, which makes one or two sharp bends, with the intention of foiling any attempt of inquisitive eyes to see into the interior through the door when it happens to be open, leads into a square court, covered, and open to the sky, in which is a tree shading the well, supplied by infiltration from the Nile with somewhat brackish water. No eye should see into the court from any other house, still less from any street. The four sides are lofty, and are composed of the rooms of the house, with their beautiful *meshrebiyas*, or if only three sides are thus occupied, the fourth consists of a plain partition wall, dividing the house from its next-door neighbour, and pierced by no aperture. The south side of the court is that on which the chief rooms of the mansion are built, for here the cool northern breezes, so dear to Cairenes in the hot season, can best be enjoyed. The rooms most accessible from the court, on the ground floor, are those which belong to the men of the household, and include the offices, stables, storerooms, and men-servants' rooms, besides the reception-rooms of the master for his male guests. These last, in the best houses are three in number: the *mandara*, the *mak'ad*, and the *takhtabōsh*. The two last are chiefly for summer use; the

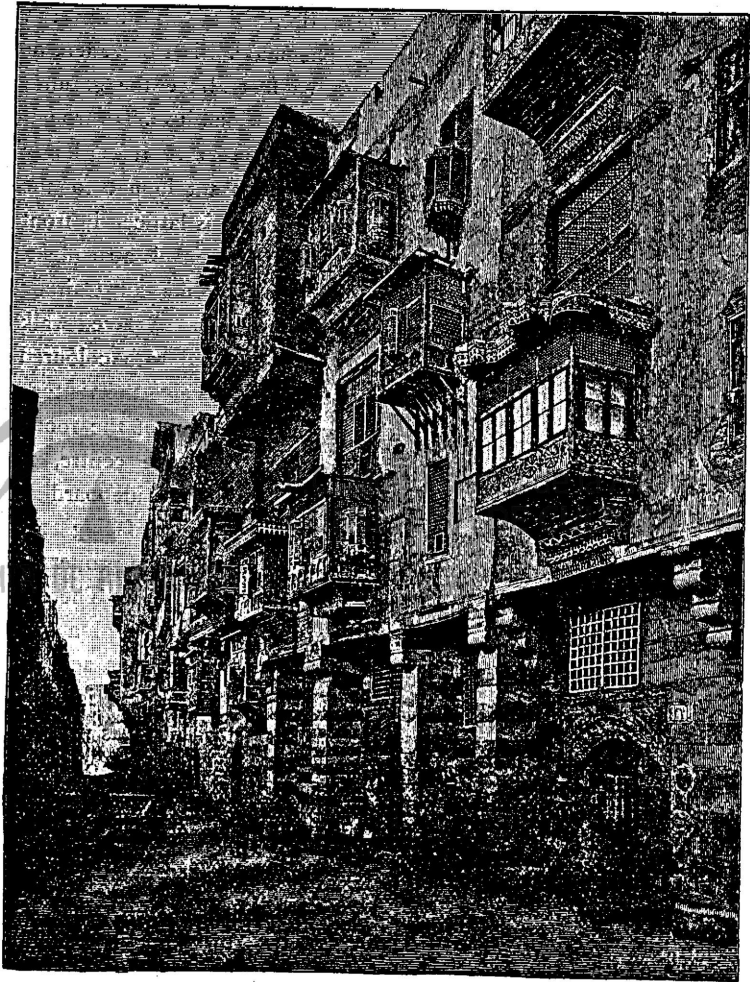


FIG. 12.—A STREET IN CAIRO.

first is the general men's saloon. The takhtabōsh is nothing more than a recess in the corner of the court, supported by a single column, paved with marble, and furnished with divans; it is an alcove rather than a room. The mak'ad is a belvedere or open gallery, raised some eight or ten feet above the ground, on the south or cool side of the court, into which it looks through three or four arches, open to the northern breeze. It is plainly furnished like the takhtabōsh, and is a pleasant lounge for the men in hot weather. Sometimes this belvedere is latticed in front for the use of the women, but, as a rule, it is a man's apartment. The third room, the *mandara*, is arranged, like all Cairene reception-rooms of the closed order, in two levels. A paved walk or floor, leading from the door, and ornamented with coloured marbles, is called the *durkā'a*, and its use is to receive the visitor's shoes before he steps up to the carpeted portion of the room. The *durkā'a* has often a fountain playing in the centre, in the midst of a tessellated marble border, and a sideboard or stand for water-bottles occupies the extremity facing the door. On one side of this narrow pathway is the room proper, to which the *durkā'a* supplies the place of a vestibule. There is no partition between the two, but the room is raised a step higher. The general plan of a reception-room is thus seen to consist in a low pavement and a daïs. The daïs, which is not a mere recess, but a spacious room, is furnished with divans running round the sides, raised from the floor by low stone slabs or palm-frames. Above the divan is a dado of coloured marbles or tiles, broken only by the cupboards, with little open arcades, filled with porcelain and earthenware vessels, by recesses containing cushions for reclining, and at the end by the *meshrebiya* or lattice window, over which is often a row of stained-glass windows forming the topmost panel of the *meshrebiya*, or a few windows of the same character are set in the wall above. The surface of the walls is simply lime-washed, or left of uncoloured plaster, and a plain wooden shelf forms the principal relief.

The ceiling is constructed of beams, clearly displayed, and resting on corbels or cornices, all of which are painted and gilt in arabesque designs, while the spaces between the beams are coffered in little compartments, each decorated with tasteful arabesque and floral designs.*

A small and carefully-closed door conducts to the *harim* or women's apartments, which are on the upper floors, or in large

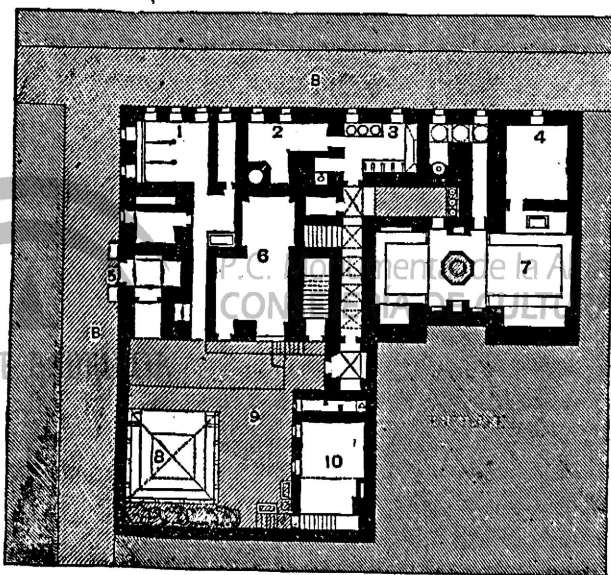


FIG. 13.—PLAN OF A CAIRO HOUSE. GROUND FLOOR.

B. B. Street; 1. Stable; 2. Bakehouse; 3. Kitchen; 4. Small mandara; 5. Entrance; 6. Strangers' room; 7. Chief mandara; 8. Mak'ad; 9. Court; 10. Servants' room.

houses occupy a separate court to themselves. Of the *harim* rooms the chief is the great *Kā'a* or reception-room. This resembles the *mandara* in its decoration, but has a *livān* or dais on each side of the *durkā'a* instead of only on one side, and thus forms

* These various details of the Cairo room will be more fully described under their respective headings.

first is the general men's saloon. The takhtabōsh is nothing more than a recess in the corner of the court, supported by a single column, paved with marble, and furnished with divans; it is an alcove rather than a room. The mak'ad is a belvedere or open gallery, raised some eight or ten feet above the ground, on the south or cool side of the court, into which it looks through three or four arches, open to the northern breeze. It is plainly furnished like the takhtabōsh, and is a pleasant lounge for the men in hot weather. Sometimes this belvedere is latticed in front for the use of the women, but, as a rule, it is a man's apartment. The third room, the *mandara*, is arranged, like all Cairene reception-rooms of the closed order, in two levels. A paved walk or floor, leading from the door, and ornamented with coloured marbles, is called the *durkā'a*, and its use is to receive the visitor's shoes before he steps up to the carpeted portion of the room. The *durkā'a* has often a fountain playing in the centre, in the midst of a tessellated marble border, and a sideboard or stand for water-bottles occupies the extremity facing the door. On one side of this narrow pathway is the room proper, to which the *durkā'a* supplies the place of a vestibule. There is no partition between the two, but the room is raised a step higher. The general plan of a reception-room is thus seen to consist in a low pavement and a *daīs*. The *daīs*, which is not a mere recess, but a spacious room, is furnished with divans running round the sides, raised from the floor by low stone slabs or palm-frames. Above the divan is a dado of coloured marbles or tiles, broken only by the cupboards, with little open arcades, filled with porcelain and earthenware vessels, by recesses containing cushions for reclining, and at the end by the *meshrebiya* or lattice window, over which is often a row of stained-glass windows forming the topmost panel of the *meshrebiya*, or a few windows of the same character are set in the wall above. The surface of the walls is simply lime-washed, or left of uncoloured plaster, and a plain wooden shelf forms the principal relief.

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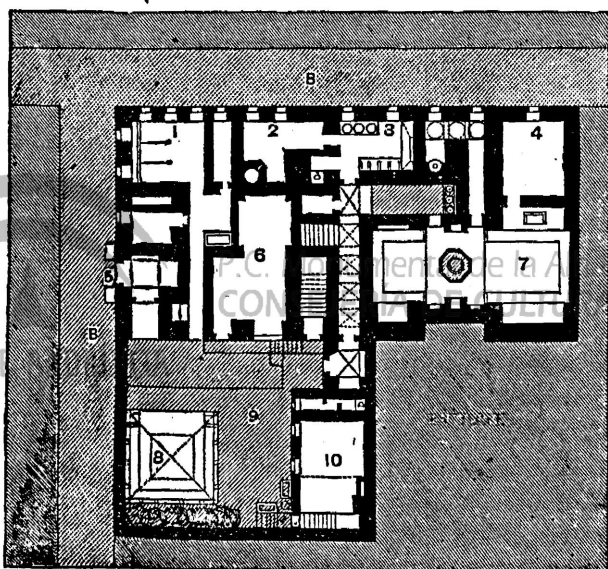


FIG. 13.—PLAN OF A CAIRO HOUSE. GROUND FLOOR.

B B. Street; 1. Stable; 2. Bakehouse; 3. Kitchen; 4. Small mandara; 5. Entrance; 6. Strangers' room; 7. Chief mandara; 8. Mak'ad; 9. Court; 10. Servants' room.

houses occupy a separate court to themselves. Of the *harim* rooms the chief is the great *Kā'a* or reception-room. This resembles the *mandara* in its decoration, but has a *liwān* or *daīs* on each side of the *durkā'a* instead of only on one side, and thus forms

* These various details of the Cairo room will be more fully described under their respective headings.

a double room.* It is also loftier than the mandara, and often rises to the roof of the house, while its durkā'a (which seldom has a fountain) is surmounted by a sort of clerestory, projecting above the rest of the ceiling, and crowned by a lantern or cupola. There are also some smaller sitting-rooms; and bedrooms, which are supplied with no furniture but the pallet-bed, which is rolled up and thrust away into a closet in the morning.

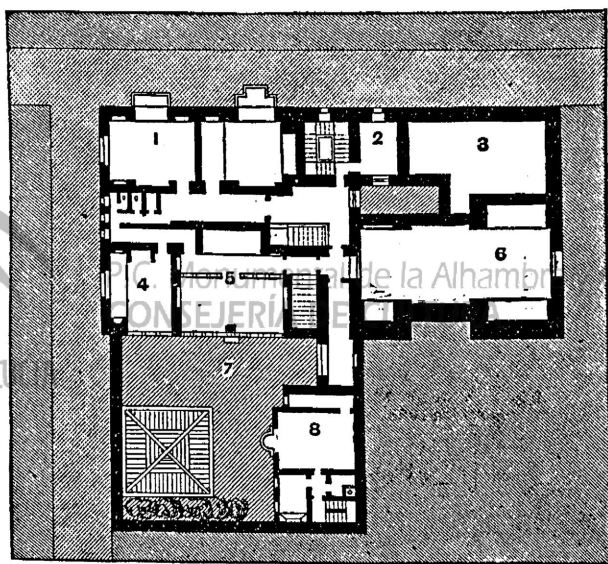


FIG. 13A.—FIRST FLOOR.

1. Servants' rooms; 2. Linen room; 3. Space over rooms; 4. Men's rooms; 5. Mandara; 6. Space over chief mandara; 7. Courtyard; 8. Strangers' rooms.

There is often a small sitting-room on the top story, with a cupola, an example of which is to be seen in the South Kensington Museum (No. 1193—1883), and also some ventilating chambers, open to the flat roof, on which are erected the sloping wooden screens or *malkafs*, so familiar to those who have looked down upon Cairo from the Citadel, the object of which is to guide the

* Some mandarars, however, have two daïses, like the Kā'a.

north winds down into the house. In the ventilating chambers beneath the malkafs, or on the upper terrace of the roof, open to the sky, the inhabitants are wont to sleep in the hot months.

The arrangement of the rooms is incapable of generalisation; they are built on every variety of plan: that given in the accompanying diagrams (from Prof. Ebers' *Egypt*) is a fair example. Some, like the great *kā'as* and *mandaras*, may rise to the whole

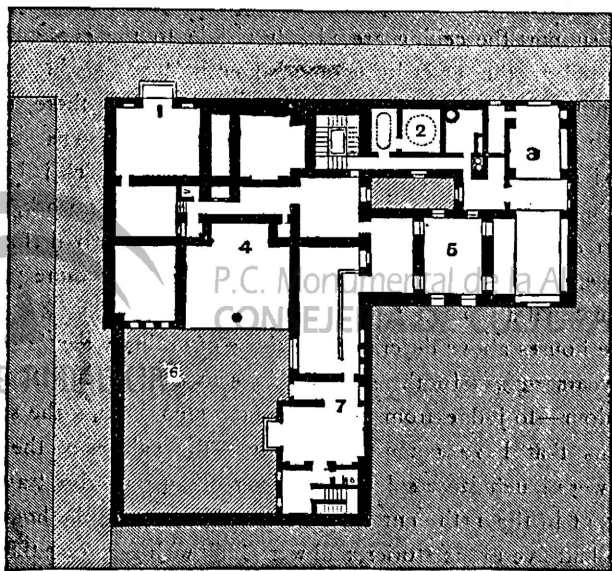


FIG. 13B.—SECOND FLOOR.

1. Rooms; 2. Bath; 3. Harim; 4. Space over mandara; 5. Space over rooms;
6. Court; 7. Strangers' rooms.

height of the house; others form mezzanine stories of the normal height of fourteen feet. You frequently have to ascend or descend several steps in going from one chamber to the next. Seclusion for the women, air from the north, and subdued light, are the three essentials, and after these have been attained the architect could exercise his ingenuity as he pleased. It should be noticed that Cairo architecture is an internal art, for all its best skill

is spent on the interior of the house; and that the decoration is architectural, since, as has been well said, the rooms are furnished by the architect and not by the upholsterer. The general effect of the courts surrounded by lattice-windows and arched belvedere, and of the interior of the reception-rooms, with their soft light, primitive colours, and obvious honesty of construction and decoration, is strangely attractive. The honesty of the work impresses one everywhere: "The beams which support the ceiling are plainly visible to the eye, and are supported at the ends by elongated corbels ending in perfect stalagmitic patterns. Nothing is hidden away; there is no insincere work. One of the beauties of the rooms is the extensive use of wood, and the rare use of stucco, which is indeed a testimonial to the sterling value of the architect's work, since he preferred to go out of his way to employ wood for his purpose, when he might have got a far easier but more perishable material at home."*

The houses above described are those of ordinary gentlemen of fifty years ago. In the great periods of Fātimy and Mamlūk splendour—to judge from contemporary records and the scanty remains that have come down to us—the palaces of the chief lords were much more splendid. Nāsir-i-Khusrau, who travelled in Egypt in the 11th century, remarks that most of the houses of Cairo had five or six stories, and were built with such care that one might fancy they were constructed of precious stones instead of mere plaster and brick and ordinary stone. Each house, he adds, was isolated from its neighbour's by gardens. Jehan Thénau, who accompanied André Le Roy, the ambassador of Louis XII. to the Mamlūk Sultan El-Ghōry, at the opening of the 16th century, tells us that the house assigned to the embassy contained six or seven beautiful halls, paved with marble, porphyry, serpentine, and other rare stones, inlaid with wonderful art; the

* R. S. Poole, in a lecture delivered before the Royal Academy, and summarised in the *Builder* of 14th February, 1885.

walls were of similar mosaic, or painted with azure and rich colours; the doors inlaid with ivory, ebony, and other *singularitez*; yet the workmanship excelled the materials. Extensive gardens, filled with fruit-trees, surrounded the mansion, and were watered from the Nile night and morning by means of horses and oxen. Such a house, he exclaims, might have cost 80,000 seraps of gold; yet it was but one of a hundred thousand more beautiful still!*

The chief buildings of Cairo, besides mosques and houses, are the street fountains and schools, which are very numerous, and the *khāns* or *wekālas* for merchants. These often go together, as in the *wekāla* of Kāit Bey, of which a description is given in the next chapter (pp. 104—112). The *khān* or *wekāla* is a rectangular building enclosing an open court, and consisting of numerous chambers, which are occupied by merchants who come to the city for a few days' or weeks' trafficking; it is, in fact, the commercial hotel of the East. Stables for the asses and other beasts are on the ground floor inside, and the exterior is commonly fringed with a row of small shops of the usual Eastern pattern—namely, a recess in the wall, some six feet square, furnished with shelves for the goods, and a divan for the seller and purchaser. Similar shops fringe the ground floors of the houses in the principal streets, the upper stories of which have no connection with the shops, but are generally partitioned into lodgings. The shops open only on the street, and, when the shopman goes home, are closed with wooden shutters. The *sebils* or street fountains consist externally of a front of semicircular form, with grated windows and a row of brass pipes, from which water may be sucked by passers-by, or a row of apertures through which they may thrust their arms with a brass cup (which is provided outside) to the tank of water within. Over the fountain is a room, with open arched windows, where a pedagogue instructs the youth of Cairo in the art of reading the Koran, and not much else. These *sebils*, with their schools, are

* Nāsir-i-Khusrau, *Sefer Nameh*, ed. C. Schefer, 133.

pious foundations, and are generally connected with some mosque. The walls of the interior of some of the better style, such as that of 'Abd-er-Rahmān Kikhya or Ketkhuda (18th century), are decorated with earthenware tiles of floral patterns, and often with a bird's-eye view of Mekka, with the Ka'ba and other holy places, represented on the tiles. Such fountains are among the most ornamental features of the streets of Cairo, though most of them belong to the Turkish period of decadence.*

In concluding this brief survey of the chief characteristics of Cairo architecture, it cannot be concealed that the style fails to give complete satisfaction to an eye trained in the contemplation of either the Classical or the Gothic orders. The Saracen builders do not seem to have been possessed with an architectural idea; the leading consideration with them seems to have been not form but decoration. For the details of the decoration it is impossible to feel too much admiration; they are skilfully conceived and worked out with remarkable patience, honesty, and artistic feeling. But the form, of which they are the clothing, seems too often to want purpose; there is a curious indefiniteness about the mosques, a want of crown and summit, which sets them on a much lower level than the finest of our Gothic cathedrals. It is perhaps unfair to judge of them in their more or less ruinous state; yet their present picturesque decay is probably more effective than was the sumptuous gorgeousness of their

* For illustrations of the chief mosques and other buildings of Cairo, consult (besides Coste and Prisse d'Avenne-) Ebers' *Egypt*, where there are some admirable interiors of houses after Mr. Frank Dillon's pictures, besides good views of various portions of the mosques of El-Māridāny (i., 202, ii., 70), the Māristān, &c. (i., 247, 249, 250), Sultan Hasan (i., 238, 262, 268), El-Muayyad (i., 273, 274), Ezbek (i., 281), Kāit-Bey (i., 284), and El-Ghōry (i., 286). My Egyptian chapter in *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt*, vol. iv., contains some fine woodcuts of El-Ashraf Bars Bey (142), Sultan Hasan (143), Barkūk (145), Kāit Bey (148), and others, with useful street views; and in the supplementary volume, *Social Life in Egypt*, are illustrations of El-Hākīm's minarets (90), Kalaūn's mausoleum (91), Sultan Hasan (95), and Kāit Bey (99-101), besides many objects of Saracenic Art from the Cairo museum.

colours and ornament when new. The want of bold relief in the ornament is one of the most salient defects to us of the north; we find the surfaces of the mosque exteriors flat and monotonous. The disregard of symmetry is another very trying defect to eyes trained in other schools of architecture; the windows, minarets, &c., are scattered with no sense of balance; and the dome, instead of crowning the whole edifice covers a tomb at the side of the building, and thus infallibly gives it a lopsided aspect. It is chiefly to the grace of their minarets, the beauty of their internal decoration, and the soft effects of the Egyptian atmosphere upon the yellowish stone of which they are built, that the mosques of Cairo owe their peculiar and indestructible charm. A charm they have undoubtedly, which is apparent and fascinating to most beholders; but it is due, I believe, to tone and air, to association, to delicacy and ingenuity of detail, and not to the architectural form. Franz Pasha, the architect to the Khedive's Government, himself a fervent admirer of what is really excellent in Saracenic art, has the following criticism on the architecture: "While bestowing their full meed of praise on the wonderfully rich ornamentation and other details of Arabian architecture, one cannot help feeling that the style fails to give entire aesthetic satisfaction. Want of symmetry of plan, poverty of articulation, insufficiency of plastic decoration, and an incongruous mingling of wood and stone are the imperfections which strike most northern critics. The architects, in fact, bestowed the whole of their attention on the decoration of surfaces; and down to the present day the Arabian artists have always displayed far greater ability in designing the most complicated ornaments and geometrical figures on plane surfaces than in the treatment and proportioning of masses. Although we occasionally see difficulties of construction well overcome, as in the case of the interior of the Bāb-en-Nasr, these instances seem rather to be successful experiments than the result of scientific workmanship. The real excellence of the Arabian architects lay in their skill in mask-

ing abrupt angles by the use of stalactites or brackets. If we inquire into the causes of these defects in the developments of art, we shall find that the climate is one of the principal; its remarkable mildness and the rareness of rain have enabled architects to dispense with much that appears essential to the inhabitants of more northern latitudes; and hence the imperfect development and frequent absence of cornices. The extraordinary durability of wood, again, in Egypt has led to its being used in the construction of walls and in connection with stone, in a manner that would never occur to northern architects. Another cause, unfavourable to the development of native art, has doubtless been the ease with which the architects obtained the pillars and capitals in ancient buildings ready to their hand."*

The architect goes on to point out how political changes, and the respect for traditional forms, and the superstitious dread of the evil eye, bearing upon external display, have combined to arrest the development of Cairo architecture. There is much that is penetrating and just in this criticism; but it is clearly the criticism of a northern artist. We have come to regard certain architectural features, such as cornices, as essential, which an eastern would regard as superfluous, and our eye is biased by what it has been accustomed to see in Europe. The main criticism, however, stands good, that the beauty of the mosques of Cairo is not so much architectural as decorative, and no prejudice can be accounted a sufficient reason for disregarding this defect.

Nevertheless, when all has been said, the mosques and older houses of Cairo possess a beauty of their own, which no architectural canons can gainsay. The houses in particular, by their admirable suitableness in all respects to the climate of Egypt, their shady, restful aspect, and subdued light, must take a high place among the triumphs of domestic architecture. We may detect a lack of meaning in this feature and in that, but we are

* Franz Pasha, in his admirable essay prefixed to Baedeker's "Lower Egypt."

forced to admit that the whole effect is soft and harmonious, sometimes stately, always graceful, and that the Saracenic architecture of Cairo, whatever its technical faults, is among the most characteristic and beautiful forms of building with which we are acquainted.

The following list of the principal mosques of Cairo still existing will be useful for reference. Considering that there are some three hundred mosques in Cairo, to say nothing of *zāwiyas* (or chapels), a complete list would be somewhat cumbrous; but the majority of these edifices are comparatively modern and of little pretension to architectural merit, which forms the sole consideration from our present point of view. El-Makrīzy, in his "Topography of Cairo" (*Khitat*), written about the year 1420, enumerates 86 *gāmi's* (or congregational mosques, where the Friday prayers were said), 75 *medresas* (or collegiate mosques, where lectures were delivered), 19 *mesgids* (or small mosques), 22 *khūngāhs* (or monasteries), 26 *zāwiyas* (or chapels), 34 mausoleums in the Karāfa, and 5 *māristāns* (or hospitals); in all 279 mosques or mosque-like edifices. But this is something of a cross division, for many of the *medresas* and *māristāns* were attached to a *gāmi'*, and really formed one building with it. A large proportion of the mosques described by El-Makrīzy still remain, but many of them are in advanced stage of decay. The following comprise the best specimens of the different periods, so far as they still present fairly preserved architectural details.

PRINCIPAL MOSQUES STILL EXISTING IN CAIRO.

A.H.	A.D.	
20.	640.	' <i>Amr</i> . Frequently restored; e.g. in A.D. 1049, by El-Mustansir; in 1172 by Saladin; after the earthquake of 1302 by En-Nāsir. Little of the original building is left.
265.	878.	<i>Ibn-Tūlūn</i> . Restored by Lāgīn, 1296.

A.H.	A.D.	
361.	971.	<i>Azhar</i> . Injured by earthquake of 1302, and restored by Salār and Suyurghatmish; again by Sultan Hasan in 1360; by Kāit-Bey; and by Kikhya in 1753. Little of the original building is left.
380-403.	990-1012.	<i>El-Hākim</i> . Injured by earthquake, 1302; restored in the next year by Beybars II.; again by Sultan Hasan in 1359; and again in 1423.
608.	1211.	<i>Esh-Shāfi'y</i> (mausoleum). Built by El-Kāmil; restored by Kāit-Bey, El-Ghōry, &c.
647.	1249.	<i>Es-Sālih</i> (mausoleum). Injured by earthquake, 1302, and restored by En-Nāsir.
667.	1268.	<i>Edh-Dhāhīr Beybars I.</i>
683.	1284.	<i>Kalaūn</i> (Māristān). Minaret destroyed by earthquake, 1302, and rebuilt.
687.	1288.	<i>Kalaūn</i> (Kubba).
698.	1298.	<i>En-Nāsir</i> .
706.	1306.	<i>Beybars II. Gāshenkūr</i> .
718.	1318.	<i>En-Nāsir, in the Citadel</i> .
723.	1323.	<i>Sengar El-Gāwaly and Salār, joined</i> .
739.	1338.	<i>El-Māridāny</i> . (Architect, El-Mu'allim Es-Suyūfy).
748.	1347.	<i>Aksunkur</i> . Restored by Ibrāhīm Aghā in 1652.
756.	1355.	<i>Sheykhū</i> .
757.	1356.	<i>Suyurghatmish</i> .
760.	1358.	<i>Sultan Hasan</i> .
770.	1368.	<i>Umm-Sha'bān</i> .
786.	1384.	<i>Barkūk</i> . (Architect, Cherkis el-Haranbul.)
808-813.	1405-1410.	<i>Barkūk, in the Karāfa</i> . Built by 'Abd-el-'Azīz and Farag, sons of Barkūk. (Architect, Lāgin Tarabay (?).)



FIG. 14.—ROSETTE IN MOSQUE OF SUYURGHATMISH.
Fourteenth Century.

A.H.	A.D.	
823.	1420.	<i>El-Muayyad</i> . In process of restoration.
827.	1423.	<i>El-Ashraf Bars Bey</i> . Also <i>mausoleum</i> in the Karāfa.
860.	1456.	<i>El-Ashraf Ināl</i> , in the Karāfa.
877.	1472.	<i>Kāit Bey</i> , in the Karāfa. Also mosque within Cairo.
886.	1481.	<i>Kigmās</i> , <i>Amīr Akhōr</i> .
905.	1499.	<i>Ezbek</i> .
909.	1503.	<i>El-Ghōry</i> (two). Restored 1883.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

CHAPTER III.

STONE AND PLASTER.

IN the preceding chapter we have endeavoured to point out the chief modes of decoration in mosques and houses, and the parts selected for ornament. This selection seemed a little capricious. It was natural that the sanctuary, or east end of the mosque, should be the special subject of the artist's skill, but it is undoubtedly a defect that this skill should have been devoted so exclusively to this and other fixed points of the building. The bareness of the three other transepts of the mosque of Sultan Hasan is only rendered more conspicuous by the marble and other decoration of the east end, and even there the elaborate ornament of the dado is likely to throw the plainness of the roof into the greater prominence. So in the treatment of the exterior, the portal engrosses the attention of the architect, to the comparative neglect of the walls. This is, however, characteristic of Cairo art, and it has its merits. It would have been less usual to devote so much skilful work to the selected portions if the whole surface had been similarly treated; we should have had a general meagreness of ornament. We have now to consider the details of the ornament of which the position alone was indicated in the last chapter.

We saw that in the great mosque of Ibn-Tūlūn the chief ornament consisted in borders of floral designs running round the arches, forming friezes above them, and connecting them at the spring. These were made of plaster or stucco, worked with a tool when in

a moist state, and never cast in moulds. The difference is very striking; the softness and flexuous grace of the hand-moulded patterns being in strong contrast to the hard uniformity of the Moorish mechanical castings. The borders of Ibn-Tūlūn are the earliest examples that have been found of the geometrical designs and scroll work which afterwards became so characteristic of Saracenic ornament. "The scroll-work may possibly be traced to Byzantine work, but in this building it has assumed an entirely distinct character. It is the ornament which thenceforth was gradually perfected, and its stages may be traced in the mosques and other edifices of Cairo through every form of its development. But in this, its first example, it is elementary and rude, and therefore all the more remarkable. Its continuity is not strongly marked, its forms are almost devoid of grace. In later and more fully developed examples, each portion may be continuously traced to its true root—constituting one of the most beautiful features of the art—and its forms are symmetrically perfect."* The principal pattern of the stucco or plaster borders of the mosque of Ibn-Tūlūn consists in a modification of the "knop and flower" pattern which is so familiar in every branch of decoration. Almost the same design is found in ancient Egyptian wall-paintings at Thebes, and also in the Assyrian ornament of Khor-sabād.†

Plaster ornament is a sign of early date, though it would be difficult to assign a satisfactory reason for this. The art of carving marble had certainly been known in Egypt long before the

* E. Stanley Poole, in an essay on Arabian architecture appended to Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, 5th ed. This sketch of my Father's was the first serious attempt to deal with the problems of the origin and development of Saracenic art in Cairo.

† Compare the illustrations on pp. 306 and 307 (vol. i.) of Perrot and Chipiez, *The History of Art in Chaldaea and Assyria*. The knop and flower pattern is there seen combined with rosettes closely resembling those of Ibn-Tūlūn. See also Mr. Wild's drawings of the decoration of Ibn-Tūlūn in the *Grammar of Ornament*.

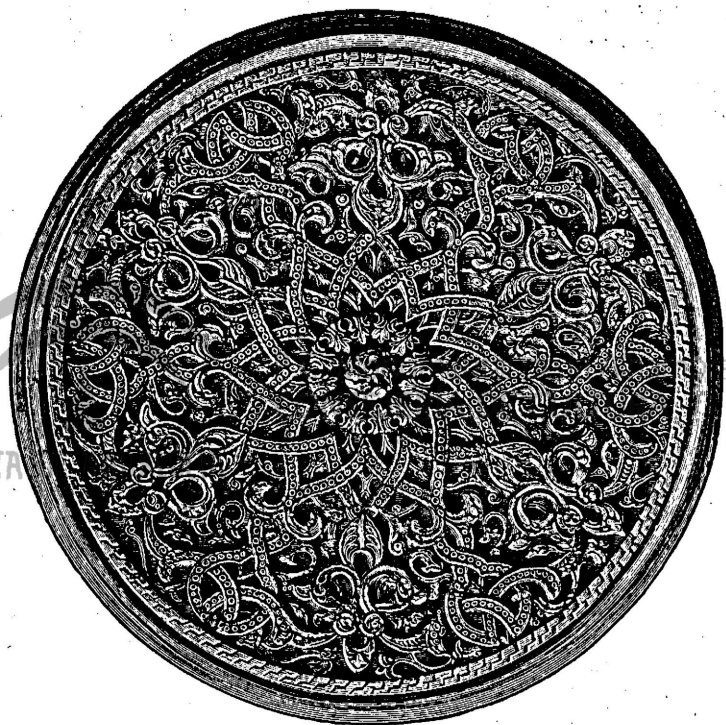


FIG. 15.—ROSETTE IN MOSQUE OF SULTAN HASAN.
Fourteenth Century.

Saracens set about building mosques, and the Copts have marble pulpits and other works of early date. Nevertheless, as a fact, the earlier mosques are generally ornamented with plaster designs. The century after that of Ibn-Tūlūn is represented by the Azhar, built in 971, of which the only certainly original remnants consist in the central arcades of the sanctuary, and these are adorned with Kūfy friezes of the true Fātimy character, and arabesque ornament, all in plaster; in the eleventh we have that of El-Hākīm (1012), which was decorated in plaster, though few traces of this now remain. After these two Fātimy mosques* there follows a wide interval before any considerable mosque offers sufficient remains to enable conclusions to be drawn. What was formerly visible of the Kāmiliya, built by El-Kāmil, nephew of Saladin, in 1224, showed plaster decoration; and the simple arabesques of the mosque of Edh-Dhāhir Beybars, *extra muros* (1268), are of the same material. But the most perfect example of plaster ornament in Cairo is in the mausoleum of Kalaūn, A.D. 1284. Here the borders of the tall arches supporting what was once the dome, the borders of the clerestory windows above, and an infinity of other decoration, are wholly of plaster, and nothing more delicate and lace-like can be imagined. The bud surrounded by leaves again forms a central idea, but it is developed until it is scarcely recognizable, and the designs are chiefly characterized by a broad treatment of large foliage, worked round into a scroll-like continuous pattern. Continuity is a leading quality of these designs: it would be difficult to break off at any given point in the borders.

Plaster work continued to be used by En-Nāsir Mohammad, the son of Kalaūn, in his two mosques, but this appears to have been nearly the last occasion (1318) of the general employment of plaster in a considerable mosque. Before the building of Sultan Hasan,

* There are also some remains of tenth century Fātimy work in the mosque of Talāi' ibn Ruzyek; but most of the ornament belongs to the restoration by Bekte nir in the fourteenth century.



FIG. 16.—STONE PULPIT IN MOSQUE OF BARKUK.
Early Fifteenth Century.

in 1356-9, stone had begun to take the place of plaster (see fig. 14). Sultan Hasan's mosque is entirely of stone facing, though, as we have seen, brick was used for the roofs of the arches or transepts, and similar internal surfaces. The ornaments, whether geometrical, scroll, or arabesque, are cut in stone or marble. The chief border of the portal consists of a bud and leaf pattern (fig. 8, page 67), obviously developed from the simple outline seen in Ibn-Tūlūn, and not nearly so complicated as the borders of Kalaūn. Probably stone was a new material to the sculptors, and was found less easy to manipulate than plaster, and the design was consequently simplified as far as possible. The rosettes at the foot of these borders are particularly fine; broad in design, yet simple and easily disentangled. The leading idea (fig. 15) is a circle of buds or flowers, joined by intertwined leaves and tendrils, and arranged in a radiating pattern round a central whorl or star. The pure self-contained arabesque is hardly found in Sultan Hasan; but the geometrical pattern arranged in a square is seen in a very fine manner. A double line, interlaced, forms the border of the square, and, at the interlacings, lines shoot out so as to form a broken pentagon, and other lines projected from this pentagon meet in the shape of a five-rayed star. The junctions of the lines are however somewhat forced; they are not natural prolongations, such as we see in the later and more perfect developments of the geometrical ornament, but break off at unexpected angles.

The stone pulpit (fig. 16), erected in 1483 by Kāit Bey, in Barkūk's mosque in the eastern Karāfa, a unique work, is among the most splendid examples of stone chiselling that can be seen in Cairo. Its shape is triangular, like the wooden pulpits to be described hereafter: but, instead of the sides being filled with geometrical mouldings containing numerous panels chased and inlaid with ivory, the whole of the pulpit is of stone slabs, and the geometrical designs and the ornament which fills the interstices are all chiselled in stone. The design

springs from a rosette of sixteen six-sided panels, the lines of which produced in radiate form towards the centre make a star-like ornament, which is filled with an arabesque design; and being similarly produced outwards cover the whole surface with a network of interlacing lines, which eventually combine into other half-rosettes bisected by the edges of the pulpit.* The interstices



FIG. 17.



FIG. 18.

GEOMETRICAL ORNAMENTS FROM THE WEKALA OF KAIT BEY (c)

between these interlacing lines are filled with admirably drawn floral arabesques consisting of little more than a single conventional flower with a simple border formed by developments of its extremities or with that of a simple rosette flower. The triangular

* M. Bourgoïn has made an exhaustive study of the geometrical ornament of the Saracens in his *Éléments de l'Art Arabe*.