

The last three pieces were in all probability made by the same school of artists. They began with the Mōsil-like system of zodiacal and other figures (but in a much more finished and delicate manner), adding the characteristic mark of this group—the gold-inlaid key-pattern medallions—and then omitted the figures and introduced more of the waterfowl that afterwards became most prominent on Mamlūk work, and also added the typical Damascus rosette ornament. These boxes constitute a class by themselves, and arguing from the Damascus ornament and the (probably) Aleppo epithet, I have provisionally termed it *Syrian*. A similar writing-box in the South Kensington Museum (8993—1863) has a long series of Mamlūk titles, none of which identify its provenance.

III. MAMLUK WORK.

The rule of the Mamlūks in Egypt extended from the middle of the 13th to the beginning of the 16th century; but there are hardly any examples of their metal-work of the 13th century, and the finest and most numerous class is that of the Nāsiry Amīrs, or courtiers of the Sultan En-Nāsir Mohammad, in the 14th century: this is the style which is meant when the term Mamlūk work is employed. Of the earlier century, besides the perfume-burner of Mōsil style already described bearing the name of Beysary, the chief specimen of 13th century work made in Cairo is the bronze plating of the doors of Beybars' mosque *extra muros*.

16. DOOR-PLATING OF THE MOSQUE OF BEYBARS I., A.D. 1268.

These plaques are now in the South Kensington Museum, having been acquired in 1884 from M. de St. Maurice. They consist of a central boss, bearing the crest of Beybars, a lion

passant (fig. 83), with twelve geometrically shaped plaques arranged round it, each of which contains an arabesque design in open filigree-work (fig. 84); a smaller boss surrounded by nine similar plaques; a knocker (fig. 85); and a border of open arabesque-work (fig. 86) and a portion of an Arabic inscription (اللاتابكى الملكى الظاهرى) also in open work. Two other sets consist of a knocker, bosses, and geometrical plaques filled with arabesque designs in open work, arabesque borders, and a portion of a Korān inscription. The plaques form systems of 10 in these sets; of 12 and 9 in the first set. All these pieces are *cast*, not



FIG. 83.



FIG. 84.



FIG. 85.



FIG. 86.

FIGS. 83-86.—BRONZE PLAQUES FROM DOOR OF BEYBARS I.
(South Kensington Museum.)

cut, and are therefore identical each with its fellows in the same system, in contrast to the usual character of Cairene work, where we seldom find two patterns alike. The arabesques are, however, very free and flowing, and the appearance of the numerous plaques, fastened all over the door by ribbed studs, must have been highly effective. The mosque where these doors once hung was built by Sultan Beybars, in the Huseyniya quarter of Cairo, in 665-7 (A.D. 1266-8), and contains many remarkable features.

These bronze-plaque doors of Beybars are of a different character from the bronze doors of the later Mamlûks.* The mosques of Cairo present many splendid examples of this later style, which usually consists in covering the doors with large plates of thin bronze (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch), cut out in various arabesque patterns, or cast in embossed designs, and chased on the surface, and generally distributed in the form of a central circle or oval and four corner-pieces, or spandrils, with a border round the four sides, secured by ribbed-headed nails. The door itself is of wooden planks nailed on to a frame-work behind, and strengthened by bronze bands near the top and bottom, which run through, according to Mr. Wild, and turn round at the edges, being formed into panels by the arabesque border on the front side: it turns on pivots, not hinges. Some of these doors are admirably represented in Prisse d'Avenne's *L'Art Arabe*: for example, the beautiful door of Almās (vol. ii. plate 100), where the whole surface is covered with bronze plaques, more like the style of Beybars than is common on later mosques; that of Sultan Barkûk (pl. 96) with a central circular plaque, pointed at top and bottom, four corner-pieces, and narrow border; that of Sultan Kansûh El-Ghōry (pl. 102) arranged somewhat similarly; and that of Talāi' ibn Ruzeik, as restored by Bektemir in the 14th century (pl. 95). There is a splendid bronze door to the mosque of El-Muayyad (A.H. 818-23), which was taken from the mosque of Sultan Hasan, where, however, the entrance to the tomb chamber is still closed by a magnificent gate of bronze inlaid with silver.

From the bronze doors of Beybars, the history of metal-work in Cairo leaps over four Sultans to En-Nāsir Mohammad ibn Kalaūn,

* Ibn Batūta (i. 75) tells us that the monastery attached to the mosque where Huseyn's head was buried at Cairo had doors plated with silver, and silver rings. En-Nāsir Mohammad, in 733, furnished a door for the Ka'ba at Mekka, which was made of ebony, covered with silver plates of great weight.

who reigned A.D. 1293-4, 1299—1309, and 1310-41, or (omitting the first brief rule) during most of the first half of the 14th century. En-Nāsir built two noble mosques, and the number of works in metal bearing his name and those of his courtiers is very large. Among the finest is the beautiful table preserved in the Arab Museum at Cairo.


17. TABLE (KURSY).—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for the Mamlūk Sultan En-Nāsir Mohammad. Fourteenth century.

It is made of filigree brass inlaid with arabesques, flowers, water-fowl, and Arabic inscriptions in silver, and is chased all over in elaborate profusion. One of the panels, forming a folding door, through which no doubt a pan of live charcoal was introduced, to warm the tray of food which was placed upon the table, is represented in fig. 75, where the inscriptions on the top border read, عز لمولانا السلطان الملك الناصر ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد بن السلطان الملك المنصور الشهيد قلاون الصالحى عز انصاره

“Glory to our lord the Sultan, the king, En-Nāsir [the Succourer or Helper], Aid of the church and state, Mohammad, son of the Sultan, the king, El-Mansūr [the victorious], the martyr [*i.e.* defunct] Kalaūn, [liegeman] of Es-Sālih [Ayyūb], be his triumphs magnified!” The inscriptions in the three other narrow borders are practically identical with the above. The large inscription in the upper panel is محيى العدل فى العالمين | ناصر الدنيا والدين “Upholder of justice in the world, Aid of the state and church;” while in the circular medallions is distributed the inscription, “Glory to our master the Sultan | El-Melik En-Nāsir Mohammad ibn | El-Melik El-Mansūr Kalaūn.”* [Musée Arabe.]

* An engraving of the top of the table, showing the Arabic inscriptions in Kū y and Naskhy, and the ornament of ducks, &c., may be seen in my *Social Life in Egypt*, p. 35.

18. Another brass and silver filigree Table (*kursy*), preserved in the same museum, and stated to have belonged to the Māristān of Kalaūn, is represented in fig. 74. It has no inscriptions, but undoubtedly belongs to the same period as the first.

The characteristic designs of the Cairo metal-workers under En-Nāsir Mohammad may, however, best be seen in the large bowl or tank described below. As a rule, but not without exceptions, we may set down, as characteristic of 14th century Cairo work, the absence of figures (except on vessels having astrological uses), the prevalence of ducks or other birds in the ground decoration, the medallions (enclosing a sort of fess bearing the name of the Sultan,) surrounded by a rosette of flowers and leaves resembling the patterns of Damascus tiles, the shoals of fish at the bottom of bowls, the broad bands of tall bold silver-inlaid letters, the large surfaces of inlay, and the little whorl ornament  which takes the place of the key-pattern medallion already noticed.

19. LARGE AND DEEP BOWL.—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for the Sultan En-Nāsir Mohammad ibn Kalaūn (A.D. 1293—1341).

Ornamented with broad bold zones of Arabic inscriptions, filled in with waterfowl and flowers and leaves (which seem to be conventionalized ducks' wings), and divided at regular intervals by medallions, enclosing titles on a fess, and enclosed in rosette of flowers and leaves.

Large inscription round the outside :—

عز لهولانا السلطان الملك ○ لناصر العامل العادي المجاهد ○
ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد بن قلاون ○

“Glory to our lord the Sultan, the king, the helper [El-Melik

En-Nāsir), ruler, leonine, fighter for the Faith, Aid of the state and church, Mohammad son of Kalaūn." The medallions enclosed in rosettes of flowers indicated by O contain, on a fess, عز لمولانا السلطان "Glory to our master the Sultan the" (*sic*).

Above and below the large inscription, on a floral ground, six little medallions contain عز لمولانا السلطان "Glory to our master the Sultan," twelve times repeated.

Scratched under rim by later hand الصبر عبادة "Patience is worship."

Large inscription inside :—

عز لمولانا السلطان الملك الناصر O العالم العامل العادي المجاهد O
 O لمرابط ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد بن قلاون عز نصره O
 to our lord the Sultan El-Melik En-Nāsir, wise, ruler, leonine, fighter for the Faith, warden of Islam, Aid of the state and church, Mohammad son of Kalaūn, be his triumph magnified!" The medallions marked O are filled as on the outside: but there are no small medallions in the floral border beneath, or in the double scroll border above inscription; but the last is divided by six whorls.

The bottom is covered with a shoal of fish, in a circular spiked border. [B. M., 51. 1. 4.]

These large inscriptions offer a good example of the method of inlaying silver plates. Each letter was scooped out and deepened towards the edges, which were slightly under-cut and very delicately serrated. As the weak hold thus obtained let the silver escape, a later workman seems to have repaired the tank, and re-inlaid it by stippling the surfaces with a triangular point and rudely serrating the edges. Very little of the silver now remains: what there is shows that the surface was delicately chased when the subject required it (*e.g.* birds' wings).

The South Kensington Museum possesses a large tray of the same Sultan, of the sort that is used to carry a meal, splendidly engraved and inlaid, as follows :—

20. TRAY.—*Brass, inlaid with gold and silver.* Made for the Sultan En-Nāsir ibn Kalaūn (A.D. 1293—1341).

The principal inscription (*a*) occupies a large zone on the upper surface, and is composed of bold Naskhy letters:—

عز لمولانا السلطان (*m*) لملك العالم العا (*m*) مل العادل العادر عز نصره (*m*)

“Glory to our lord, the Sultan, the king, wise, just, ruler, be his triumph magnified!”

At (*m*) the inscription is broken by medallions containing the words الملك الناصر El-Melik El-Nāsir, on a fess; and round each medallion runs an inscription (*b*) similar to (*a*), but adding, after العادر, المجاهد المرابط المتاعز المؤيد, the whole enclosed in a belt of leaves and flowers.

An inner zone of inscription is similar to (*b*), but continued with the words المنصور سلطان الاسلام والمسلمين عز نصره “The victorious, Sultan of Islam and the Muslims: be his triumph magnified,” and divided by three similar pairs of medallions joined together by a panel of flowers and leaves. The right-hand medallion of each pair contains on a fess the words عز لمولانا السلطان (*c*), the left, on a shield, an antelope in an enclosure.

A third innermost zone of inscription is similar to *a*, but substitutes المجاهد for عز نصره

On the outer surface of the rim is the following inscription, divided at O by sets of three medallions like (*c*), joined by panels of flowers:—

عز لمولانا السلطان الملك الناصر العالم العامل العادل O flowers
 O flowers O العادر المجاهد المرابط المتاعز المؤيد المنصور ناصر الدينا
 والد O fl. O fl. O ين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين محيي العدل في
 العالمين والفقرا O fl. O fl. O والمساكين السلطان الملك المنصور
 ناصر الدنيا والدين O fl. O fl. O

“Glory to our lord the Sultan, El-Melik En-Nāsir,” &c.

Diam. 31 in. [S. K. M. 420—1854].

21. Box.—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for the Overseer Ahmad. [Fourteenth century.]

The lid is hinged and fastens with a hasp: on the top is a radiate Arabic inscription surrounding a shield (on a fess a lozenge):—

مما عمل بوسم العبد الفقير الرجى الغفران من الرب المنان [1] لمهتار
احمد مهتار الامير محمد بن ساطلمش الجلالى

“Of what was made by order of the humble servant, hoping for forgiveness from the benevolent Lord, the Overseer Ahmad, Overseer to the Amīr Mohammad son of Sātilmish, the Gelāly.”

On the hollowed rim of the lid is a border of flower-scrolls divided by whorls, and below this a border of beasts of the chase divided by shields: on a fess, a lozenge.

On the lower part, divided by four medallions containing water-fowl, on a ground of large arabesques of early style, are the Arabic benedictory verses:

ولا برحت مدا الايام فى سعة | بانعم ومسرات وافضالى
لا زلت يا مالكى ما دمت فى دعة | وانت من كل هم خالى البالى

Cease not through all thy days to dwell at ease,
Where comforts solace thee, and pleasure charms:
While breath shall last, my Master, cherish peace;
High rest thy heart above the world's alarms.

On the bottom, a beautiful arabesque border surrounds a whorl.
[B. M., Blacas. Reinaud, ii. 422.]

The name of the Amīr Mohammad ibn Sātilmish has not yet been identified; but a Mamlūk called Sātilmish is mentioned in the latter half of the thirteenth century as taking part in the court at Cairo; and the style of arabesques on the box, the character of the inscriptions, the whorls and shields, undoubtedly indicate a Cairo fabric. The title *Mihār*, or Overseer, was given to the officers who presided over the different departments of a princely household.



FIG. 87.—BRASS BOWL INLAID WITH SILVER.
Fourteenth Century (British Museum.)

UNTA DE AND

de Alhambra y Generalife
CULTURA

22. BOWL.—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for a Courtier of En-Nāsir. [Fourteenth century.] (Fig. 87.)

Outside, whorl at bottom surrounded by sort of sixfoil, round which a lozenge-diaper ornament; ground of Damascus flowers and water-fowl; border inscription divided by six whorls enclosed in a ring of flying ducks:—

المقر الكريم العا لى المولى الاميرى ○ الكبيرى العالمى ○
 العاملى العادى ○ المجاهدى المرابطى ○ لملكى الناصرى ○
 “His Excellency, generous, exalted, lordly, great Amīr, wise, ruler, leonine, fighter for the Faith, warden of Islām [liegeman] of El-Melik En-Nāsir.”

On the bottom, inside, a shoal of fish round a whorl.

[B. M., Henderson, 686.]

23. CANDLESTICK WITH THREE FEET.—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for a Centurion of En-Nāsir. [Fourteenth century.]

Engraved with birds and arabesques, the interstices filled with black enamel. Round central band, inscriptions in silver inlay, recording fourteenth century Mamlūk titles, (including that of Captain over 100,) divided by three medallions enclosing birds and whorls of eight rays. Height 12 in., diam. 10½ in.

[S. K. M., 912.—1884.]

Another candlestick in the South Kensington Museum (4505—1858), is engraved in fig. 88.

24. STAND FOR TRAY.—*Brass (with an alloy of silver).* Made for a Chief Secretary. [Fourteenth century.]

Dice-box shape; engraved with Arabic inscriptions, divided by medallions containing coats of arms in floral borders; the spaces

filled with floral ornaments outlined with black enamel. The inscription reads :

الجناب العالی المولوی ا ○ السیفی امیر دوادار اتابک عز انصاره
 "His Highness, exalted, lordly, [liegeman] of Seyf-ed-din, Chief Secretary, Atābek : be his triumphs magnified!"

Height $9\frac{1}{2}$ in., diam. $7\frac{5}{8}$ in. [S. K. M., 934.—1884.]

The floral ornaments are of the kind already described, the Damascus-like leaves and flowers ; and the medallions and floral borders form a kind of rosette very characteristic of the Nāsiry period. The coats of arms consist of a fess bearing a large goblet between two smaller ones ; above the fess is a hieroglyphic inscription $\left(\begin{array}{c} \circ \\ \circ \end{array} \right) \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{D} \\ \text{D} \end{array} \right) \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{=} \\ \text{=} \end{array} \right)$, denoting "lord of the Upper and Lower country"—which the Mamlūks must have constantly seen on the ancient monuments, but were undoubtedly unable to interpret—and beneath is a lozenge. The subject of heraldic bearings on Mamlūk works of art has been extensively discussed by the late Rogers Bey in a paper published in the *Bulletin de l'Institut Egyptien*. This particular coat of arms is not described by Mr. Rogers ; but several nearly resembling it belong to the Amirs of the fourteenth century. The cup, as a charge, indicates that the bearer held the post of Sāky, or cupbearer, to the Sultan or to some great noble.

25. BATH VESSEL.—*Bronze, inlaid with silver.* Made for a Courtier of En-Nāsir. [Fourteenth century.]

Round edge, Arabic inscription, divided by four shields, containing a bend between two stars :

المقر العالی المولوی المالکی ا □ العادلی العاملی العالی الا
 □ (sic) المجاهدی المرابطی المتاعزی الها □ لکی العادلی
 □ الملکی الناصری □

"His Excellence, exalted, lordly, royal, just, worker, wise,

fighting for the Faith; warden of Islām, powerful, royal, just, [liegeman] of El-Melik En-Nāsir."

[B. M., Burges, 22.]

The intention of the next bowl is certainly magical: the planets are to be used astrologically, to secure auspicious results. The bowl would be filled with water, which became imbued with the mysterious influences of the planets, and then the water would be drunk off, or sprinkled on the person. These cups were often made at Mekka, in view of the Ka'ba, which is sometimes represented: so much is stated on a cup in the Vatican.

26 BOWL OR CUP.—*Brass, inlaid with silver.* Made for a Courtier of En-Nāsir. [Fourteenth century.]

Outside, on bottom, seated figures of the planets: the moon, a crowned human figure, holding a crescent in two uplifted hands; Mars, helmeted and holding sword and bleeding head; Mercury, holding a carpenter's square; Jupiter, seated judge-like, between two fish; Venus with pear-shaped lute and wine-cup; Saturn with raised staff and purse; the sun should have occupied the centre, but is worn off. Ground of arabesques. An inscription round the side, divided by three seated aureoled figures holding wine-cups, records usual Mamlūk titles of El-Nāsir's court:

Inside, at bottom, a shoal of fish, arranged in form of whorl.

[B. M., Blacas. Reinaud, ii. 359, ff., and pl. vii.]

27. TRAY.—*Brass inlaid with silver.* Made for Sultan Sha'bān, who reigned A.H. 746-7 (A.D. 1345-6).

Ornamented somewhat in the Nāsiry style, with rosettes and geometrical designs, on a ground of bold and rather coarse arabesques.



FIG. 88.—BRASS CANDLESTICK INLAID WITH SILVER.
Fourteenth Century. (South Kensington Museum.)

A. Large zone of inscription :

○ عز لمولانا السلطان الملك ا ○ لكامل العالم العامل العادل
 العاذر المجاهد سيف الدنيا والدين شعبان عز نصره ○
 "Glory to our lord the Sultan, the king, perfect, wise, ruler,
 just, lenient, fighter for the Faith, sword of the state and church,
 Sha'bān : be his triumph magnified !"

B. At O, medallions : — الملك الكامل surrounded by a circular inscription, C, similar to that above, but omitting العامل العادل and عز نصره ; the whole enclosed in border of boldly drawn flowers and leaves.

In the centre of the tray is a sixfoil enclosed in ring of inscription (same as C) within double trefoil, outside which a ring of inscription similar to A (omitting عز نصره), divided into three parts by panels of flowers between whorls.

The rim is covered with floral borders and whorls.

[B. M., Blacas. Reinaud ii. 439].

A beautiful writing-box, with the name of the same Sultan, and decorated with ducks, whorls, and key-pattern, is engraved in Prisse.

Reinaud (ii. 441, *n.*) describes a tray, nearly four feet in diameter, which he saw in Paris, and which bore the name of Farag son of Barkūk, second of the Burgy or Circassian Mamlūks, who reigned (with a year's interruption) from A.H. 801 to 815 (A.D. 1398—1412). . Unfortunately he does not tell us the style of decoration, the metal or metals, or other details, nor does he mention what has become of the tray. The inscription in the midst ran : عز لمولانا السلطان الملك الناصر فرج بن برقوق ; عز نصره while a larger inscription included a long string of titles. These long and sounding titles are often clearly regulated by the space at the artist's command, and even the words themselves are apparently varied to suit the taste. It is probable that العادر, العادي, &c., are merely fanciful alterations of الغازی .

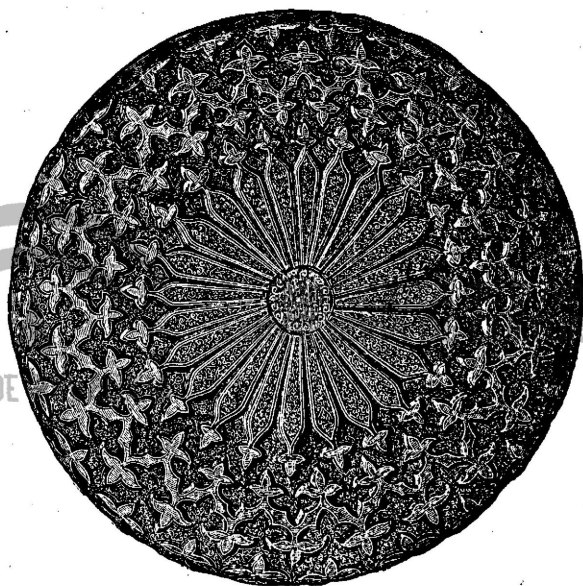


FIG. 89.—BRASS BOWL OF KAIT BEY.
Fifteenth Century. (*South Kensington Museum.*)

Fig. 89 represents the back of a very beautiful brass bowl of the Mamlūk Sultan Kāit-Bey (A.D. 1468-96), which is preserved in the South Kensington Museum (no. 1325—1856). It is specially noteworthy for the back being ornamented with a *repoussé* arabesque design of great beauty, covered with delicate chasing. The inscription on the side, inlaid with silver, runs : عز لمولانا السلطان الملك العادل المجاهد المرابط ا ◯ لمؤيد المنصور سلطان الاسلام ◯ والمسلمين الملك الاشرف ابو النصر قاتباي عز نصره ◯

“Glory to our master the Sultan, the king, just, fighter for the Faith, warden of Islām, God-aided, victorious, Sultan of Islām and the Muslims, the most noble king [El-Melik El-Ashraf], Father of Victory, Kāit Bey : be his triumph magnified.” At ◯ are four medallions, characteristic of Kāit Bey’s monuments and all his works ; they contain his name and style, as below :—



Among the purposes to which metal-work was applied was the manufacture of large chandeliers or lanterns for mosques. Some of these are still hanging before the niches but most of them have been taken away. Coste illustrates a bronze lamp of Sultan Hasan (fig. 23), and two are seen hanging in his representation of that mosque (fig. 25), besides the usual small plain glass lamps : but Coste was quite capable of inserting such details for the sake of artistic effect, and their presence in his drawing is hardly a proof that they really existed. Coste also gives a large lamp to the mosque of Kāit-Bey ; and in Prisse there is an illustration

(reproduced in fig. 76) of a silver lamp of Beybars II. of the shape of the usual enamelled glass lamps, but made of filigree work, hung by fine metal straps, which, however, are imperfectly rendered in the woodcut. An engraving of an early undated metal lamp of the same form, which comes from Jerusalem, and is now in the Louvre, is reproduced (fig. 90) from M. de Longpérier's *Œuvres*. Another form is that of a chandelier, of a conical shape, surrounded by numerous little glass globes to hold oil and wicks. An example of this kind (from the mosque of 'Abd-el-Basit, and now in the Arab Museum at Cairo), made of filigree iron with a bright copper band, is shown in fig. 77, and fig. 78 represents a bronze tray (intended to be suspended beneath a chandelier), covered with chasing, and bearing the name and titles of the last of the Mamlūk Sultans, Kansūh El-Ghōry (A.D. 1501—1516).

The art of metal-working survives in Cairo, as has been said, to the present day. The finer style of bronze door was made in perfection so late as last century, as may be seen from M. Prisse's engraving of the door of 'Abd-er-Rahmān Kikhya (A.D. 1760), which is as delicately wrought as any earlier example. In the present day the coppersmiths of Cairo make trays and ewers and other common utensils decorated with considerable skill in the style of the Mamlūk work, and sometimes with much elaboration of ornament, including inlay of gold wire.

The results of the foregoing examination of the history of Saracenic metal-work may be roughly summarized in the following genealogical tree:—

MŌSIL WORK.

[Descended from the Assyrian metal-workers, and probably existing in very early times and in continuous development, but represented in collections not earlier than the thirteenth century, and apparently ceasing to produce the best work in the same or the fourteenth century.]

FĀTIMY WORK.

[Probably the offspring of Mōsil, but at a very early period, perhaps ninth or tenth century. The art rests on historical evidence; but there is a lack of examples in metal-work in the collections.]

EARLY SYRIAN WORK.

[Containing Mōsil elements with certain local characteristics, probably peculiar to a Damascus or Aleppo school. Examples belong probably to late thirteenth century.]

SICILIAN WORK.

MAMLŪK WORK.

[Containing Fātīmy (or Mōsil) and Syrian characteristics. Numerous examples, chiefly of the fourteenth century]

SARACENIC WORK
OF VENICE.

[Derived from Syrian and Mamlūk schools. Examples chiefly from the early sixteenth century.]



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Universidad de Sevilla
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

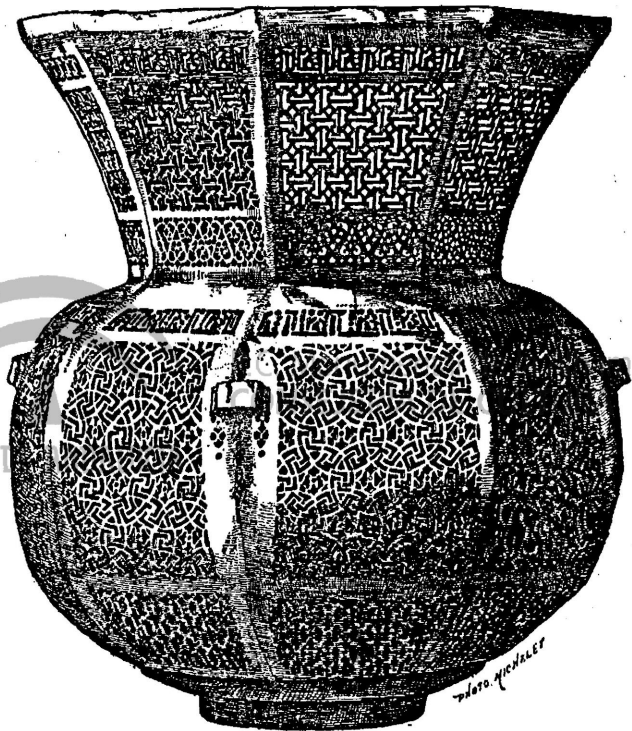


FIG. 90.—LAMP FROM JERUSALEM.
(Louvre.)

2. Goldsmith's work and Jewellery.

The Prophet Mohammad entertained a religious dislike to the luxury of gold ornament, and cautioned the women of Arabia against the use of tinkling anklets. Nature, however, was occasionally too strong for the Prophet, and although the mass of the male Muslims observe a strict sobriety in their dress, weave cotton with their silk, and prefer silver to gold for their sole ornament, the signet ring, there are always some whose passion for display overcomes the scruples of conscience; and the women, of course, cannot exist without a little jewellery. We read in the annals of Egypt of extraordinary quantities of precious stones preserved in the treasuries of princesses and khalifs. 'Abda, the daughter of the Fātimy Khalif El-Mu'izz, left at her death five bushels of emeralds and a prodigious amount of rubies and precious stones of all sorts. The Khalif El-Mustansir, this lady's nephew, possessed quantities of emeralds, pearl necklaces, gold and silver and amber rings, caskets set with jewels, figures of birds and animals adorned with precious stones, a table of sardonyx, and a jewelled turban. As a rule, however, we read more of large objects set with jewels than of small ornaments of attire, and this is explained by the fact that jewellery is principally employed by women, and therefore cannot be described in detail by Mohammadan historians, who are bound in delicacy to ignore the fair sex. Thus the seclusion of ladies in the East makes it difficult to trace the history of Saracenic jewellery, and the difficulty becomes insuperable when it is discovered that no specimens of the mediaeval jewellery of the Egyptian ladies have come down to us with a certain date.

In the absence of dated examples of mediaeval Egyptian jewellery, we are forced to work backwards from the existing productions of the jeweller's market at Cairo, and endeavour to

deduce the probable character of the earlier work. There can be little doubt that many of the ornaments now manufactured in Cairo represent ancient patterns, which have been handed from father to son in the goldsmiths' traditions for several centuries. The ordinary bracelet, composed of two plain bands enclosing a double or single twisted band is certainly an old design, and has worn the same shape and shown the same character of ornament for many generations. So, no doubt, have the anklets with square heads cut in facets. A description of the ornaments now made at Cairo—which is all that is attainable—may therefore not improbably represent the same general character of jewellery as that worn by the famous Queen Sheger-ed-durr, "Tree of Pearls," who repulsed St. Louis with her gallant Mamlūk troops.

The modern jewellery of Cairo has been so exhaustively described and illustrated by Mr. Lane, in an Appendix to his *Modern Egyptians*, that it is only necessary to summarize his account and refer to his engravings. A Cairo lady's ornaments consist in various additions to her head-dress and hair, in ear-rings, necklace, bracelets, anklets, and amulets. The head-dress is composed of a tarbūsh or fez, round which is wound a kerchief (*rabta*). To the crown of the tarbūsh is sewn the boss-like ornament called a *kurs*, about five inches in diameter, and ornamented with diamonds set in gold filigree-work. In the present day the diamonds and gold are alike of poor quality, and a good *kurs* is not worth more than £150. Even the wives of tradesmen, who are usually devoted to diamonds, manage to buy some sort of *kurs*, though it is a heavy, uncomfortable ornament, and produces headache when put on, and also when taken off, so that many ladies, when once their heads are hardened to its weight, wear it night and day. A common kind of *kurs* is made of a thin gold plate, embossed with a pattern, and having a false emerald set in the middle.

Attached to the kerchief, over the forehead, is worn the *kursa*, a band of diamonds, emeralds, or rubies, set in gold, generally with pendants, about seven inches long. On either side of the

kerchief hang festoons of pearls, connected together by a pierced emerald, and fastened at the front to the *kursa*, and at the other end to the back of the kerchief, or to the ear-ring. Sometimes a sprig (*risha*) or crescent (*hilāl*) of diamonds set in gold or silver is worn, instead of the *kursa* and pearls, on the front or side of the kerchief; and another favourite ornament is the *kamara*, or pear-shaped gold plate, embossed with Arabic letters or a pattern, and having flat gold pendants hanging beneath. There are several varieties of this ornament, in the shape of a *sakiya*, or water-wheel, a comb, &c., with distinctive names, the most curious of which is '*Ūd-es-Salib*, "Wood of the Cross," which is clearly of Coptic origin.

The ear-rings (*halak*) are not remarkable. They consist of diamonds, pearls, emeralds, rubies, &c., set in gold, with sometimes a sprig of floral filigree-work above the drop. The necklace (*'ikd*) is seen in great variety, but with this peculiarity, that it does not completely encircle the neck, being but ten inches long; the connecting piece of string is covered by the hair, which is generally ornamented with strings of gold ornaments and coins. There is usually a bead or link larger than the rest in the middle, or also at fixed intervals. Pearls strung, diamonds set in gold, and hollow gold beads, form the usual links of the necklace.

Cairene jewellers do not cut their diamonds and emeralds in facets, as this would induce a belief that they were false; but they commonly pierce the emeralds. Both customs, of course, destroy the beauty of the jewels.

More characteristic than the necklaces are the bracelets (*asāwir*) and anklets (*khulkāl*), which are commonly of solid silver, or even gold. Simple twist for gold, and a twist set in plain bands for silver, are the most usual patterns of bracelets, and are doubtless of high antiquity. The anklets are heavy, and clank together as the lady walks, so that the poet says :

"The clink of thine anklets has bereft me of reason."

The amulet (*higāb*) is a little silver or gold box, embossed and adorned with pendants, containing a chapter from the Korān or

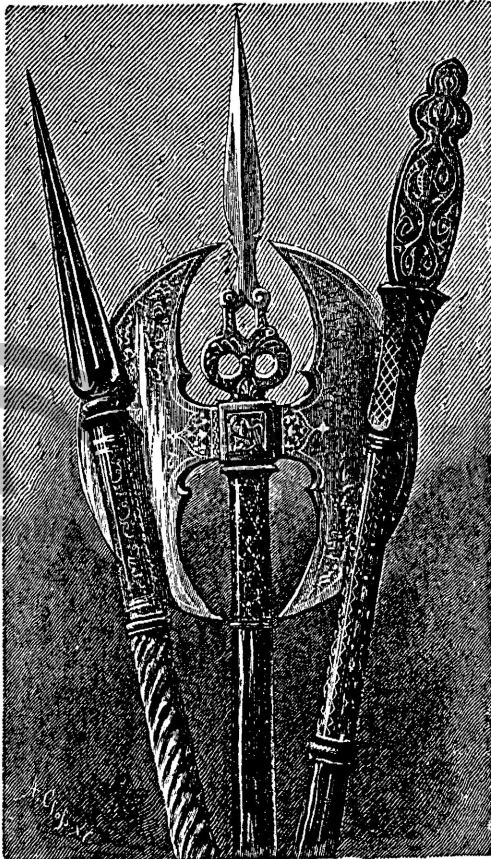


FIG. 91.—ARMS FOR LION HUNTING.

other charm, covered with waxed cloth, and is suspended at the right side above the girdle by a cord passing over the left shoulder.

There is another branch of metal-work of which nothing has

been said: we know almost nothing of Mamlūk armour; and although there is undoubtedly a "Market of Arms" in Cairo which once plied a busy trade, it is doubtful whether their work did not chiefly consist in fitting and adapting the weapons and armour of Persia and the Indies. Two helmets in the Tower of London have indeed an Egyptian look, and I should be inclined to ascribe them to Cairo workmen of the period of Kalaūn (end of the thirteenth century). These are, however, quite exceptional; and most of the arms attributed to Egypt are undoubtedly Syrian or Persian. It must not be forgotten that, to the Mamlūks, Damascus was almost as much their capital as Cairo; and while Damascus blades were to be had there was little inducement for the establishment of an Egyptian school of armourers. The list of Beybars' presents (p. 28) includes Damascus weapons, and pikes tempered by the Arabs, but no Cairo armour is mentioned.

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



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

CHAPTER VIII.

GLASS.

It is interesting to remark that the Saracens, while they had to begin with no art of their own, and learned all their aesthetic training from their foreign subjects, yet contrived to introduce some element of distinctive originality into almost every branch of artistic work. Thus the carved panels of the Cairo pulpits are a genus by themselves; only in Cairo can such work be seen. The metal-work of Mesopotamia, Damascus, and Cairo, is wholly unlike any other metal-work in the world, except that which was avowedly an imitation of it. It is not merely that the designs are varied, or new shapes introduced; the whole character of the work is distinct from any other style. The chased inlay of silver in the metal-work, and the self-contained arabesques and geometrical panelling of doors, ceilings, and stone-work, are features which we may seek in vain to match in Europe.

So is it with their glass; it is absolutely unique in character. Without prejudging the question whether some of the mosque lamps were imitated in Italy or not, at least no one will dispute that they form a distinct class by themselves, and that no other glass resembles them in the shape, the general style, or the details of the ornament. Nor do the stained glass windows of the mosques and houses of Cairo offer any analogy to the windows of our cathedrals, or any other windows at all. In glass, as in most other artistic industries, the differentiating genius of the Saracen artist displays itself in a special character persistently maintained through many centuries.

The oldest glass in the world belongs to Egypt. The dull

green and opaque blue glass of the Pharaohs is well known, and there can be little doubt that the art was not suffered to die out under the Greek and Roman governors, though examples of these periods are not numerous. The Arab and other Mohammadan rulers of this province of the Muslim empire encouraged the manufacture of glass, at least in the insignificant form of small weights for testing the accuracy of coins. The British Museum possesses a large collection of these glass weights, bearing inscriptions which assign them to definite dates. Some have the names of the early Egyptian governors under the Damascus and Baghdād Khalifs, of the eighth and ninth centuries, but most of them present the names of the Fātimy Khalifs of the tenth and especially of the eleventh century, more rarely the twelfth. These coin weights prove at least that the making of glass had not become a lost art in Egypt. We read in the life of St. Odilo, bishop of Fulda, of a *vas pretiosissimum vitreum Alexandrini generis*, which was on the table of the Emperor Henry in the first half of the eleventh century. There is a vase in the treasury of St. Mark's, at Venice, of nearly opaque turquoise paste, inscribed with Arabic characters, which may probably be of the tenth century. "The bowl is five-sided, and on each side is the rude figure of a hare. These figures, as well as the inscription, are in low relief, and were probably cut with the wheel. The setting is in filigree, with stones and ornaments of cloissonné enamels."* Cups of rock crystal of the same century are in existence and are frequently mentioned by the Arab historians, who even describe thrones and other large objects made of this mineral, which offers some analogy to glass in the process of cutting on the wheel, and which must have induced imitations in the cheaper substance.

Most of the existing glass-work of Egypt, however, belongs to the fourteenth century, and consists of lamps intended to be suspended in the mosques of Cairo. "All show that the

* A. Nesbitt, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Glass Vessels in the South Kensington Museum*, lxiv., &c.

makers were tolerably expert glass-blowers, and could produce vessels of considerable size; but the glass is of bad colour and full of bubbles and imperfections. The makers had learnt, probably from the Byzantines, the art of gilding and enamelling glass, and made much use of it. Inscriptions in large characters are favourite ornaments; figures of birds, animals, sphinxes, and other monsters, are found. The outlines are generally put on in red enamel, the spaces between being often gilt. The enamels are used sometimes as grounds and sometimes for the ornaments; the usual colours are blue, green, yellow, red, pale red, and white.*

There is every reason to believe that these mosque lamps were made at Cairo, or at all events that the best and oldest specimens were made there,† though the coarser and more modern sort has been attributed to imitators at Murano (Venice), who are believed to have worked for the Mamlūk Sultans. It is true that Damascus and Tyre had a greater name for glass-working; Nāsir-i-Khusrau, remarks that Tyre exported glass vessels worked on the wheel; William of Tyre writes to the same effect; and Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century, speaks of ten glass-manufacturers at Antioch, and four hundred Jews at Tyre (Sūr) "shipowners and manufacturers of the celebrated Tyrian glass." In the Royal Inventories of France are notices of several glass vessels, among the possessions of Charles V., in 1380, described as "of the Damascus style," among others *une lampe de verre outrée en façon de Damas sans aucun garnison*. It was, however, the custom among our mediæval chroniclers to regard Damascus as the centre of Saracenic art, and to call everything Oriental *à la façon de Damas*, and the term must not be pressed too far. Some lamps may, indeed, be the product of the glass-workers of Tyre or Damascus; and one in the South Kensington Museum is stated to have come from a mosque

* A. Nesbitt, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Glass Vessels in the South Kensington Museum*, lxiv., &c.

† They were called *Kandil Ka'aūny*, "Kalaūn's lamp."

which seems to be near Damascus, and another believed to be from Damascus is in the British Museum. Most of the Cairo lamps, however, were doubtless made in the city where they were destined to hang, or at the not far distant Mansūra, famous for its glass-works. It must always be remembered that the probability of fragile objects, such as glass and pottery, being made in the immediate neighbourhood of their destination is very strong, in the absence of distinct evidence of importation. We know that there were glass-works at Cairo. Nāsir-i-Khusrau* states that a transparent glass of great purity was, in his time, made at Misr, by which he means Fustāt, or Old Cairo; and if he had not said this, the numerous fragments which are constantly picked up on the mounds of rubbish which lie between Cairo and the site of Fustāt would be proof enough. It is curious, however, that lamps should be almost the only objects of glass that seem to have been made at Cairo. It is recorded that the Mamlūks used glass drinking-vessels, and so much might be inferred from the representation of cups on their metal-work, which are plainly intended for glass or horn vessels. Nevertheless, there is a complete absence of mediæval glass cups, or other vessels of undoubted Egyptian manufacture; and the only glass objects besides the lamps are a few bottles, decorated with enamel like the lamps, but in more delicate lines, chiefly of red and gold; and the coin weights, to which we have already referred.

Of the enamelled glass mosque lamps there are five examples of the finest kind at the British Museum, three equally superb specimens belong to the South Kensington Museum, besides four others exhibited there on loan by the Khedive. A few are to be found in private collections, of which that of M. Charles Schefer, at Paris, is among the most remarkable; Mr. Magniac has a lamp of Sultan Hasan, and Linant Pasha had others of the Amirs Sheykhū and Almās. So few now come into the market that the

* *Sefer Nameh*, ed. C. Schefer, 152.

price of such examples as are offered for sale is absurd. Very few of these lamps are now seen hanging in their proper places in the sanctuary of the mosques; I only noticed two or three in all the mosques of Cairo in 1883. This is partly due to the risk of their being carried off by enterprising collectors, to whom the guardians of the mosques, who have long known the market value of their treasures, are not indisposed to sell them for an adequate bribe; and partly to the circumstance that the Commission for the Preservation of the Monuments of Cairo, alive to the dangers to which these magnificent objects were exposed, by the cupidity of travellers and the venality of natives, instituted a rigorous search and removed all the lamps they could find to the safety of the Museum of Arab Art. Here, when I examined the collection in 1883, were about eighty glass lamps, chiefly derived from the mosques of Sultan Hasan, Barkūk, and Kāit Bey. As there were several lamps which were precise duplicates of others in the collection, I suggested to the Khedive that four of these duplicates should be sent on loan to South Kensington, and his Highness readily gave the necessary authorisation.* The following description of these four lamps will show the general character of this branch of Saracenic glass-work.

The first lamp (Arab Museum, No. 24) bears the name and titles of Sultan Hasan, who reigned from 1347 to 1361, with brief intervals of deposition. It is ornamented with Arabic inscriptions, medallions, and other decorations, in enamelled colours, and had six loops for suspension, one of which is broken off, leaving a small hole. The colours of the enamel are chiefly cobalt and red, with a touch here and there of pale green and white. The glass is thick and muddy, with numerous striae, as is the case with all Saracenic lamps. The decoration is arranged

* An engraving of one of them was published in the *Art Journal*, and afterwards in my *Social Life in Egypt*, 98.

in a series of five bands, the position of which is indicated in the accompanying skeleton outline:—

A, on the neck, interrupted by three medallions, *a, a, a*; *B*, at the junction of the neck and body of the lamp; *C*, surrounding the body and containing the main inscription, interrupted by the glass loops for attaching the silver chains that attached the lamp to the beams or ceiling of the mosque; *D*, on the lower curve of the body; and *E*, on the foot. This division is common to most of the lamps with which I am acquainted, but the ornament of course varies greatly in different examples.

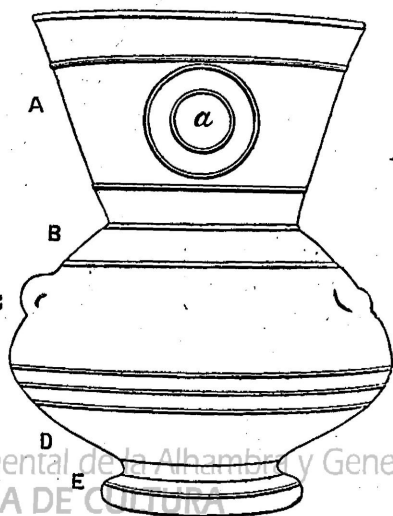


FIG. 92.

DIAGRAM OF GLASS LAMP.

The inscriptions on the five bands are as follows:—

A. (a) الله نور السموات والارض (a) مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها (a)
مصباح المصباح (a)

“God is the Light of the heavens and the earth; His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp:” here the inscription breaks off, it should continue في زجاجة الزجاجه كأنها كوكب دري
“in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star.”—*Korān*, xxiv.
35. The Arabic letters are in cobalt, the shading lines and ornaments, which are very delicately traced, are in red.

a, a, a. Three medallions, each bearing, on a fess indicated in