

beautiful workmanship, ewers, caskets, writing-boxes, all were covered with silver ornament, arabesques, flowers, inscriptions, and geometrical designs, with, not seldom, the heraldic badges of their owner. The specimens described below range from the beginning of the fourteenth to the end of the fifteenth century, when the art of inlaying was already on the wane; but an examination of the numerous collections, public and private, of Europe would doubtless carry the history of the art to a somewhat later date. In the present day the Cairo workmen engrave brass trays and vessels of considerable merit, and if they do not now produce to any appreciable extent the inlaid work of their ancestors it is probably because it is too costly for most purchasers, and is neglected by the modern Pasha.

There can be no doubt that most of this Mamlūk work was made at Cairo. Although the figured work of Mōsil, taking a new start in the 12th and 13th centuries, seems to have at first dominated the artists of the Mohammadan East, and to have influenced schools of design far from its centre, there is no question that inlaid metal-work existed in Egypt before the 13th century. The inventory of the palace of the Fātimy Khalif El-Mustansir, in the 11th century, contains numerous entries of inlaid metal-work,—gold plates enamelled in colours; writing-boxes in gold and silver; great vats for washing clothes, standing on three legs, representing animals; mirrors inlaid with gold and silver in borders of precious stones; quantities of vessels adorned with chased gold; six thousand gold narcissus vases; and even row-galleys coated with gold plates. Nāsir-i-Khusrau, who saw this Khalif holding a state reception, says his throne was covered with gold, on which were depicted scenes of the chase, huntsmen and dogs, and inscriptions; the balustrade was of gold trellis-work of a beauty defying description, and the steps behind the throne were of silver.* The same

* *Sefer Nameh*, 158.

observer tells us of a magnificent silver chandelier placed in the mosque of 'Amr by the Khalif El-Hākīm, which was so large that they had to break down the door to get it into the mosque.*

Fātimy work spread to Sicily, where we find very early and singularly perfect metal-work made by Mohammadans. The Bayeaux ivory casket (Prisse, iii., pl. 157), with its finely chased silver plates, has an unmistakable Fātimy inscription in combination with confronted birds, peacocks beak to beak, parrots, and other Mōsil characteristics. The ivory box of Ziyād ibn Aflah, in the South Kensington Museum, with the date 359 (A.D. 971), is probably due to Fātimy workmen. The crystal vase preserved in the treasure of St. Mark at Venice bears the name of El-'Azīz, a Fātimy Khalif of the last quarter of the tenth century, and is closely similar to another crystal vase of St. Denis, now in the Louvre, which bears inscriptions of the same character as those on the Nürnberg mantle, which was made at Palermo in 1133 under the rule of Roger.† These crystal vases, of which examples with the name of El-'Aziz are mentioned by El-Makrīzy, and the embroidered silks, show a power of design and execution which implies similar proficiency in metal-work. In fine, there is no doubt that the artists of Egypt under the Fātimis were skilled to a degree that found no parallel in the handicrafts of Europe. The art may have succumbed for a while to the influence of the Mōsil school, which would naturally be imported by rulers like Saladin and his successors, who came from the very region of the Mōsil silversmiths; and the Fātimy work may have owed much of its perfection to the teaching of Mesopotamian artists of a date earlier than any existing specimens; ‡ but it is impossible to

* *Sefer Nameh*, 149; El-Makrīzy, *Mamlouks*, ii. 250.

† A. de Longpérier, *Œuvres*, i. 453-5.

‡ We know that Basra painters were brought to Egypt in Fātimy times. El-Makrīzy tells us that the "Mosque of the Karāfa," erected by Taghrīd Darzān, the wife of El-Mu'izz, was built by a Persian architect, El-Hasan El-Fārisy, and resembled the Azhar. Its chief gate was cased with iron, and

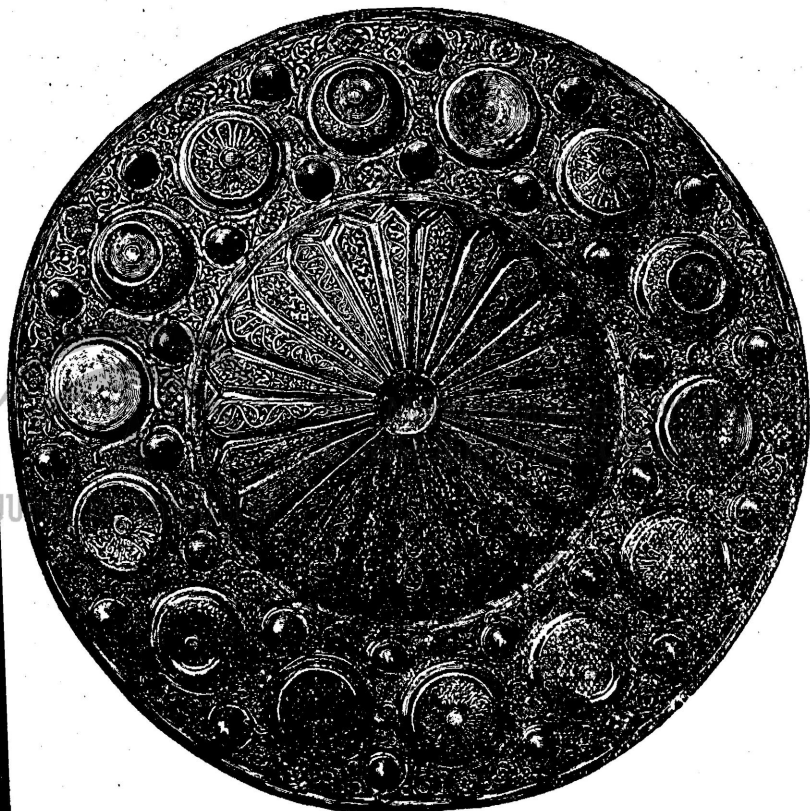


FIG. 77.—BASE OF CHANDELIER OF SULTAN EL-GHORY.
Beginning of 16th Century. (*Cairo Museum.*)

overlook the existence of an ancient skill in arts of all kinds in Egypt itself, and to ascribe much of the merits of the Mamlūk work to the traditions of the Fātimis. The derivation is the more likely, inasmuch as the Mamlūk work betrays more of the arabesque and floral influence of the Egyptian school, as we see it displayed in the older mosques of Cairo, than that of the figure ornament of Mōsil. The ducks of the Mesopotamian swamps indeed survive and are emphasized, in deference, as I believe, to the name of the founder of En-Nāsir's dynasty, Kālāūn (the "duck"); but the general character of the Mamlūk style is certainly different from that of Mōsil, and partakes of the general Saracenic character of arabesque and geometrical design, which was no doubt inherited from the earlier rulers of Egypt, and was probably to a large extent fostered by skilful artists among the Copts.

It is unfortunate that so few examples of Coptic art can be ascribed with certainty to fixed dates; for the establishment of the existence of an early Coptic school of art, derived from Byzantium, would explain much that is obscure in the history of Egyptian art. From what Mr. Butler has been able to bring together in his valuable work on the *Coptic Churches of Egypt*, it seems clear that, however deeply the Saracens were indebted to the Copts for their designs and methods in wood and ivory carving and inlay, they did not draw their metal-work from the same source.

fourteen square brick gates led into the sanctuary: before each of them was an arch resting on two marble columns, in three parts, blue, red, and green, and other colours. The ceilings were decorated in various colours by workmen from Basra, and the Beny Mu'allim, the masters of El-Kettamy and En-Nāzūk. Opposite the seventh doorway was an arch on the two sides whereof were painted fountains with steps, which looked real. Painters used to come to see it, but could not imitate it. Two rival painters, El-Kasir and Ibn-'Aziz (of 'Irāk), were pitted one against the other by the Vizir El-Yāzūry; the first painted a picture of a dancing-girl in white robes on a black blind arch, as though she were inside it, and the second a similar girl in crimson robes on a yellow ground, as though she were standing out of the arch.



FIG. 78.—LANTERN OF SHEYKH 'ABD-EL-BASIT.
(Cairo Museum.)

Coptic metal-work shows no trace of affinity to the Saracenic bowls, trays, and censers described in the present chapter. The lamps, crosses, textus cases, and flabella of the Copts are more nearly related to European and Byzantine models than to contemporary Saracenic work. Yet the remark made above, that Coptic influence is traceable even in this art, holds good; since it is not uncommon to find one art suggesting ideas to another, and the Coptic designs in wood and ivory may have helped to form the Mamlūk style in brass and silver.

But it may be asked, especially when the prevalence of what I have described as a Damascus-looking rosette on Mamlūk work is considered, whether the metal-work of the Mamlūks was not manufactured at their second capital, Damascus, rather than at Cairo, and whether the old Fātimy art had not become extinct, to be succeeded by a Damascus school taking up new ground? There is no reason for supposing that the artists of Damascus stopped with the style described under my second class—if indeed that be really Syrian; doubtless they continued to execute equally fine specimens, and some of the objects bearing Mamlūk names may have been made at Damascus. But it should be noted that there is practically no metal-work of any merit at Damascus now, while the Cairo workmen are still skilful; and further, I can quote a passage from El-Makrizy which mentions a flourishing school of metal artists under the Mamlūks at Cairo.

"*Sūḵ El-Kefīyīn* ('market of the inlayers'). This market . . . contains a number of shops for the making of *keft*, which is inlaying copper vessels with silver and gold. There was a great sale for this kind of work in the houses of Miṣr [Fuṣṭāṭ], and the people had a keen relish for inlaid copper. We have seen it in such quantities that it could not be counted, and there was hardly a house in Cairo or Miṣr which had not many pieces of inlaid copper. The equipment (شورة) of a wedding was not complete without a *dikka* (or stand) of inlaid copper. The *dikka* means a thing like a divan-frame, made of wood inlaid with ivory and

ebony, or painted. Upon the dikka were set cups of yellow copper [brass] inlaid with silver, and the set consisted of seven pieces, some smaller than others, the largest holding about an ardebb of wheat. The length of the [bands of] silver inlay, on those of the larger size, was about a third of a cubit, and the breadth two fingers. And similar to this was a set of plates, in number seven, one fitting into the other, the largest reaching to about two cubits and more. And besides that [inlaid work was used for] lanterns, and lamps, and vessels for الاشان, and basins, and ewers, and perfume burners. The price of a dikka of inlaid copper thus mounted up to 200 dinārs of gold. If the bride were of the daughters of the Amīrs and the Wezīrs and the chief secretaries and the chiefs of the merchants, the outfit of the marriage included seven dikkas, one of silver, another of inlaid copper, another of white copper, another of painted wood, another of china, another of crystal, another of *kedāhy*—and this is of pieces of painted sheets [papier-maché?] brought from China: we have seen very many in the houses, but the art is now lacking in Misr.”*

El-Makrizy goes on to describe the dikka of the Kādy ‘Alā-ed-dīn, Muhtesīb (or inspector of the markets) of Cairo, who married a daughter of the merchants, named Sitt El-‘Amāim (“Lady of the Turbans”), of which the metal alone consisted of a hundred thousand pure silver pieces; and then mentions the wedding of a daughter of Sultan Hasan with an Amīr of Sultān Sha‘bān, and describes the fine trousseau she had, including a dikka, or service, of crystal, with a crystal bucket engraved with representations of wild beasts and birds, big enough to hold the contents of a water-skin. He concludes the section with the remark that “the demand for this inlaid copper-work has fallen off in our times, and since many years the people have turned away from purchasing what was to be sold of it, so that

* *Khitat* (Bulāk ed.), ii. 105.

but a small remnant of the workers of inlay survive in this market.*

The passage above quoted from El-Makrizy establishes beyond doubt the fact that there was a school of inlayers and metal-workers at Cairo which survived, though in diminished numbers and prosperity, to his own day, *i.e.* about the year 1420; and the bowl (fig. 89) described below p. 238, with the name of Kāit Bey, fifty years later, must, if it is of Cairo workmanship, as I believe, have been made by the remnant the historian describes as still occupying the Sūk El-Keftiyin.

The general characteristics of the class which I have termed Mamlūk work are easily recognizable. The Arabic inscriptions are large and bold, and often, in the case of trays or other flat surfaces, radiating; small inscriptions containing the name or title of the Sultān on a fess, or perhaps a coat-of-arms, are enclosed in a medallion surrounded by a belt of flowers and leaves of the kind familiar on Damascus tiles; the ground is freely sprinkled with ducks and other fowl, and the bottom inside the bowls is generally ornamented with a shoal of fish, suggestive of the purposes for which the vessel was intended; the borders, generally of arabesque or flower scrolls, but sometimes of beasts pursuing each other, are broken by little whorls,

* When El-Makrizy speaks of white and yellow copper, he means of course brass or bronze. The greater number of the inlaid objects I have seen are of brass, and not of copper; though of course the word *En-Nahās* may be taken to include "yellow copper" (or brass) as well as pure red copper. In the South Kensington collection, which has had the advantage of the chemical tests of Dr. Hodgkinson (F.R.S.E., Professor at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and of the Royal College of Chemistry), there are 20 brass objects to 8 of bronze, while what copper there is has a coating of an alloy of lead and antimony, which gives a grey appearance to the bowls thus treated. Some of the bronzes are zinc bronzes, *i. e.* contain zinc as well as tin, but as a rule they contain a large proportion of tin.

† There is no "market of the inlayers" in Cairo now; but workmen may still be found who can inlay copper with silver after a somewhat rude fashion, using a simple graver, and beating silver wire into the excavated design.



FIG. 79.—COVER OF SHERBET BOWL.
Made by Mahmud El-Kurdy at Venice. Sixteenth Century.
(South Kensington Museum.)

typical of the style, and there are no figures, except when the bowl or other vessel is intended for magical or astrological purposes. The style is very distinct, and once seen can never be mistaken.

There remains one more important branch of the history of Saracenic metal-work which must not be passed over, although it does not belong to our special subject of Egyptian Art. This branch is the Saracenic art of Italy, and notably Venice. It stands to reason that the exquisite workmanship of the chased vases and bowls of the Saracens must have soon found its market in Europe, and there is plenty of evidence that even before the Crusades the monasteries of the West had learned to prize chalices made by the infidels. A strong impetus must have been afforded by the Mohammadan proclivities of Frederic II., and his extensive employment of Saracen mercenaries in his campaigns against Gregory IX. These foreign troops were settled in various cities of Italy, where they left their traces in the names as well as in the blood and civilization of the places they inhabited. Thus Lucera came to be called *Nocera delli pagani*; thus Pisa, which was occupied by Saracen troops for the greater part of the thirteenth century, had its Oriental quarter, known as the "*Kinsica*," and even in the preceding century the poet Donizo had lamented the city being "delivered over to Moors, Indians, and Turks;" thus, too, there was a "*Via Sarracena*" at Ferrara. Saracenic artists lived at Genoa and Florence, and no doubt taught their art to the native workmen. Cellini says he copied Oriental poniards and improved upon them. Before the Crusades, Amalfi was the port whence pilgrims started for the Holy Land, and it was frequented by merchants from Egypt and the East. Here was opportunity enough for the introduction of Saracenic art into Europe. But beyond all these lesser entrances, Venice was the chief port for Eastern wares. Venice had her colonies in the coasts of the Levant, in Turkey, Greece, and Palestine; Venice had treaty rights in Egypt and Syria; Venice welcomed the merchants of

the East with equal privileges, and assigned them the old palace of the Dukes of Ferrara for their habitation; and at Venice the name of the "Fondaco dei Turchi" still survives.*

This almost Oriental city was the centre of Saracenic metal-work in Italy. Numerous salvers, cups, censers, and other articles, bear the unmistakable stamp of Venetian handicraft. The first and most salient distinction of this European branch of Saracenic work is in the form; the somewhat crude outlines of the true Saracenic bowls and candlesticks give place to more graceful and obviously Western shapes. In the decoration considerable alterations are made. In place of the inscriptional medallions or simple Mamlūk shields, European coats-of-arms are introduced; and the general treatment of the decoration is different. The arabesques remain, but they are more elaborate, and at the same time more mechanical. Silver inlay is sparingly used, and in many instances is entirely wanting; and the design is brought out, not by the contrast of metals, but by relief; the pattern being raised, and the surrounding ground cut away to a lower level. When there is inlay, it is generally in thin lines, secured between slightly raised and serrated edges, and further held by stippling the surface beneath the plate with little notches; but even then the design is in relief. The artists who produced this extremely delicate and beautiful work were at first and probably for some time Easterns. The most famous name we meet with on the sherbet-bowls and trays of Venice is that of Mahmūd El-Kurdy, who must have come from the Kurd country in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates, and was thus an heir to the traditions of the Mesopotamian metal-workers. The number of these Venetian and Italian specimens in the British Museum is considerable, and the series has been instructively arranged, so that one can trace the gradual transition from the Mamlūk style through the Venetian school to the other still semi-oriental salvers of mediaeval Europe. The South Kensington

* See M. Lavoix, *Les Azziministes*, *ubi supr.*, for these and other indications:

Museum has also a few fine examples of the Venetian style of metal-work, including a specimen of Mahmūd El-Kurdy's skill which is engraved in fig. 79. Presently the native Italian workmen took up the art, calling themselves Azzimini—workers, *all'Agemina*, "in the Persian style"—as did Paulus Ageminus, who made the vase described by M. Lavoix, and Giorgio Ghisi Azzimina of Mantua, a great name among them: but in their hands the art changed character, and we have to go to the East again to see what remains of Saracenic art in the well-chased brass trays of Cairo, the floral decoration of Persian *narghilas*, and the rude arabesque bowls of Syria and Tökät.

I now proceed to describe some typical examples of Saracenic metal-work in our English Museums.

I. MÖSIL-WORK.

I. EWER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Made by Shugā' ibn Hanfar, at Mōsil, in A.H. 629 (A.D. 1232).

On a ground of key-pattern, zones of scenes of the chase and festivity, benedictory inscriptions, and the date (at the junction of the neck) نقش شجاع ابن حنفر الموصلی فی شهر الله المبارك شهر رجب فی سنة تسع وعشرين وثمانیة بالموصل "Engraved by Shugā' ibn Hanfar of Mōsil, in the blessed month of God, the month Regeb, in the year 629, at Mōsil." The figures are arranged in four zones, two of which comprise each ten seated figures, enclosed in quatrefoils, playing musical instruments, drinking from cups, &c.; while the other two zones are adorned with large mounted figures, to wit:—Upper large zone: 1. Horsemen with chitah on rump; 2. Figure seated on throne holding cup and attended by two squires; 3. Horseman with hawk on wrist, rabbit before horse, dog beneath; 4. Archer, bending one knee, shooting ducks; 5. Two men



FIG. 80.—CASKET OF EL-'ADIL, GRAND-NEPHEW OF SALADIN.
Thirteenth Century. (*South Kensington Museum.*)

fighting together with swords and round shields; 6. Horseman with beast on rump, a dog beneath; 7. Figure seated on throne, with two attendants, bird above; 8. Horseman spearing lion beneath horse's head; 9 and 10 were occupied by handle and spout (the latter missing). Lower large zone:—1. Man and woman in howdah on camel's back, and man leading; 2. Archer drawing bow, and woman in pillion, on a camel; 3. Two seated figures, one playing harp, the other pipe; 4. Horseman with sword and round shield combatting foot man similarly armed; 5. Seated figure, with jug held by servant; 6. Two women playing lute and cymbals; 7. Horseman, with uplifted arms, launching leopard or chitah from the crupper in pursuit of a deer; 8. Two women, with bottle, bowls, and fan; 9. Horseman shooting arrow down throat of boar; 10. Seated king, wearing turban, receiving homage of a man who prostrates himself before throne and kisses king's hand; a woman stands behind. Suns (with human faces) divide the ten figures of the lower zone, and floral medallions those of the upper zone. Between the two is a frieze of hunting-scenes broken by octagons of key-pattern: men and beasts and birds contending in fantastic attitudes. [Brit. Mus., Blacas. Coll. Re naud, ii. 423.]

2. CENSER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Dated A.H. 641
(A.D. 1243).

Shape, a cylinder on three feet; with a dome-shaped upper part, hinged to open and shut, and perforated in a zone round middle. The upper part is divided into four zones. Beginning at the button at top, the first zone contains an Arabic inscription: — *انا فى باطنى الجحيم ولاكن ظاهرى قنر رائحات* "Within me is hell-fire; but without float sweetest odours: it was made in the year 641."

The second zone is composed of a three-strand plait-pattern.

The third zone, pierced with small holes, is covered with arabesques, except four medallions which are filled with the characteristic key-pattern &c.



The fourth zone has the same plait-pattern as the second.

The lower part is ornamented with three medallions (one reserved for a handle, which is missing) of key-pattern, with scroll border; and three arabesque quatrefoils, each surrounded by four stars; on a ground of key-pattern; and a benedictory Arabic inscription between the medallions and quatrefoils. The feet are engraved with arabesques.

The bottom is of a later date, and is ornamented with an interlacing geometrical design in five star centres round central star. On the rim of the original bottom are traces of illegible inscription.

[B. M., Henderson, 678.]

This is not a typical example of Mōsil-work; but its early date procures it the second place, and the key-pattern is characteristic, and will be found repeated on later specimens of unmistakably Mōsil fabric. With regard to the material, I should state that without chemical tests it is often impossible to be sure whether the alloy contains tin or zinc, whether, in other words, it is bronze or brass. The colour is a very unsafe guide, as I have proved during a series of chemical assays of the South Kensington collection performed by Professor Hodgkinson.

3. Box.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Made for Bedr-ed-din Lulu, Prince of Mōsil, who reigned A.H. 631—657 (A.D. 1233—1259.)

Shape, cylindrical, with a hinged lid and hasp; edge of lid bevelled.

On the bevel of the lid is an Arabic inscription:—

عز لمولانا اتابك (؟) الملك الرحيم العالم العادل المؤيد المظفر المنصور
المجاهد المرابط بدر الدنيا والدين لؤلؤ حسام امير المؤمنين

"Glory to our lord, the merciful king, wise, just, God-aided triumphant, victorious, fighting for the Faith, warden of Islām, Full-moon of state and church, Lūlu [Pearl], sword-blade of the Prince of the Faithful."

Round of the edge of the lid, a plait-border.

On the surface of the lid, a shoal of fish, interlaced, within quatrefoil, surrounded by a key-pattern, within scroll-border.

Round the lower part, in quatrefoil panels, four aureoled seated figures holding wine-cups, &c., alternating with four bold arabesques; these eight panels separated by other panels, enclosing a rosette of annulets, and beasts of the chase and water-fowl; ground of key-pattern; a fine arabesque border above and beneath.

[B. M., Henderson, 674.]

Here we have a vessel made for a well-known Atābek of Mōsil, presenting the key-pattern, plait-border, medallions, quatrefoils, &c., already noticed in No. 1, but with the addition of the aureoled figures, beasts of the chase, water-fowl, and fish, which now become characteristic of thirteenth century work. If the hunting and hunted animals are typical of the Assyrian and Sassanian source of the art, the fish and water-fowl are no less natural in the swamps of Mesopotamia.

4. Box.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Made for the Ayyūbī Sultan El-Ādil Abū-Bekr II. (A.D. 1238-40) grand-nephew of Saladin. Fig. 80.

Cylindrical, the edge of the cover bevelled and engraved with an Arabic inscription:—*عز لهولانا السلطان الملك العادل الزاهد—*
العابد المويذ المظفر المنصور المجاهد المريط سيف الدنيا والدين
ابى بكر ابن محمد بن ابى بكر بن ايوب "Glory to our lord the Sultān, the king, just, virtuous, devout, God-aided, triumphant, victorious, fighter for the Faith, warden of Islam, Sword of state and church, Abū-Bekr son of Mohammad son of Abū-Bekr son of Ayyūb."

The sides are covered with six aureoled-figures:—1. Horseman hawk on wrist, dog below; 2. Man spearing beast; 3. Horseman spearing beast on crupper; 4. Man spearing beast; 5. As 1; 6. Man slaying beast with sword.

On the cover, diaper of hexagrams enclosing six seated turbaned figures of the planets round central sun, within a zone of the Signs of the Zodiac. Scroll border beneath bevel. Prevailing ornaments,

scrolls and



An inscription on the bottom برسر الطشت خاناه العادلية, "Made for the Tisht-Khānāh of El-'Ādil," refers to the magazine or store-room, where the dresses and utensils, &c., of the Sultan were kept, and the clothes washed. It was managed by a superintendent (طشدار) and a number of servants (مبتار).*

H. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., diam. $4\frac{1}{4}$ in. [S. K. M., 8508—1863.]

5. PERFUME-BURNER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Made for the Amir Beysary, a Turkish Mamlūk of Egypt. Circ. A.H. 670 (A.D. 1271). Fig. 81.

Globular: in two hemispheres, pierced with small holes, with a ring at the top.

The upper hemisphere is ornamented with five medallions enclosing two-headed eagles with spreading tails, separated by five smaller medallions filled with the key-pattern in the shape of a six-pointed star, the surrounding ground engraved with free arabesque scroll-work.

Above and below the design are two zones of Arabic inscriptions. Below:

مما عمل برسر المقر الكريم العالی المولوی (sic) الامیری الكبيری

* El-Makrīzy, *Hist. des Mamlouks*, Quatremère, II. i. 115, n.

المحترمى المخدومى السفهسلازى المجاهدى المرابط (*sic*) المتاعزى
المؤيدى المظفرى

"Of what was made by order of his excellency, the generous, exalted, lord, great Amir, honoured, master, Marshal, fighter for the Faith, warden of Islam, the powerful, the God-aided the victorious." Above: بدر الدين بيسرى الظاهرى السعيدى الشمسى المنصورى البدرى "Full-moon of the Faith, Beysary, the liegeman of Edh-Dhāhir, of Es-Sa'īd, of Shems-ed-din, of El-Mansūr, of Bedr-ed-din." Within which, round the ring, is a zone of five two-headed eagles in open work.

Lower hemisphere, same as upper, but omitting المولالى, and substituting الاسفهلارى for السفهسلازى, adding المرابط الى, and affixing الشمسى to عز نصره.

[B. M., Henderson, 682.]

Lord Beysary was one of the retainers of Es-Sālih Ayyūb, the last ruling king of Egypt of the house of Saladin; rising by degrees, he became one of the most powerful of the Amirs of the time of Beybars. When El-Melik Es-Sa'īd Baraka, the son of Beybars, was deposed, Beysary was offered the throne, and refused it. Kalaūn (1279-90) threw him into prison, whence he was liberated, after eleven years' captivity, by El-Ashraf Khalil in 1293, who restored him to his rank of centurion, or captain over 100 men, while the Amirs showered congratulations and presents upon him. Henceforward he styled himself El-Ashrafy, "follower* of El-Ashraf," instead of his old title of Esh-Shemtsy. On the death of Khalil he was again offered the throne, and again declined the honour. The Sultan Ketbughā allotted him sixty Mamlūks, to each of whom Beysary gave two horses and a mule. The tide

* The relative termination, *y*, affixed to a name, though originally implying the relation of slave to master (as *El-Ashrafy*, the Mamlūk of El-Ashraf), came to signify also the mere relation of a retainer, liegeman, or even courtier, without the notion of ownership. Beysary was called El-Ashrafy, as one of the courtiers of El-Ashraf Khalil, the Sultan's "man;" but he was not his slave.



FIG. 81.—PERFUME-BURNER OF BEYSARY.
Thirteenth Century. (*South Kensington Museum.*)

of fortune changed in 1297, when the Sultan Lāgin, moved to jealousy by a rival lord, again consigned Beysary to prison, where he died in 1298, and was buried in his tomb outside the Bāb-en-Nasr. He was lavish in his generosity, prodigal of immense gifts, and perpetually in debt to the amount of 400,000 dirhems (about £16,000); for he had no sooner cleared off one debt than he hastened to contract another. Generosity was his pride, and he would accept no remonstrances from his servants on his prodigality, but straightway dismissed the economical critic. He never drank twice out of the same cup, but took a new vessel each time. At the time of the accession to power of Kalaūn, Beysary is stated to have been wholly given over to wine and gambling. No man approached him in the amount and importance of his charities. His palace, Dār El-Beysariyeh, in the Beyn-el-Kasreyn, was originally intended, in late Fātimy times, for a residence for Frankish ambassadors, and one actually had resided there to receive certain tribute; but under Beybars, Lord Beysary Es-Sālihy Esh-Shemisy En-Negmy began to rebuild the palace in 1261, and spent immense sums on adorning it. It occupied, with its stables, garden, and bath, about two acres (feddāns): the marbles employed for it were the best that were used in Cairo, and excellently wrought. The palace remained in the possession of his heirs till 1332. Kūsūn wished to own it, and asked the Sultan En-Nāsir Mohammad for permission to treat for it: it was valued at 190,000 dirhems, and the garden brought it up to 200,000; it subsequently passed through many hands, and at the time of El-Makrizy belonged to a daughter of Barkūk. The door of the house had a panel which was one of the most beautiful ever made at Cairo.*

It may be questioned whether the South Kensington box and Beysary's perfume-burner were made at Mōsil or at Cairo. The

* El-Makrizy, l. c. II. ii. 135 n.

statement on the former that it was made "by order of El-'Ādil's *tisht-khānāh*" does not necessarily infer that the order was executed in Cairo: a Mōsil workman may have been employed at Mōsil or have been fetched to Cairo. The two pieces, however, are of the style which is identified by other examples as the fabric of Mōsil, and the two-headed eagle is a familiar device on Mesopotamian coin of the twelfth and thirteenth century; and if either was made at Cairo the artists must have been trained in the Mōsil school. That such work was sometimes done at Cairo is shown by an astrolabe in the British Museum, with the inscription—

صنعه عبد الكريم المصرى الاسطرلابى بمصر الملكى الاشرفى
الملكى المعزى الشهابى فى سنة خلع هجرية

"Abd-El-Kerim made it, the Cairene [Misry], the Astrolabist, at Cairo, the [follower] of El-Melik El-Ashraf and El-Melik El-Mu'izz, and of Shihāb-ed-din, in the year 633."

This astrolabe has the key ornament, good arabesques, and of course planets and zodiacal figures; and is inlaid with silver and gold by under-cutting and toothed edges. The El-Mu'izz, whom he once served, was no doubt the prince of Mesopotamia, and El-Ashraf the Ayyūby of Diyārbekr, both of whom reigned in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. This would show that Mesopotamian artists came to Cairo, where there was, as we have seen, a *Sūk El-Keftiyin*, or market of the inlayers.

6. PERFUME-BURNER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* No date.

[Thirteenth century.]

Shape similar to No. 2.

On the lower part are three arabesque frames, one occupied by handle, the other two filled with two aureoled figures seated cross-legged on high-backed thrones, with bird on either side;

between which are other medallions filled with quatrefoils; and beasts of the chase; ground of arabesque scroll-work.

On the top, nine seated figures holding cups, cymbals, &c.; and round the button a zone of Arabic inscription:—

العز الدائم والعمر السالم والاقبال الزائد

“Enduring glory and sound life and growing prosperity.”

[B. M., Henderson, 681.]

The seated figures on high thrones are similar to some on coins of Saladin, of 1190, and of the Urtukis of Māridin of the year 1230: cross-legged figures are common on the Mesopotamian currency of the thirteenth century.

7. DEEP SALVER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* No date.

[Thirteenth century.]

On a ground of key-pattern, a band of hunting-scenes, and cross-legged figures holding crescent moon, alternately, with occasional water-fowl, and a border of hounds. The hunting-scenes depict a horseman attacking, with drawn sword, a leopard on horse's rump, another shooting a hare with bow and arrow, a third cutting down a deer in front of the horse, and three pairs of seated Byzantine-looking figures, two of these holding cups and the third a hawk, while the companions hold sword or spear. Meaningless Kufic inscription لعالعالعا, &c. Within the curve of the rim, a border of medallions enclosing figures holding wine-cups, &c., and also pairs of figures resembling the Madonna and Child. The central and chief device consists of a seated cross-legged figure on high-backed throne, attended by two squires, holding cup and sword (other cups sprinkled in the field); at the foot of the throne two lions couchant, and beneath them a two-headed eagle, closely resembling that of Beysary, between two bowmen shooting each at one of its heads.

[B. M., Henderson, 706.]

8. EWER.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* No date. [Thirteenth century.]

The decoration on the body is arranged in a series of zones on an arabesque ground.

The topmost zone consists of a band of falcons, back to back, with silver eyes, tails crossed, and heads standing out in very bold relief, so as to form a sort of parapet of knobs.

Second zone : Arabic benedictory inscription, tops of *alifs*, *lāms*, &c., terminating in chased human faces.

Third zone : Beasts of the chase.

Fourth or central zone, wider than the rest : Large arabesques enclosing twelve quasi-medallions, filled with personified signs of the zodiac combined with the seven planets, viz. (1) Mars on Aries, warrior holding decapitated human head, and riding ram ; (2) Venus on Taurus, woman (with lute) riding bull ; (3) Mercury and Gemini, two figures linked together with a staff (pen?) between them, terminating in human faces ; (4) Moon and Cancer, crab surmounted by human head in crescent formed by claws ; (5) Sun and Leo, lion surmounted by sun ; (6) [Mercury and] Virgo, woman with two ears of corn ; (7) Venus and Libra, balance held up by a woman ; (8) Mars and Scorpio, man holding two scorpions ; (9) Jupiter and Sagittarius, centaur shooting arrow down gaping mouth of dragon (formed out of his own tail) ; (10) Saturn and Capricornus, bearded man with long staff, riding goat ; (11) Saturn and Aquarius, bearded man and well-bucket ; (12) Jupiter and Pisces, two fish (Jupiter covered by handle).

Fifth zone : Beasts of the chase.

Sixth zone : Arabic benedictory inscription.

Seventh zone : Long-necked birds within borders, necks intertwined.

Eighth zone: Arabic benedictory inscription.

On the *neck* is a zone of Arabic benedictory inscription, with a fine lion sejant at either side; a zone of birds with red copper eyes; the ground consists of beautiful free arabesques. Up the spout and sides of handle run strings of beasts of the chase, and up the back of the handle a string of birds; at the junction of handle with body is a seated figure, cross-legged, holding two serpents.

(B. M. Engraved in Labarte's *Handbook of the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Palliser, p. 423.)

The silver inlay of this ewer is effected by undercutting the edges, and not by stippling the surface (what stipples there are belong to a later repairing), and the straight lines are inlaid by punching all along them with a small oblong-headed punch.

9. BOWL.—*Bronze inlaid with silver.* No date. [Thirteenth century.]

The decoration consists *without*, in two zones of Arabic religious inscriptions divided by key-medallions, and a double row of medallions enclosing aureoled figures playing musical instruments and drinking from cups; *within*, a zone of medallions enclosing hunting-scenes, aureoled figures fighting with lions, carrying falcons, riding an elephant, and a Bedawy on camel, the interstices filled with key-pattern; at the bottom, inside, a boat rowed by three men, while two others shoot wild ducks, another cuts a duck's throat, a seventh sits at the mast-head, and another dives beneath, pursued by an alligator; three zones of Arabic religious and unmeaning inscriptions; on rim, border of animals of the chase, elephants, and a winged centaur. Height 8 in., diam. 19 in.

[S. K. M., 2734—1856.]

The foregoing is one of the finest pieces of Mōsil work in England. The elephant and camel are specially noteworthy;

above all, the spirited scene on the bottom of a shooting party on the water, such as is recorded in the accounts of the sports of Persian princes.

10. STAND.—*Brass inlaid with silver and gold.* No date.
[Thirteenth century.]

Nine-sided; chased with representations of nine figures of aureoled horsemen, holding falcons, fighting with dragon, brandishing bow, spear, and other weapons; above, nine cross-legged seated aureoled figures clashing cymbals, blowing pipe, holding candles, and putting wine-glass to lips; the interstices filled with black bituminous enamel; on a background of silver scroll-work; above and below, imitation Arabic inscription (لسا لسا, &c.). Height $5\frac{3}{4}$ in., diam. $9\frac{1}{4}$ in.

[S. K. M., 917.—1884.]

The workmanship of the preceding is unusually delicate and intricate, and the shape is peculiar. It may have formed the base of a candlestick. The black enamel, composed really of pitch, is here well preserved, and it is probable that the majority of the inlaid works of this period were treated in a similar manner; so that the black composition concealed most of those intervening portions of brass which the silver plates did not cover.

It is impossible to conclude this section without referring to the most famous example of figured Mōsil work in Europe, the so-called "Baptistry of St. Louis," preserved in the Louvre.* This splendid bowl, which belongs in style to the class of Mōsil work of the thirteenth century, measures five feet in cir-

* It has been fully described by M. de Longpérier, in the *Revue Archéologique* (N. S. vii. 306-9), and the article reappears in the first volume of his *Œuvres* (pp. 460-6).

cumference, and is covered inside and out with bands of figures richly inlaid with silver, so that little of the copper is visible. On the band inside are two medallions, each enclosing a prince seated cross-legged on a throne with a high pinnacled back and two lions under the feet, and holding a wine-cup, attended by two servants, one on the left of the prince bearing a sword, the other on the right holding a casket inscribed *دواة* ("writing-case"). On the back of the throne is the inscription "made by Ibn-ez-Zeyn," or (as it is written elsewhere on the bowl) *عمل المعلم محمد ابن الزين غفر له*, "Made by master Mohammad ibn-ez-Zeyn, save him!" The little cups held by the princes in the medallions are also signed with his name, as though they represented the vessels actually made in his workshop. Between the medallions are, on the one hand, six horsemen fighting with lances, bows, and maces; on the other, six huntsmen pursuing beasts and game. One carries a chitah on the crupper—one of those "*leopardi qui sciant equitare*" which the mighty hunter Frederic II. loved to see engraved upon his cups.

On the exterior a frieze of figures, ten centimètres high, is broken by four medallions, each containing a prince on horseback killing a bear, a lion, or a dragon, with lance or arrows. Between, his servants bring him arms, falcons, a slain antelope, dogs in leash, and leopards; one offers a flask and cup (inscribed with Ibn-ez-Zeyn's name); another, a plate, inscribed *انا يجفيز لحمل الطعام*, "I hasten to bring food." This frieze is bounded by two borders of beasts of the chase, divided by eight medallions, containing each a fleur-de-lis—probably a later European addition.

Such, in effect, is M. de Longpérier's description of this magnificent work of art, to which the engravings inserted to illustrate his article do scant justice. Some of the zones are reproduced from these engravings fig. 82. Mr. W. Burges (in Sir Digby Wyatt's *Metal Work*) says that the inlay of this

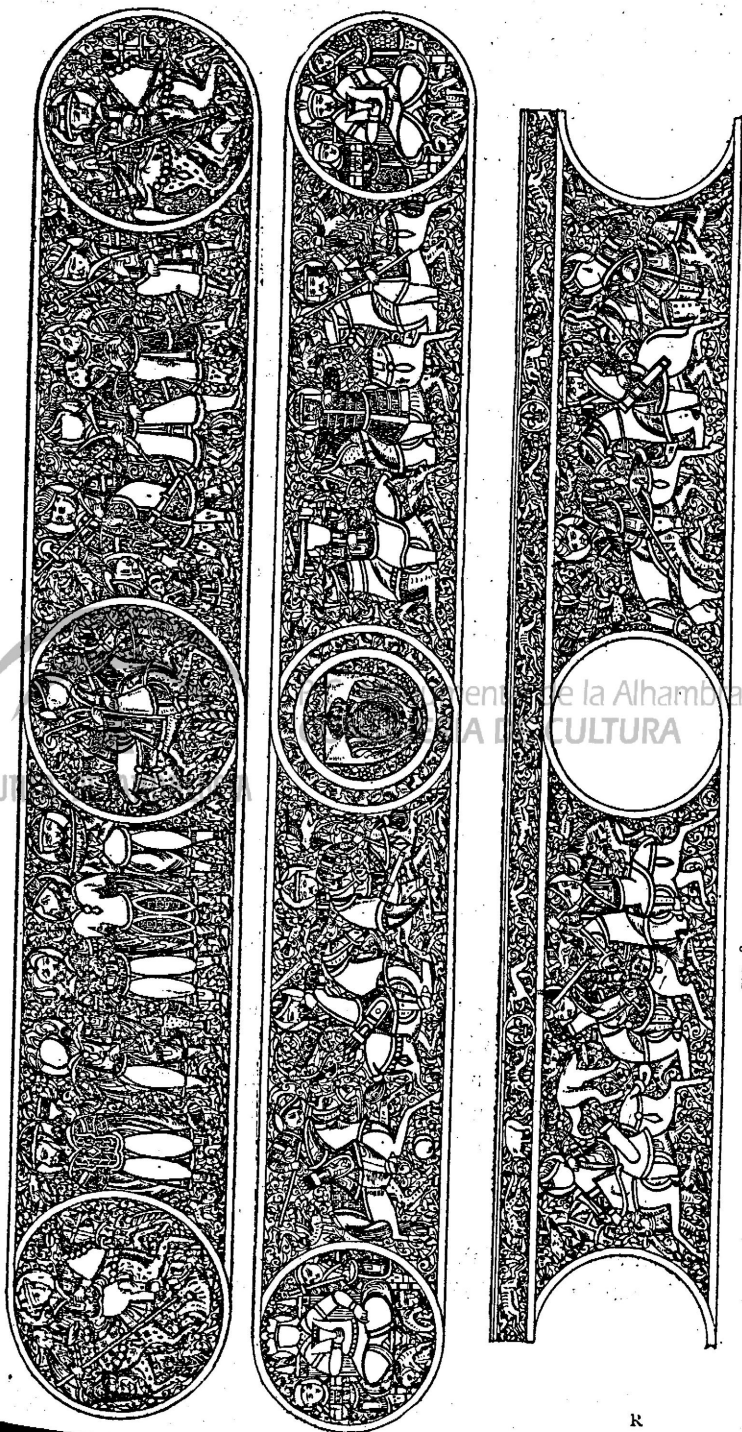


FIG. 82.—INLAID SILVER PANELS OF THE "BAPTISTRY OF ST. LOUIS."
(Louvre.)

bowl is effected by sinking the designs, especially deeply towards the edges, which are under-cut in a rebate, into which the edges of the inlaid plate are forced.

Before dismissing the Mōsil work, some reference must be made to the numerous mirrors which were made in that part, as well as elsewhere. They have been brought from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and especially from the South of Russia, where they are often found buried in the graves of Tartars. They are generally cast, with a good deal of silver in the bronze; in form they are round or square, and vary in size from two inches to a foot. Several are preserved in the British Museum, including those described by Reinaud, from the Duc de Blacas' Collection. The ornament is on the back, and generally consists of little more than benedictory inscriptions; but one has a pair of Assyrian winged monsters, resembling Kalaūn's winged kings.

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

II. EARLY SYRIAN WORK.

11. COFFRET.—*Brass, inlaid with silver and gold.* No date.

[Late thirteenth century?]

Oblong, with sloping lid and silver chains to support it when open. It is covered with silver plates, chased with foliage, birds, and human-headed lions; and inlaid with medallions of designs and religious or unmeaning (العالمية) Arabic inscriptions in gold.

On the lid are eight large and small bosses. Height $5\frac{3}{8}$ in., L. $5\frac{7}{8}$ in., W. 4 in.

[S. K. M., 459.—1873.]

Other specimens of the same sort are engraved in Prisse, where one is stated to have belonged to En-Nāsir ibn Kalaūn.

12. WRITING-BOX.—*Brass, inlaid with silver and copper.* With hinge and hasp. No date. [Late thirteenth century?]

Oblong, with compartments for pens, ink, sand, &c.

Along the front, sides, and back of lower part, the signs of the zodiac are represented in combination with the planets, much as on No. 8, but with copper as well as silver inlay; the ground is of closely interwoven arabesques, inlaid and chased on the surface. On the bottom are four groups of four water-fowls each, with the heads together. On the lid, three medallions filled with key-pattern; arabesque ground; and border of decorative Kūfy inscription, nearly illegible. Inside the lid is an Arabic benedictory inscription and a Kūfy inscription on the top inside, with a central panel, and arabesque ground.

[B. M., A. W. Franks, 1884.]

13. WRITING-BOX.—*Brass, inlaid with silver and a little gold.* No date. [Late thirteenth century?]

Similar to 12, but with rounded ends; seventeen figures, riding, drinking, or playing on musical instruments, on the lid and bottom, inside and out; water-fowl confronted in pairs, back to back, and also a group of six; small medallions of key-pattern inlaid with gold wire.

[B. M., Burges, 19.]

14. WRITING-BOX.—*Brass, inlaid with silver and a little gold.* No date. [Late thirteenth century.]

Similar to 12 in shape and general treatment, but the leaves of the arabesque ground are now frequently converted into birds, and there are no figures: the two birds fighting beak to beak, in chased silver inlay, occur repeatedly, and also the key-pattern

medallions in gold: Arabic benedictory inscriptions on top and round sides, and on bottom arabesques on a key-pattern ground: inside, fine rosettes of flowers and leaves like Damascus tiles, numerous key-pattern medallions in gold wire, flower-scroll borders, wild-fowl in panels of six, two Arabic benedictory inscriptions, and one circular radiating inscription, viz.:

الجناب العالی المولوی الکبیری المالکی السیدی الهمامی
الغیائی الذخری

"His Highness exalted, lordly, great, royal, master, valiant, *Ghiyāthy*, munificent."

[B. M., Burges, 20.]

It is dangerous to hazard conjecture as to the identity of the prince Ghiyāth-ed-din from whom this Mamlūk (retainer) took his epithet Ghiyāthy, for the name is not uncommon. It does not, however, occur among the Beny Zenky or the Bahry Mamlūks, and it is not unreasonable to suppose it to refer to either Edh-Dhāhir or El-Aziz, son and grandson of Saladin, who both bore the surname, and ruled Aleppo from 1186 to 1236. A retainer of the latter might easily be living in the second half of the thirteenth century.

15. Box.—*Brass inlaid with silver and a little gold.* No date.

[Late thirteenth century?]

Oblong, curved outline. Gold inlay chiefly distributed in key-pattern medallions and stars; silver in the confronted birds &c.; two groups of four birds within eightfoils on top; on front, two birds confronted and two beasts confronted within eightfoil, four times repeated, in alternation with arabesques likewise enclosed in eightfoils; ground of key-pattern; border of beasts of the chase.

[B. M., Henderson, 677.]