usual in the best Saracenic work, no two designs of this pulpit are
absolutely identical: some fresh turn, some ingenious variation in
the lines of the arabesque, show the independence of the artist from
servile copying. The panels are enclosed by two thin lines of
light-coloured wood inlaid in the darker wood of the panel, but
the borders are not carved in the manner usual in later work, nor
is there any ivory inlay.

The next dated examples are the carved panels from the
mosque of El-Mâridâny, a Mamlûk Amir of the court of En-
Nâsir ibn Kalaûn, which was built in the year 739 of the Hijra,
A.D. 1338. These panels are partly comprised in the top of a
French table belonging to the collection of M. Meymar, now in
the South Kensington Museum, and the setting and beading is
modern; but the geometrical panels are fortunately intact.
Horizontal panels, which must have been originally placed
above and below the carved doors of this pulpit, or over the
little doors of the side cupboard (such as is seen open in
fig. 34), present the following inscription twice over:—

"Provider for the widowed and destitute, Refuge of the poor and
miserable, The humble servant of God most high, Altunbugha, the
cup-bearer, the [Mamlûk] of El-Melik En-Nâsir,"—which shows
that not only was this Amir a Mamlûk, or retainer of the
Sultan En-Nâsir, but that he held the office of cup-bearer, which
was among the most influential and coveted posts in the court.
The carving of the arabesques on the geometrical panels of
El-Mâridâny's pulpit is more delicate and intricate than that of
Lâgin's, and inlaid borders (consisting in a double ivory line,
separated by others ornamented with a scroll pattern) are en-
closed in a series of thin wooden beadings. Like Lâgin's
carvings, those of El-Mâridâny are executed in two reliefs; the
principal lines of the design being more prominent than the
FIG. 41.—CARVED PANELS FROM PULPIT (OF KUSUN?).
Fourteenth Century. (South Kensington Museum.)
scroll-work of the background, which, however, is still in sufficient relief.

Nearly contemporary with the pulpit of El-Māridāny are the panels, figs. 41 and 42, which are taken from one of M. de St. Maurice’s doors in the South Kensington Museum. In the case of a modern application of the original panels it is not always safe to assume that all the pieces belong to the same pulpit; and especially doubtful is the connection between the geometrical panels and the horizontal inscriptive friezes above and below, which are more likely to be selected because they fit the present scale of the door, than because they belonged to the same pulpit as the geometrical panels they accompany. In the present instance the horizontal panels give the name of the Sultan Zeyn-ed-din Hasan—

the peculiarity of which lies in the substitution of the surname Zeyn-ed-din for the Nāsir-ed-din, which is invariably applied to Hasan on his coins and public buildings. The inscription, however, is no forgery, and there is no other Sultan Hasan to whom it could apply. The only question is whether it belongs to the geometrical panels in whose company it is found. If it does not, which I am far from asserting, at least the geometrical panels belong to a period very nearly coinciding with the reign of Sultan Hasan (1347—1361). Mr. Wild has preserved a sketch of the pulpit of the mosque of Kūsūn, now destroyed, which contained panels of the same curious octagonal shape, with very obtuse angles, like those in fig. 42.* The Amir Kūsūn was one of the Mamlūks of En-Nāsir, Hasan’s father, and his mosque was built in 1329. It does not necessarily follow that the pulpit was set up at

* The same shape is seen in the plaques of the bronze door of the mosque of Talāiʿ ibn Ruzeyk, as restored by Bektemir in the 14th century: see Prisse, ii., pl. 95. Some portions of the original mosque of Talāiʿ are still standing.
FIG. 42.—CARVED PANELS FROM PULPIT (OF KUSUN?).
Fourteenth Century. (South Kensington Museum.)
once; a temporary pulpit may have served at first. But the similarity of the panels (fig. 42) to those sketched by Mr. Wild seems to indicate that if the St. Maurice door is not actually made up from the fragments of the vanished mimbar of Kūṣīn, the pulpit that was thus desecrated undoubtedly belonged to a period nearly coinciding with the death of that Amir in 1341. If the panels with Sultan Hasan’s name on them belong to the rest, the pulpit must have been built after his accession in 1347, in which case it may have been placed in Kūṣīn’s mosque by Sultan Hasan, in accordance with a not uncommon practice. The work is very like El-Māridāny’s, but even more delicate, and there cannot be a long interval between them. It should be stated that the outer beading enclosing both these and the Lāgin panels is absolutely modern. It is reproduced in the engraving only to show the position of the panels towards one another. The original panels are inlaid with a line of ivory inside which is a border of dots.

After the time of El-Māridāny’s carvings, the style of work seems to have gradually deteriorated. Sheykhū’s pulpit, in his mosque built in 1358, is good, but ordinary; El-Muayyad’s, in 1420, shows a decided falling off in the execution. With the pulpit of Kāīt Bey, fig. 34, we come to the end of the history of this description of wood-carving in Cairo, so far at least as dated specimens are within our reach. The art may have continued for some generations longer, but it had already lost much of its character and beauty. In form and arrangement, and also in general effect, the pulpit of Kāīt Bey may challenge comparison with almost any other; but when we come to look closely into the work it becomes apparent that the art of the carver had undergone a serious process of deterioration. The designs are mechanical, hard, and prone to repetition: they will not bear comparison with the panels of Lāgin or El-Māridāny. This is no doubt partly due to the substance used. The wooden panels are merely shells to contain smaller ivory panels of the
FIG. 43.—CARVED PANELS OF THE TOMB OF ES-SALIH AYYUB.
Thirteenth Century.
same outline, and the latter alone are carved. Ivory is less easily worked than wood, though capable of even more delicate treatment; but the artists who were accustomed to work in wood must have found the ivory difficult to handle in the same flowing lines. Ivory carving of this type is usually somewhat hard in treatment, as may be seen in the beautiful but somewhat stiff panels of a mosque door engraved in fig. 69. These, however, belong to a much better period than those of the Kāīt Bey pulpit, as may be seen at a glance; and it is indisputable that in the time of Kāīt Bey the carving had changed character for the worse. This is the more remarkable, since the reign of this Sultan was famous for the multitude of admirable architectural works promoted by himself. The stone carving of the time is perhaps unequalled in any other period of Cairene art. Perhaps the whole energy of the carvers was absorbed in stone work, and the softer material was neglected. After the dominion of the Mamlūks was transferred to the Pashas appointed from Constantinople, the art of carving pulpit panels seems to have died out. The ordinary Turkish mosque of Cairo has a painted mimbar, of the same shape as its carved predecessor, but with red-ochre and green painting, of no special character, in place of the intricate geometrical panelling of the best period.

The kursy, or lectern, a V shaped desk, on which the Korān was placed for reading, was sometimes constructed, like the pulpit, of geometrically arranged carved and inlaid panels. An example may be seen engraved in Prisse, Pl. 18, where the fine carved kursy with open work at the top belonged to the mosque of Barkūk in the eastern cemetery. Carved panelling of the same style is also sometimes employed for the wooden casing of the tombs which occupy the founder’s chapel in a mosque. The ordinary Muslim tomb is simply an oblong erection of stone, with a short pillar at each end, one of which has the representation of a turban carved upon it. Even the graves of the greatest of Mamlūk Sultans were constructed
after this simple model. Such is the tomb of Kalaūn, the plain-
ness of which is partly concealed by the clumsy lattice screen of
heavy baluster-work which encloses the grave and the relics of
the Sultan. The tombs of Sultan Hasan, Barkūk, and indeed of
most of the sovereigns of Egypt, are of this unpretending character.
So long as there was room inside for the occupant to sit up and
say his Catechism to the examining angels, Munkar and Nekir,
the outside of the grave was of small consequence. The real tomb
of the Sultan was the mosque, with its glorious dome, which rose
above the humble stone grave. But in some instances the grave
itself was a subject for artistic treatment. The tomb of Es-Sālih
Ayyūb, built in 1249, is the earliest example of the carved
panel-work with which we are acquainted.* It is fifty years earlier
than Lāgin’s panels, described above; and evidence of priority,
apart from the known date of erection, is presented in the sim-
plicity of the arabesque designs, as seen in the cut (fig. 43),
which is taken from a paper squeeze made under my eye
in 1883. Another mode of ornamenting a tomb, which appears
to have been usual at an earlier date still, was by a frieze of
wooden planks surrounding the oblong grave at its upper edge.
This is the method employed for the tombs of the members of the
‘Abbāsy family, buried in the chapel behind the mosque of Sitta
Nefisa. Each grave consists externally of a square stone box,
standing about four feet from the ground, and ornamented only by
a band of wood, carved with inscriptions, about six inches in width,
running round the four sides at their upper edge. The dates of these
tombs range from A.H. 640 (A.D. 1242) to A.H. 768 (A.D. 1366).†
The ornament here is simply insessional. But there is at least

* A very similar style of work is seen in the carved wooden niche from the
mausoleum of Sitta Rukeyya, which may belong to a time very nearly con-
temporary with Es-Sālih Ayyūb. This niche is now in the Arab Museum
at Cairo, and a photograph of it may be seen in the portfolio of objects in the
Musée Arabe, of which a copy is in the Art Library at South Kensington.
† E. T. Rogers Bey: Rapport sur le lieu de sépulture des Khalifs Abbas-
one instance of a more elaborate decoration of a frieze of this kind. The grave of a sheykh, in one of the cemeteries which surround Cairo, was formerly ornamented by a wooden frieze, carved not only with inscriptions but with exceedingly soft and delicate arabesques. One of the sides is represented in fig. 44. It is made of some soft yet close-textured wood, which has evidently offered little resistance to the friction of the desert sand, the effects of which are seen in the singularly soft appearance of the surface, which looks as though it had been intentionally rubbed with emery paper. Each side of the frieze is made of four long parallel strips, with intervening panels of various lengths; and the tenons by which it was mortised to the next side are seen in the cut. The back of the frieze is carved with a large bold arabesque design which belongs in style to the period of Ibn-Tulun, or a little later. A Kufic inscription over the door of the mausoleum indicates an earlier interment of the year 304 (A.D. 916), and it is safe to assume that the original carving belonged to this earlier grave. Thus the frieze was carved on materials that had been seasoned for perhaps three centuries, and this will explain the somewhat large surfaces having escaped the effects of the sun. The carving is unusually fine: a border of Koranic inscription at the top is supported by an exquisite arabesque scroll-border, and the main band of the frieze is ornamented with panels of arabesques surrounded by inscriptions in high relief, on a ground of arabesque scrolls. The inscriptions here are partly from the Koran, partly benedictory to the deceased, whose name they give, together with the date of his death, which is legible in the right-hand bottom corner of the engraving, A.H. 613 (A.D. 1216).

Thus far we have seen no Cairo carving that traverses the law of the Mohammedan religion against the reproduction in art of the forms of animate creatures: arabesques, and scrolls of endless variety, have been the staple of the ornament. These are the characteristic features of Cairo carving. But it would be a mistake to imagine that the prohibition against the representation of
living things was universally observed. We shall see when we come to discuss the early metal-work of Egypt, and also the textile fabrics, that figures are at certain periods the rule, not the exception. So in wood-carving, though not to the same extent, if one may judge from existing examples, the law about figures was not always observed. Panels carved with representations of birds exist in the South Kensington Museum and in the Arab Museum at Cairo. But the most remarkable example of figure carving in Cairo is found in the doors of the Māristān, or mosque-hospital of the Mamlūk Sultan Kalaūn, the father of En-Nāṣir Mohammad. M. Prisse d'Avennes fortunately studied these extraordinary panels when they were better preserved than they are now, and from the squeezes he then took he was able to...
restore the designs to the almost too perfect outlines presented in his plates (nos. 83 and 84), from which the engravings, figs. 46-8, are taken. There are eight panels altogether, of pine wood, and each is carved with representations of the sports, amusements, and occupations of the Arab, or rather of the Persian, for there can be no doubt that the source of these admirable designs was the art of Mesopotamia, where the traditions of ancient Persian and Assyrian art still survived in the metal-work of the artists of Mösil and other towns.

In the centre of the first panel we see on a ground of rather crude scroll-work a centaur, winged like an Assyrian beast, and wearing a crown exactly resembling the tiara that is found on similar centaur huntsmen on the figured metal-work of Mösil. He has stretched a bow and is discharging an arrow at a unicorn behind him; a corresponding unicorn paws the ground on the opposite side. The scene is just what we find through the whole range of Mesopotamian design, from the oldest Assyrian bas-reliefs downwards.

In the second panel a peacock stands in the middle, in a geometrical figure formed of a lozenge and quatrefoil combined. Large leaf scrolls winding round form a sort of division in the band of figures, and the sections thus marked off are filled with (on the left) two running servants, holding ewers and glasses, and (on the right) a player on the square lute and a seated figure with drinking-vessels. Simple scroll borders enclose the central band above and below.

In the vertical panel, which is divided into various compartments by the curling lines of the scroll-work which forms the background, is a kneeling figure in the act of rising, with a slain deer flung over his shoulders and held in position by one arm thrown round its neck and the other round its hind-legs. Over this figure two eagles are perched, breast to breast, but with beaks averted; and on either side of these, in exaggerated proportions, are two long-tailed cockatoos, fronting inwards, but with heads
averted like the eagles; over the cockatoos are a corresponding pair of deer, each with an eagle on his back, with wings spread, having just alighted on his prey; and, to crown the panel, is a central representation of two combatant ducks,—their webbed feet clearly visible—beak to beak. These upper designs are matched, below the cockatoos, by similarly arranged figures: to balance the eagles and deer, a pair of winged Assyrian monsters or centaurs, resembling that on the first panel described above, with the same three-pointed crown; and underneath these, in the
centre, to correspond with the ducks, a pair of long-eared rabbits confronted. These figures are depicted in a spirited style that has no parallel in Eastern carving, at least in Egypt or Syria; and they mark a distinct epoch in the history of Cairo art.

As has been already said, there is but one source to which these remarkable carvings can be traced. The artists who engraved the hunting-scenes, the water-fowl, the drinking-bouts, of the bowls and other vessels of bronze and brass made at Mōsil or in the neighbouring cities—the artists, in short, who had inherited the traditions of animal design from the workmen of the Sasanians, the Parthians, and the Assyrians, these were the men who inspired, if they did not actually execute the carved panels of Kalaūn. The birds face to face refer no doubt to the cock-fights which the Persians included among their favourite sports, and the adoption of the duck instead of the cock has its explanation in the name of the Sultan for whose hospital these panels were carved; for Kalaūn was a slave from Kipchak, and his name means “duck” in his native Tartar tongue. It is strange that so admirable a style of decoration did not find wider acceptance among the founders and architects of mosques in Cairo.

No near parallel to these carvings of Kalaūn can be found in any mosque of the period, still less in any of later date. A few pieces carved with parrots and peacocks have been noticed, but these, since they are separated from their original surroundings, may have come from the same source as the panels still remaining at the Māristān of Kalaūn.

It is perhaps rash to speculate upon the causes which led to the sudden adoption and as sudden abandonment of a remarkable and characteristic style of carving; but in the present case there is some evidence that may help us to an explanation. In the chapter on metal-work we shall have to describe a similar sequence of adoption and abandonment with respect to the figured style of Mōsil, which closely resembles the style of Kalaūn’s carvings. The chased bowls and caskets, covered with representations of
hunting and drinking scenes, beasts of the chase, and the like; made their appearance in Cairo about the end of the first quarter of the thirteenth century, so far as existing specimens allow us to judge. The style was brought from Mesopotamia by the princes of the family of Ayyūb, of which Saladin was the most celebrated member. The Ayyūbis passed through the country watered by the Tigris and Euphrates before they arrived in Syria, or attempted to worm themselves into the sovereignty of Egypt. Saladin and his kinsmen were the officers of the great Sultan Nūr-ed-din, of Aleppo and Damascus, who came of the stock of the Beny Zenky of Mōsil. The Beny Zenky had been among the earliest to adopt the novelty of a figured coinage: they adorned their money with the saints and holy personages of the Byzantine coinage, or with symbols taken from Persian astrology, in place of the sternly simple inscriptions which covered the faces of the coins of the orthodox Khalifate. These innovations were carried into Syria by Nūr-ed-din, who entertained as few prejudices on the subject of representations of living things as the rest of the Kurdish and Tartar princes, who now ruled the best provinces
of the Khalifs of Baghdad. Saladin (though a very pious and orthodox prince) brought the heretical novelty to Cairo, where he carved his own cognizance, an eagle,* on the wall of the Citadel which he built on a spur of Mount Mukattam. There is a brass and silver casket of Saladin’s grandnephew in the South Kensington Museum, covered with figures of huntsmen, &c., which shows that the Ayyûby kings of Egypt continued to patronize the art introduced by their great kinsman. So, too, the earlier Mamlûks found no spiritual injury to result from the representation of men and animals on their cups and perfume-burners, their trays and bowls. Evidence of this will be found in the chapter on metal-work; and the lion, the cognizance of Beybars, the most powerful of the early Mamlûk Sultans, occurring on coins, doors, and walls, shows that this indifference to a minor regulation of the Arabian prophet extended to more forms of art than one. Beybars’ lions or chitahs on his coins and bronze mosque doors, Beysary’s eagles on his perfume-burner, El-Ädil’s hunting-scenes on his coffret, Kalaân’s centaurs and drinking-bouts on his hospital doors, all point to a general acquiescence for awhile in this flagrant disregard of what had always been held a binding precept in Islam. But with the reign of En-Nâsir, Kalaân’s son, a new style of metal-work came into fashion: rosettes of flowers and leaves, arabesques, and scrolls, and the rest of the legitimate materials of the Mohammadan artist, obtained a hold on Cairo work in all branches that was never again lost. At precisely the same time, the figured carving, which seemed to promise so fine a field for mosque and palace decoration, was abandoned in favour of the small carved and inlaid arabesque panels, which have already been examined in detail. It is not unreasonable to ascribe the change in the wood-work to the same cause as that which operated in the metal-work; and this seems to have been natural enough. The barbarous Kurds

* It may, however, be the crest of Karâkûsh, the eunuch, who was commissioned by Saladin to build the Citadel. Karâkûsh means “black bird of prey.”
and Tartars, who had swarmed over the lands of the Khalifate, and entered Egypt, might for a while, by dint of sheer imperious insistence, make a form of art popular which was nevertheless unorthodox; but as the barbarians settled down in the cities of the Muslims, which they did so much to beautify, they must have gradually become assimilated to the people they governed, and their first ignorant indifference about so vital a part of religion as the prohibition of images of animate things must have given place to a proper iconoclastic feeling, or at least they must have learned to weigh more accurately the sentiments of the pious on the subject. Thus the imported art of figure carving, which was the temporary protégé of the Tartar princes, before they knew better, gave place to the arabesque and geometrical ornament which had long before been settled upon as most consonant with the letter and spirit of Mohammad's precept. The figure art was foreign to Cairo; it was heretical; and it was little suited to the small panelling which was a condition of the carver's art in so hot a climate: the large panels of Kalaūn's doors have suffered severely from the heat, and the size is against all the precautions of joinery in hot climates. On the other hand, carved panelling, in small
sizes, worked into intricate geometrical patterns, formed the native art of Cairo, was exactly adapted to the conditions of climate, and offended no law of God or man. It was clear that the figure carving had no chance against so well accredited a rival.

When we say that the small arabesque carving described in detail, and illustrated by specimens from numerous pulpits, was a native Egyptian art, we may be thought to be going too fast. The evidence is certainly incomplete for so definite an assertion, it will be said; and until we know something more about early Egyptian carving, say in Fātimy times, it is hardly reasonable to expect a cautious student to assent to any proposition about "native" arts in Egypt. But I believe that the evidence for the indigenous nature of the particular style of carving referred to is strong enough to warrant the appellation of native art. It is to be noted that in no other Mohammadan country do we find the same character of wood carving except in isolated examples, which may be due to Cairene influences. Damascus carving is absolutely different in style; it consists in rich flowery decorations in high relief, and not of arabesques in small geometrical panels and comparatively low
The Art of the Saracens.

Relief. Persia has nothing of the kind, nor, so far as we know, has the opposite region of Mauritania. The carved panelling of Cairo seems to be peculiar to Egypt. This is in itself a strong argument for an Egyptian origin of the art. But there is other evidence, which, if at present not so complete as could be desired, still offers a considerable presumption as to the history of the art. The finest specimens of carved geometrical panelling are found, not in the Mohammedan mosques, but in the Christian churches of the Copts, in Babylon, near Old Cairo. The screens of these Coptic churches are often one broad expanse of elaborate inlay and carving in wood and ivory, arranged like the mosque pulpits in geometrical panels of small size. The designs are naturally founded more or less upon the cross, which is also inlaid very frequently in the screens; but the character of the work is very similar to that of mosque pulpits, and in some instances, the designs of the carving are as nearly identical as the originality of the Cairo artist would permit any two designs to be. A glance at the lectern engraved in Mr. A. J. Butler's admirable work on the Coptic churches of Egypt,*

* _The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt_, ii. 66, 67.
WOOD-WORK.

will show the identity of the two, and there is every probability that the workmen who made the Coptic screens and lecterns made also the Muslim pulpits. It is historically ascertained that the Copts were the most skilful of the artists of Egypt, and were employed by the Mohammadans to execute some of their mosques; and when the excellence of the carvings in the Coptic churches is considered, it is not unnatural to assume that this was among the arts which the Copts lent to their Muslim masters. The question of date is not so easily settled. It is of course necessary to the absolute establishing of this view of the origin of Cairo

![Image of lattice work](South Kensington Museum)

panel-carving that examples of Coptic carving should be found earlier than any in the mosques, but in this respect the evidence is not convincing. Mr. Butler states, for example, that the screen of the convent of Abu-s-Seyfeyn, near Cairo, dates from A.D. 927, and the priest of the convent said that it was nine hundred years old. But Coptic priests are bad authorities on such a point, and the comparison of style which Mr. Butler institutes with the restoration pulpit of the mosque of Ibn-Tülün tends to give a thirteenth instead of a tenth century date. But there are various structural arguments which, in the opinion of
Mr. Butler, who speaks with the highest authority on Coptic art, prove that some of these carvings go back as far as the tenth century at least, while the doors at El-Adra, in the Nitrian valley, are stated to be certainly of the eighth century; and if this be accepted, there can be no further question as to the origin of the art of panel-carving and inlaying in Cairo. The Coptic churches are mostly earlier than the tenth century, and must have had screens from their foundation; and there is no reason to suppose that the screens have been often renewed, or that it was impossible to carve as well in the tenth century as in the thirteenth; indeed

the fine stucco designs of Ibn-Tūlūn, which was built by a Coptic architect in the ninth century, point to a skill in working plaster ornament even then. It was, moreover, natural that the Copts, the old inhabitants of Egypt, should have early discovered the method of defeating the warping tendencies of their hot climate by means of a minute subdivision into panels. Taking these various considerations, it is not so rash as it seemed to assume that the art of carving panels in the style characteristic of Coptic screens and Muslim pulpits was native to Egypt, and was the special property of the Copts.
WOOD-WORK.

The Coptic churches also contain some examples of figure carving, somewhat resembling the hunting figures of Mōsil metalwork. A noble triforium screen in the church of St. Barbara, and another in the church of St. Sergius (Abu-Sargah), in Old Cairo, are decorated with warrior saints and beasts much after the model of the horsemen of Mesopotamian art. There may of course be a connection between these and Kalaūn’s panels, described above, but it is not necessary to trace the two to the same source. There can be no doubt of the Mesopotamian origin of Kalaūn’s carvings; but those of St. Sergius may not improbably be directly derived from Byzantine models, with which they show more affinity than with the Mōsil style. Had these carvings been derived from the Mesopotamian school, we should expect to find a prevailing hunting character, interspersed with scenes of festivity, wine-cups, and musical instruments; instead of which the subjects are principally warrior saints of the Byzantine style, and the beasts that accompany them may be due as much to the animal decoration of the Lower Empire as to the hunting-scenes of Persian art. The St. Barbara carvings, however, closely resemble Mōsil work, and have even the winged centaur. It is, after all, merely a question of the immediate
source of the Coptic figure carvings, for it can hardly be doubted that the Byzantine figures and beasts were the offspring of the Sassanian and Assyrian style, as much as the figured metal-work of Mōsil and Cairo and the carvings of Kalaūn. There is always much that is hypothetical in the attempt to trace the origin of any special art; many influences combine to form a style, and it is contrary to experience to ascribe the whole of the elements that go to make up a style to one source. But whatever may be the subsidiary influences in Cairo carving, we cannot be wrong in ascribing the development of arabesque panel-carving to Coptic workmen, and the employment of figures to the influence of Mesopotamian models, either directly, or through the medium of Byzantine examples.

The wood-work in the mosques of Cairo is principally of the carved and panelled style; pulpits, lecterns, doors, are subjects for panel-work, inlaid and carved, in geometrical patterns; inscriptional friezes, when of wood, are carved and generally painted or gilt; and the casings of the tombs, when there are any, are panelled like the pulpits. But there is another manner of treating wood which is commonly adopted in mosques: this is the open lattice-work which, from its most familiar application, in the projecting windows of houses, is commonly known to us as meshrebīya work. The earlier mosques show us a style of lattice which is much less graceful than what is usually understood by meshrebīya work. This oldest lattice consists in a frame of stout quarterings, divided into compartments of a couple of feet square, each of which is filled with a number of upright balusters, square in parts and round in others. The effect of such a screen, as seen in the enclosure of the tomb of Kalaūn, is clumsy and heavy. A more usual kind of lattice is the wide open grille, resembling the cross-bars of a prison window, and having no pretensions to elaboration. The ordinary graceful lattice-work of the meshrebīyas is not common in mosques, though occasionally the sanctuary is screened off by such a lattice, and in one of the
Coptic churches a screen of this kind forms a cheap but graceful substitute for the more elaborate wood and ivory carving.

It is in the houses of Cairo that this lattice-work is seen in its greatest profusion and variety. Fig. 12 gives several excellent examples in a single street. The number of such streets is daily diminishing, partly in consequence of the dread of fire, which used to leap from window to window in the old city with frightful rapidity, and partly because the modern Cairenes are enamoured of the unsightly architecture and plate-glass of Europe (which is unhappily seen introduced in the foremost window in fig. 12). The South Kensington Museum is peculiarly rich in examples of fine lattice-work. The two best are from a single house in Cairo, which was in course of destruction, after being condemned by the Ministry of Works as unsafe, when I was in Cairo, in 1883; and I was thus enabled to purchase for the Museum.
the complete room (no. 1193), and the meshrebiya (no. 1194), without violating any standing monument of Cairo art. The lattices of these two windows are of a fine period, probably the early part of the eighteenth century, and the small compartments of the larger one are filled with turned lattice of a singularly delicate character, which gives the effect almost of lace when viewed from inside with the light shining through. One of these panels is represented in fig. 49. There are now more than forty different specimens of lattice-work in the South Kensington Museum, and most of them present some variety in the design. It would not seem that there was much opportunity for variety of effect in the mere combination of short turned bobbins of wood in a lattice screen; but the Cairo workmen found out an infinity of changes that could be rung on their simple materials. The engravings, figs. 49-58, which represent ten different styles in the South Kensington Museum, will show how variously the component parts of a lattice may be arranged. The essential feature of the work is a series of oval turned balls connected together by short turned links, which fit into holes in the balls. It is in the arrangement and number of these links, of which 2000 are often contained in the space of a square yard, that the variety of design is effected. Sometimes the balls are supported by four links or arms forming a cross, sometimes by six or eight, like a star; and the distance between the balls may be extended, so as to permit of a smaller nob at the crossing of the arms, a modification that produces a singularly delicate and lace-like effect. Sometimes these intermediate balls are so distributed as to form a pattern upon the ground of the wider design, as in fig. 58, where the finer interlacing forms the outline of a lamp suspended in the more open lattice. The lamp is the most usual design in such interlaced meshrebiyas, but Solomon's seal and other simple designs are also found, and sometimes an Arabic inscription is formed by the skilful arrangement of the lattice. An example of interlacing cypresses may be seen in the South Kensington
FIG. 57.—LATTICE-WORK.
(South Kensington Museum.)
Museum, (no. 1471—1871,) and of a Coptic cross formed by the lattice-work (1492—1871). The meshrebiya no. 140 (1881), has an interlacing inscription

نسر من الله وفتح قريب وبشر المومنين يا محمد

"Help is from God, and approaching victory, and give glad tidings to the Faithful, O Mohammad!" The meshrebiya from the St. Maurice collection, (no. 892—1884,) shows several examples of interlacing designs, Solomon's seals, hanging lamps, and the Küfy inscription رأس الحكيم مخافة الله مال الحادم صداقه الله.
FIG. 59.—FRONT.

FIG. 60.—BACK.

CARVED AND INLAID LATTICE-WORK.