

the possession of examples to conclude that the works of other fabriques were sent to Diruta for the additional embellishment.

The crude drawing of the earlier ware improved very slowly; in 1502 tiles executed for the palace at Pesaro were still of sorry design; but it developed by the introduction of half tints, the colouring of the drapery, and in the composition of the groups of figures, inspired by the works of Timoteo della Vite and other artists of the Umbrian school. At Pesaro the art appears to have attained its highest perfection at the bottega of the Lanfranco family, about 1540-45.

The establishment of the ducal Court at Urbino naturally drew more favour to the potteries of that city, and of its near neighbour Castel Durante. The latter of these appears also to have been a seat of this industry from very remote times, and not only to have furnished large quantities of glazed earthenware but also artistic works of the highest merit. Castel Durante not only produced fine wares at home but artists of great ability emigrated from her, establishing themselves at various places. Hence originally came the Fontana family, the most important producers of the higher class of decorative pottery at Urbino. At Venice Francesco Pieragnolo in 1545, accompanied by his father Gian-Antonio da Pesaro, formed a bottega; but his wares are not among the earliest dated pieces made in that city, where we know that M<sup>o</sup> Ludovico was producing admirable works five years previously, and M<sup>o</sup> Giacomo da Pesaro in 1542. A member of the Fontana family, Camillo, younger brother of the celebrated Orazio, went to Florence, and another M<sup>o</sup> Camillo to Ferrara in 1567, by the request of the then reigning duke, Alfonso II.; in 1600 we find that Maestro Diomedè Durante had a pottery at Rome, producing pieces painted by Gio. Paulo Savino, in the style of the Urbino grotesques on white ground, which had been brought to such perfection by the Fontana family. Another artist of this family, Guido di

Savino, is stated to have previously established himself at Antwerp.

At Urbino and Gubbio the shaped pieces, the vases, cisterns, &c. were of large size admirably modelled, as, for instance, the fine vase at South Kensington, no. 515, in the woodcut; they were also richly "istoriata" with subjects from sacred and pro-



fane history, poetry, &c.: the produce of the celebrated Fontana botega being, perhaps, the most important of them. Here also worked the able artist Francesco Xanto, from 1530 to 1541 (latterly in the pottery of Francesco Silvano), so many of whose painted pieces were subsequently decorated with ruby and gold lustre at Gubbio.

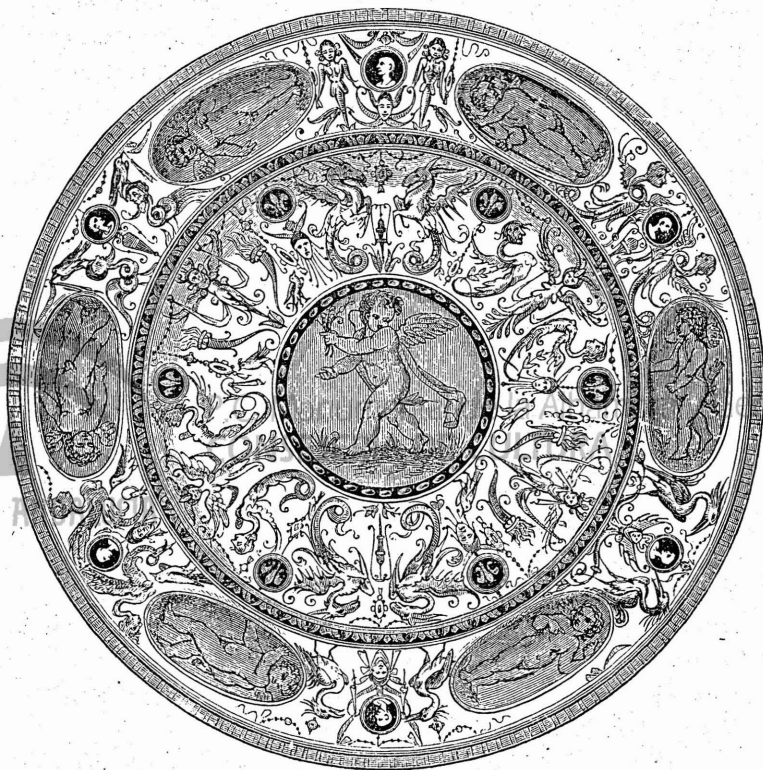
From 1520 to 1540 the art constantly advanced in this duchy, and had retained great perfection till 1560. It is probable that the potteries at Castel Durante were of earlier foundation than those at Urbino and, from their first establishment to the de-

cadence of the art were some of the most important and productive furnaces of the duchy. Here several boteghe existed, one of which was under the direction of the cavaliere Cipriano Piccolpasso who, himself an artist and a professor of medicine, was doubtless well advanced in the chemical knowledge of his day. He worked about 1550, and has left the important and interesting manuscript, entitled "Li tre libri dell' arte dell' Vasajo," now in the library of the South Kensington museum. This manuscript was printed and published at Rome in 1857, and a translation in French at Paris in 1841, both editions with engraved copies of the numerous designs.

Guidobaldo I. was succeeded in the dukedom by his nephew Francesco Maria Della Rovere, in 1508, who, incurring the resentment of pope Leo the tenth, was obliged to retire into Lombardy but was reinstated in 1517. Rome was sacked in 1527, and history accuses Guidobaldo of having permitted the horrible act without interfering to prevent it. He died from poison in 1538 at Pesaro, whither he had retired after a reverseful life and reign. His duchess was the excellent Leonora Gonzaga. She built a palace near Pesaro, known as the "Imperiale," richly decorated by able artists among whom was Raffaele dal Colle, whose designs were also adopted for the maiolica ware. The frequently repeated error of ascribing the actual painting, as also the making designs for this ware, to the great Raffaele Sanzio may probably have arisen from the similarity in the Christian names of these artists.

The development of the manufacture in the duchy of Urbino may be considered to have attained its culminating point about 1540, after which, for some twenty years, it continued in great excellence not only as regards the "istoriati," but more particularly in the shaped pieces and dishes (of which we engrave an example p. 40) decorated with the so-called "Urbino arabesques" on a clear white ground; the subjects painted in medallions, surrounded by grotesques of admirable invention and execution,

after the style known as "Raffaellesque." But excellent and highly decorative as are the finer products of this period from the furnaces of the Fontana of Urbino, or of the Lanfranchi of



Pesaro, they want to the eye of the true connoisseur the sentiment and expressive drawing, the exquisite finish and delicacy, the rich colour, and the admirable design of the earlier works produced at the Casa Pirola in Faenza, at Forlì, Castel Durante Siena, and Caffaggiolo, in the latter years of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries, and by M<sup>o</sup> Giorgio at

Gubbio, many of which rival in beauty the exquisite miniature illuminations of that palmy period of Italian art. The service in the Correr museum in Venice, supposed to have been painted by an unknown artist of Faenza and dated 1482, is of high quality ;



and we possess at South Kensington works by his hand, particularly a plaque or tile (No. 69) on which is a representation of the Resurrection of our Lord, worthy of being ranked with the highest productions of pictorial art. The borders of grotesques on the plates of this earlier period differ greatly from those of the Urbino factories of the middle time, being generally grounded on dark blue or yellow, and executed with great delicacy of touch

and power of colouring; the centres of the smaller pieces are usually occupied by single figures, small medallion subjects, portrait heads, amorini, shields-of-arms, &c.; frequently they were intended for "amatorii" or love tokens. Some of the most careful and highly finished productions of M<sup>o</sup> Giorgio are of this early time, before he was in the habit of signing with the well-known initials M<sup>o</sup> G<sup>o</sup>; the earliest so signed being the admirable St. Francis tazza at South Kensington, dated 1517.

We may therefore affirm that the choicest works in Italian pottery were produced during a period which extended from 1480 to 1520 or 1530; thence till 1560 was its meridian, although some fine works were produced at Urbino by the Fontana till 1570; before that time the ruby lustre had been lost, and soon after a rapid decline of design and execution reduces all to painful inferiority. The woodcut (p. 41) is from a splendid dish, dated 1533, no. 1748, at South Kensington.

Guidobaldo II., who had succeeded to Francesco Maria in 1538, wanted the force of character and nice appreciation of the higher literature and art which had distinguished his father; but he was a great patron of the ceramic productions of his duchy, and sought to improve the designs used by painters on pottery by the introduction of subjects of higher character and composition. With this view, lavish of expense, he bought original drawings by Raffaele and the engravings of Marc Antonio from that master's designs. He also made presents of services to contemporary princes and friends. One, given to the emperor Charles V., a double service, is mentioned by Vasari, the vases of which had been painted from the designs of Battista Franco, a Venetian, whom he had invited to Urbino. Another service of which pieces are extant was given by the duke to Andrea da Volterra, his confessor. For the Spezieria or medical dispensary, attached to his own palace, he ordered a complete set of vases and drug pots; designs were prepared for these by B. Francco and Raffaele dal Colle and executed at the botega of

Orazio Fontana, by whom some of the pieces were painted. They were subsequently presented by duke Francesco Maria II. to the Santa Casa at Loreto, where the greater part of them are still preserved. Some of them were engraved by Bartoli. The story tells us that so highly were they esteemed by Christina of Sweden that she offered to buy them for their weight of gold, after a grand duke of Florence had more prudently proposed an equal number of silver vessels of like weight.

Orazio Fontana, the great artist potter and painter of Urbino, worked for the duke from 1540 to 1560 and carried the art to the highest perfection. Passeri states that Orazio had no equal in the execution of his paintings, the distribution of his colours, and in the calculation of the effect of the fire upon them in the production of his wares. He also quotes various contemporary authors who speak of the excellence of the maiolica of this period. After the death of Orazio Fontana and Battista Franco works of an inferior class only were produced from the designs of the Flemish engravers. From 1580 the decline of the art was rapid. It met but small encouragement from duke Francesco Maria II., who succeeded in 1574, except during his residence at Castel Durante where it still, though feebly, survived. He abdicated in favour of the Holy See, and died in 1631. The rich collections of art then remaining at Urbino became the property of Ferdinand de' Medici, who had married the duke's granddaughter, and were removed to Florence.

Artistic manufactories had, in addition to those of the Umbrian duchy, greatly increased in various parts of Italy under the encouragement of powerful local families; but none appear to have attained to higher excellence than those of Tuscany. At Caffaggiolo under the powerful patronage of the Medici, and at Siena, some of the most excellent pieces of this beautiful pottery were produced, rivalling but not surpassing the fine examples of Faenza.

The Tuscan pieces are remarkable for their rich enamel, for

the force and brilliancy of the colours, and for the execution and design of the grotesque borders and other decoration; a deep rich blue, a peculiar opaque but bright red, and a brilliant yellow, are characteristic pigments. The existence of the former fabrique has been made known to us only by the inscription of the name on some few pieces preserved in cabinets. From their style and the mark accompanying the inscription we are enabled to detect many examples, some of which bear concurrent testimony in the subjects connected with the history of the Medici family with



which they are painted. The well known plate (in the woodcut) on which a painter is represented engaged in executing the portraits of a noble personage and his lady, who are seated near,



and which were supposed to be intended for Raffaele and the Fornarina, is a fine specimen of the work of perhaps the most able artist engaged at this pottery. This beautiful example is now in the South Kensington museum, acquired from the Bernal collection.

At Siena also admirable works were produced but we are disposed to think that their inspiration was derived from Caffaggiolo, whence also her potters probably received instruction in the application of the stanniferous enamel. Some pieces of the latter end of the fifteenth century are with probability ascribed to Siena, and dated pieces as early as 1501. Tiles also from the same fabrique are remarkable for the excellence of their grotesque borders on an orange yellow ground, having centres painted with great delicacy: some unusual examples having a black ground to their decorative borders.

Rome and the south of Italy do not appear to have produced meritorious works in this field, during the period of its greatest excellence in the northern and Tuscan states; and it is not till the dispersion of the artists, consequent upon the absorption of the Umbrian duchy into the Pontifical states, that we find a Durantine establishing a pottery at Rome, and producing in 1600 an inferior repetition of the grotesque style so admirable in the hands of the Fontana, half a century earlier at Urbino. The decadence was rapid; an increased number of inferior potteries produced wares of a lower price and quality; the fall of the ducal houses which had so greatly encouraged its higher excellence as a branch of fine art, together with the general deterioration in artistic taste, alike tended to its end.

## CHAPTER V.

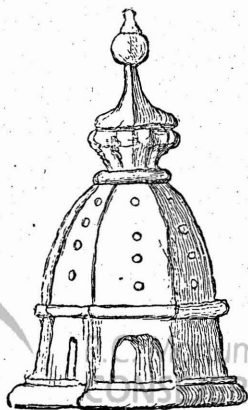
A REVIVAL in the production of native decorative earthenware took place in various parts of Italy, as also in the rest of Europe. The efforts made to imitate true porcelain were reflected by improvements in the quality and decoration of enamelled earthenware, and in the last century we find potteries in various parts of Piedmont and Lombardy, Venice, Genoa and Savona, Urbino and Pesaro, Siena, Castelli, Florence and Rome, producing wares of greater or less artistic excellence. But although careful drawing is occasionally found, as on some of the pieces painted by Ferdinando Maria Campana at Siena, from the prints of Marc Antonio, and some charming designs with borders of amorini among foliage, and subject pieces of great merit from the Castelli fabrique; and although the "technique" of the manufacture is also of great excellence; the ornamentation wants that masculine power of colouring and vigour of the renaissance, so strikingly apparent upon the better productions of the older furnaces, and the admirable delicacy and richness of effect to be seen upon the earlier works.

The endeavours made throughout Europe to discover a method of making porcelain, similar in its qualities or approaching to that imported from China, had begun in the sixteenth century. In this direction also royal encouragement was of the greatest value, and we find that first in the field of discovery was, as naturally might be expected, that country in which the enamelled earthenware had previously reached its highest perfection. Under the patronage of the Grand Duke Francis I. about 1580, experiments

were made which at length resulted in the production of an artificial porcelain of close body and even glaze. The existence of such a production and the history of its origin have been revealed to us only within the last few years, and we are indebted to Dr. Foresi of Florence for having made this discovery, so interesting in the history of the ceramic arts. He had noticed and collected some pieces of a porcelain of heavy nature and indifferent whiteness, decorated in blue with flower and leafage pattern of somewhat oriental style but at the same time unmistakably European, on some of which a mark occurs consisting of the capital letter F, surmounted by a dome. The earliest recorded European porcelain had heretofore been that produced by Dr. Dwight, at Fulham, in 1671, and at St. Cloud in France, about 1695, but the specimens found by Dr. Foresi were manifestly not attributable to either of these or any other known sources. Further researches brought to light a piece of the same ware on which the pellets of the Medici coat were substituted for the more useful mark, and led to a search among the records of that house. Dr. Foresi was rewarded for his trouble by the discovery that the above-named duke had actually caused experiments to be made, and had established a private fabrique in connection with his laboratory in the Boboli gardens. The Magliabecchian library yielded an important manuscript compilation by some person employed by the duke, giving the nature of the composition and details of the production of this ware. The marks on the pieces explained the rest. The Medici arms and the initials F . M . M . E . D . I . I . , reading "Franciscus Medici Magnus Etruriæ Dux Secundus," on one important piece now in the collection of the baron Gustave de Rothschild of Paris, clearly attached it to his reign, while the letter F, the initial of the city, and the dome of her cathedral of which she was so proud, equally pointed to the place of its production.

Another exceptionally fine and interesting piece has recently been acquired in Italy by signor Alessandro Castellani. It is a shallow basin in the centre of which the figure of St. Mark, with

the lion, is painted in the usual blue pigment, and in a manner which stamps it as the work of a master's pencil. What makes this specimen particularly interesting is the existence of a monogram composed of the letters G. and P. which is painted on the volume held beneath the lion's paw, while on the reverse



of the piece the usual mark occurs, as given in the accompanying facsimile. It has been suggested that this monogram may be that of Raffaele's great pupil, Giulio Pippi *detto* Romano, and that, as it has been stated that he occasionally painted upon enamelled earthenware, this piece may be considered as his work. That the design was from the hand of that master is probable, and that its execution was by able ceramic painters is equally so: but Giulio Romano died in 1546, whereas the Medici porcelain does not appear to have been perfected before 1580.

This Florentine porcelain is especially rare; scarcely thirty examples being known to exist. Three of these are at South

Kensington, and one is in the possession of the present writer. It is of value to our subject, not merely as an important episode in the narrative of the rise and progress of ceramic industry in Italy but from its exceptional nature, as one at least of the specimens was decorated by an artist whose handiwork is to be recognised upon pieces of the Urbino enamelled earthenware. The fine "Brocca" 15 inches high, belonging to the baron Gustave Rothschild, is surmounted by an elegantly formed handle springing from grotesque winged masks, modelled in relief. The body is decorated with two belts of grotesques, divided by a narrower one, on which are masks and scroll ornaments; beneath these is a band divided into arched panels or compartments, in each of which is a flower in somewhat Persian taste. These grotesques are executed with great freedom and force and at the same time with a careful finish and delicacy, and in the manner of an unknown painter who worked at the botega of Camillo Fontana.

It remains to us only to notice the productions of the present day, many of the more meritorious of which are only imitations (in some instances, we regret to say, produced for fraudulent purposes) of the more excellent works of an original period of art; and to give some account of the mode of manufacture, the forms and uses of the pieces, and the manner of their decoration.

The first successful attempt at re-producing the Italian enamelled pottery of the renaissance from original models was, we believe, made at Doccia (the manufactory belonging to the Marquis Ginori) near Florence. The greater number of these pieces were ordered by an unprincipled dealer of that city who supplied the models, and by whom and his agents they were more or less scratched, chipped and otherwise "doctored" to look old, and so imposed upon unwary purchasers at high prices. The writer recollects some of these specimens which were, years since, offered to him at Leghorn by an English tradesman of position (himself possibly deceived), to which a family history had been attached, their

reputed owner (it was said) being under the necessity of parting with them. Since that period the productions of Doccia have improved, the lustre pigment has been re-produced, and these revivals have been justly admired at various international exhibitions of art and industry as legitimate works of the manufactory.

But a still better imitation of the metallic lustre of Gubbio has been produced by an artist of that city; and at Siena some excellent copies of tiles and other pieces have been made; so also at Faenza. Bologna, too, has made copies of the rilievos of Della Robbia which, like those produced at Doccia, may be purchased new of the makers, or found, scratched and dirty, in various curiosity shops throughout Europe, ready to pass for old, some of the worst being occasionally signed as by Luca to enhance their interest. It is to be regretted that a few of these forgeries, as well as admirably executed terra-cottas, have found their way into public museums under a false passport.

At Naples reproductions of the wares of Castelli are well executed.

In France the excellent reproductions of Persian and Rhodian wares by Deck, and some good imitations of the Italian enamelled and lusted pottery by various artists; and in England the pieces produced by Minton, Wedgwood, and other manufacturers, have led to modifications and adaptations, resulting in an important development of this branch of artistic pottery.

## CHAPTER VI.

WE are fortunate in possessing a manual of the Italian potters' art of the sixteenth century, in the manuscript by the "Cavaliere Cipriano Piccolpassi Durantino," as he signs his name on the title page of his work. Nearly all the information on this branch of the subject, conveyed to us by Passeri and subsequently by Sig. Giuseppe Raffaelli and other writers, has been gathered from that manuscript written in 1548. We think we cannot do better than go at once to this fountain head, and epitomize the information it conveys, upon the manner and materials, upon the forms and decoration, of maiolica.

After a "prologo" in which the author defends himself from the invidious remarks of others, he tells us how the earth or clay brought down by the river *Metauro* was gathered from its bed during the summer when the stream was low, and by some was made into large balls, which were stowed in holes (*terraz*) purposely dug in the ground; by others it was previously dried in the sun; here it remained to mellow and purge itself from impurities, which otherwise would be injurious. This same method of gathering the material for the foundation of the wares was adopted at many other places. At Venice the earth of Ravenna and Rimini is worked, although they frequently use that dug at Battaglia, near Padua, but for the better sort that of Pesaro.

Our author enters into further details of the method of gathering the potters' clay where there are no rivers, by digging a succession of square pits connected by a channel in the depres-

sions between hills, into which the earth, washed by showers of rain, is refined in its passage from pit to pit. For inferior wares the earth is then collected on a table and well beaten with an iron instrument, weighing twelve pounds, three or four times, being kneaded with the fingers as a woman would in making bread, and all impurities carefully removed. Afterwards it is formed into masses, from which a piece is taken to work upon the wheel or press into moulds. If the earth is too "morbida" it is placed upon the wall or house top, on sieves, through which it is washed by the rain, and gathered in old broken vases, &c., placed beneath.

For making wares "all' urbinata" (meaning probably with a white ground) the dug clay ought to be white, for if of a blue colour it will not take the tin glaze; this, however, is not objectionable if it is to be covered with a slip of "terra di Vicenza" (a white clay), a method which he terms "alla castellana." But it is the reverse with the clay gathered from the beds of rivers, the blue in this case being of the better quality.

It is difficult for us now accurately to apply the names which he gives to the variously shaped pieces, and the more so, as we are informed that in our author's time various names were attached by different artists and at different potteries to the same form. Thus the "Vaso a pera" was also known as "Vaso da due maniche" and "Vaso Dorico;" and the body of such a vase was by some made in one piece, by others in two or three, making joints at the lower part and at the insertion of the neck, and uniting them by means of lute (*barbatina*). Vases and jugs with pyriform bodies, moulded handles, and shaped spouts, or lips, were known as "a bronzo antico" (fig. 1), their forms, doubtless, being derived from the antique bronze vessels discovered in excavations.

Some of these pieces have a stopper fitting into the neck by a screw, the worm of which is worked upon it by means of a piece of wood (*stecca*) formed with projecting teeth, the interior of the



neck being furnished with a corresponding sunken worm. The details of all these methods are illustrated on the third table of

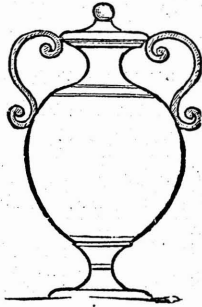


FIG. 1.

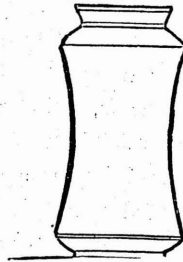


FIG. 2.

his atlas of plates. After telling us that the *albarelo* (fig. 2), or drug pot, universally known under that name, is made of different sizes and always of one piece, our author describes the manner of



FIG. 3.

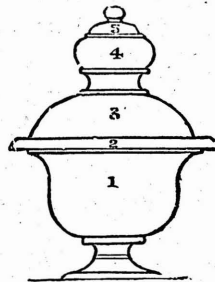


FIG. 4.

forming the *Vaso senza bocca* (fig. 3), a sort of puzzle jug with hermetically fixed cover on the top and an opening beneath the foot, from which an inverted funnel rises inside the body of the vase. To fill it, the piece must be turned upside down and the liquid poured into the funnel below, and may be again poured out

at the spout when required, in the ordinary way, the vase having been placed upright.

It is hardly necessary to give a list of different forms, but we may follow our author in his description of that set of five, or sometimes nine separate pieces, which, fitting together, form a single vase (fig. 4). These sets, known as "scudella da donna di parto" or "vasi puerperali," were made for the use of ladies in their confinements, and consist of the following pieces:—(1.) The broth basin or *Scodella*, on raised foot. Over this fits the lid (2), which also does duty as a plate (*Tagliere*) for the roll or slice of bread; inverted over this is the drinking cup. (3), *Ongaresca*, upon the foot of which fits the salt cellar, *Saliiera* (4), surmounted by its cover (5). The particulars of the arrangement of the nine pieces are not given. Single portions of these are to be found in collections, but the present writer is not aware of any one complete set having been preserved.

Using either the *mugniolo* or the *scudella*, the mass of clay placed upon the disk is revolved by the wheel and fashioned into form with the hands, assisted by variously shaped pieces of flat wood (*stecche*) and moulding tools of iron (*serrì*) all of which are figured in Piccolpasso's designs.

The forms of the *seggers*, *case* (that is, cases made of fire-clay and pierced with holes, in which the finer wares are baked, being thus protected from dirt or accident in the furnace), and the composition of the clay of which they were made, as also of the *tagli*, *punte*, *smarelle*, *pironi*, &c. variously formed tripods and supports for holding the pieces to be fired, are given us in detail. The clay consists of a mixture of the red earth used for coarser wares and the white, which is reserved for vases and finer pieces.

Shaped pieces with ornaments in relief, masks, spouts, handles, &c. are formed in moulds made of plaster of Paris (*gesso*) upon the original models. The mould being ready, the potter's clay is formed into a cheese-shaped mass of a diameter suitable to the

size of the mould ; from this slices are cut by means of a wire worked over two pieces of wood of the thickness of the required slice, and placed at either side of the cheese of clay. A slice of even thickness being thus obtained it is pressed by the hand into the hollows of the mould ; that for the other side of the piece is then steadily pressed over the clay which occupies the corresponding mould, and the excess exuding from the edge between is neatly cut away. The foot would be similarly formed in another mould, and subsequently attached to the bowl by means of lute (*barbatina*). This lute is made of the finer quality of clay, much worked and allowed to dry, then mixed with a certain quantity of the shearings of fine woollen cloth, kneaded with water and diluted to the consistence of thick cream.

To make shaped vases or ewers (*bronzi antiche*) a mould is formed to each side of the piece, uniting longitudinally at the handle and spout ; the clay pressed into each of these is neatly cut from the edge by means of the *archetto*, a wire strained across a forked stick, and joined to the corresponding side with *barbatina* by which also the handle, formed in another mould, is attached to the piece, the inside being smoothed at the joint by means of a knobbed stick (*bastone*). The pieces known as "abborchiate," such as salt-cellars with ornaments in rilievo, are made in the same manner, as are also the "smartellati" or tazze, &c. formed after the manner of pieces in beaten metal (*repoussé*) with bosses and radiating compartments in relief. The basket-like pieces (*canestrella*) were similarly moulded.

In his second book Piccolpasso gives the receipts and methods of preparing the glaze and colours, commencing with the "marzaccotto," the silicate of potass or glass, which is the foundation of all glaze. We are then told the manner of constructing a reverberatory furnace in which the tin and lead can be oxydized, and which is built of brick with an earth called "sciabione," probably a sort of fire-clay. It consists of an elongated square structure divided longitudinally into two compartments, in one of

which is placed the fire, while the other is occupied, on a higher level, by a shallow tray or trough made of *tufu*, a volcanic stone, or of brickwork, to contain the metals, upon and over which the flame of the burning wood is made to play in its passage to the draft hole at the end.

The construction of other furnaces is his next subject. They were built of brick and of an elongated quadrilateral plan, divided into two stories by an arched floor, pierced to allow of a free circulation to the heat; the upper chamber, which is higher than the lower, is furnished with four small openings on the upper part of either side (*vedette*) and nine similar ones in the vaulted roof; the lower chamber has a well or depression sunk about one foot beneath the surface to receive the ashes from the fire, and both it and the upper one have an arched opening or feeding door (*bocca*) at one end. The dimensions usual at Castel Durante were six feet long by five wide, and six high, but in Venice they were larger, for, says Piccolpasso, "I have seen one at the house of M<sup>o</sup> Francesco di Pier ten feet wide by twelve long, outside, having three openings to feed the fire."

In the upper chamber the wares are placed for baking, the finer sorts being enclosed in the seggers (*case*) piled one above another, and the coarser arranged between, supported by pieces of tile, &c. and so packed as to fill the chamber as much as possible without impeding the free current of the fire. This is the first baking, and at the same time the pigments, prepared as previously described, are submitted to the action of the fire in the upper part of the furnace. The opening to the upper chamber is then roughly bricked and luted up, leaving only a small orifice (*bochetta*) in the upper part. The small lateral openings (*vedette*) are also closed, and those in the roof loosely covered with pieces of tile. The vases containing the mixture of sand and *feccia* for making the *marzacotto* are then placed upon each other under the furnace at the further end (probably in the lower or fire chamber). All being prepared, and invoking the name of God, "uso

Christiano," with the sign of the cross, take a handful of straw and light the fire made of well-dried wood placed in the lower chamber, and which must be gradually increased for four hours, taking care that it is never pushed too much, lest the pieces run or become too hard to receive the glaze. The furnace should be of a clear heat all throughout and so continued for about twelve hours, drawing away the ashes from below with the "cacciabragie" or rake. When sufficiently baked let the fire burn out, and remove the cinders that all may become cool.

We must refer to the Introduction to the large catalogue of the maiolica collection at South Kensington for further extracts, quoting here one sentence only where the author says, "And now I will give you the 'sbiancheggiate' that is made in Lombardy, bearing in mind that the earth of Vicenza is used, making the design on the white earth; I would say with a style of iron of this kind (gives design), and this drawing is called 'sgraffio.'" This is an interesting passage connecting as it does these incised wares with the fabriques of Lombardy, to which, from the character of the designs upon the earlier pieces, we have always assigned them.

In his third book Piccolpasso goes into further details of the glaze and colours, manner of painting, firing, &c.

The "bianchetto" which is only once baked, and the other colours, being removed from the furnace, are triturated with water on a "piletta" or hand colour mill, or by means of a pestle and mortar, to reduce them to a fine powder, and passed through a horse-hair sieve. Some grind them on a slab of porphyry which is even better. The green pigment may be baked two or three times. The "zallo" and the "zallulino," after once or twice baking, are covered with earth and again baked in the hottest part of the furnace.

The white enamel glaze, having been properly milled and fined through a sieve, is made into a bath with water to the consistency of milk. The pottery baked in biscuit is taken out of the furnace,

and after being carefully dusted with a fox's tail is dipped into this bath of glaze and immediately withdrawn, or some of the pieces may be held in the left hand while the liquor is poured over them from a bowl. A trial piece should show the thickness of glove leather in the adhering coat. The "invetriatura" having been thus applied and the pieces allowed to dry are now ready to receive the painting. This is executed with coarser and finer brushes or *penelli*, made of goats' and asses' hair, and the finest of the whiskers of rats or mice; the ordinary wares being held in the left hand or on the left knee and the finer in wooden cases, lined with tow, to prevent rubbing. A different brush must be used for each colour. The painters generally sit round a circular table suspended from the ceiling so that it may turn round, and upon this the different pigments are placed.

The painted pieces after being dried in a clean place, taking care that the "bianco" is not chipped or rubbed off, are painted with *zallulino* on the outer edge and are then ready to receive the "coperta" or outer glaze. The liquid of the bath must be thin, as a translucent coating only is required over the colours; into this the pieces are dipped, and being again dried are ready for the final firing.

In a supplement Piccolpasso gives us an account of the manner of making *maiolica*, and it will be observed that throughout his narrative he has never applied that term to the painted and glazed wares produced at his own bottega, or at any of the others to which he refers.

He tells us that he feels he ought not to omit the account of it which he has received from others, although he has never made or even witnessed the making of it himself. "I know well" he says "that it is painted over finished works; this I have seen in Ugubio, at the house of one Maestro Cencio." The portion of the design which is to receive the lustre colour is left white at the first painting; thus, a figure in a grotesque whose extremities are to be lustred will only have those parts painted which are to be

coloured, leaving the extremities merely sketched in outline upon the white ground ; these, after the colours have been set by firing, are subsequently touched with the lustre pigment. The process of firing differs from the former one, because the pieces are not enclosed in seggars but are exposed to the direct action of the flames.

The furnace also is differently constructed, the fire chamber square in form, having no arched roof pierced with holes but only two intersecting arches of brick to support the chamber above, the four corners being left as openings for the free current of the flames. Upon these arches is placed a large circular chamber or vessel, formed of fire-clay, which fits into the square brick structure, touching at the four sides and supported on the intersecting arches beneath, but leaving the angles free. This inner chamber is pierced in all directions with circular holes, to allow the flames free passage among the wares. The method of building these furnaces is kept guarded, and it is pretended that in it and the manner of firing consist the great secrets of the art. The *scudelli* are packed with the edge of one against the foot of another, the first being supported on an unglazed cup. The furnaces are small, only from three to four feet square, because this art is uncertain in its success, frequently only six pieces being good out of one hundred ; "true the art is beautiful and ingenious, and when the pieces are good they pay in gold." The fire is increased gradually, and is made of *palli* or dry willow branches ; with these three hours firing is given, then, when the furnace shows a certain clearness, having in readiness a quantity of dry broom cease using the willow wood, and give an hour's firing with this ; after, with a pair of tongs remove a sample from above. Others leave an opening in one of the sides by which a sample or trial, painted on a piece of broken ware, can be removed for examination, and if it appears sufficiently baked decrease the fire. This done, allow all to cool, then take out the wares and allow them to soak in a lessive of soap-suds, wash and rub them dry

with a piece of flannel, then with another dry piece and some ashes (of wood) give them a gentle rubbing, which will develop all their beauty.

“This is all, as it appears to me, that can be said about the maiolica, as also about the other colours and mixtures that are required in this art.”



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



## CHAPTER VII.

WE have given in the last chapter a very brief abstract or epitome of the interesting manuscript of Piccolpasso, which offers us a perfect idea of the manner and comparatively simple appliances under which the beautiful examples of the potter's art were produced in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The *rationale* of these processes is clear enough and requires no comment; but we may perhaps remark that whereas the fixing of the glaze and colours in the ordinary process is merely produced by a degree of heat sufficient to liquefy and blend them, in the case of the metallic reflection a different effect is requisite, and different means adopted. The pigments consist partly of metallic salts, which being painted on the wares, after exposure to a simple heat for some time, have then directed upon their glowing surface the heated smoke given off by the fagots of broom; this smoke being in fact carbon in a finely divided state has great power, at a high temperature, of reducing metals from their salts; painted on the wares these are thereby decomposed, leaving a thin coat of mixed metal, varying in colour and iridescence from admixture with the glaze and other causes, and producing the beautiful effects so well known.

The various names by which the Italian pottery of the renaissance has been known have in some instances arisen from, as they have also led to, error. "Faenza ware," doubtless, had its origin from the town of that name, although its French equivalent "faïence" may either be a translation of the Italian, or may be derived from a town in Provence, called "Faïance" or "Fay-

ence," a few miles from Cannes and Fréjus, where potteries are stated to have existed from an early period. "Urbino ware" and "Umbrian ware" explain themselves as connected with those important sites of the manufacture, while the name of "Raffaelle ware" was doubtless derived from the subjects after his designs, with which so many pieces were painted, and from the grotesques after his manner. A very beautiful drawing of his school, and which has been ascribed to Raffaelle's own pencil, is in the royal collection at Windsor. It is for the border of a plate, and consists of a continuous circular group of amorini, dancing in the most graceful attitudes.

Scripture subjects are perhaps more general upon the pieces of early date, particularly those of Faenza, on which designs from Albert Dürer, Martin Schön, and other German painters are found, executed with the greatest care; such subjects were also used at Caffaggiolo. The spirit of the renaissance awakening a passion for the antique declared itself in the numerous representations from Greek and Roman history and mythology, scenes from Homer, the metamorphoses of Ovid, and the like, which formed the main stock subjects for the wares of the Umbrian fabriques, excepting always the sacred histories delineated so admirably by Orazio Fontana and others, from the designs of Raffaelle and his scholars. It was among the artists of this duchy that the habit of writing the subject on the back of the piece chiefly prevailed, with specimens of curious spelling and strange latinity. Transmutation of subject is not rare, as the burning of the "Borgo" for the siege of Troy, and others. The forms appear to have varied considerably at different localities of the craft, partaking of a classic origin, mixed with some orientalism in the earlier and gothic forms in the more northern pieces; but upon all the exuberance of fancy and rich ornamentation characteristic of the Italian "cinque-cento" is made evident, as it is upon the furniture, the bronzes, and the jewellery of that artistic period.

There can be little doubt that the maiolica and finer painted wares were looked upon at the time they were produced as objects of ornament or as services "de luxe." The more ordinary wares or *dozzinale* were doubtless used for general domestic purposes in the houses of the higher classes, but the finer pieces decorated by better artists were highly prized. Thus we find that



services were only made for royal or princely personages, frequently as presents. Some of the choicest specimens in our cabinets were single gift pieces; small plates and *scodelle* which it was then the fashion for gallants to present, filled with preserves or *confetti*, to ladies. Many of these are of the form known as *tondino*, small, with a wide flat brim and sunk centre; in this the central medallion is generally occupied by a figure of Cupid, hearts tied by ribbon, or pierced by arrows; or by joined hands

and similar amatory devices, or with a shield of arms and initial letters. The borders are painted with grotesques and trophies, among which sonnets and music sometimes occur, and medallions with love emblems, portraits, and armorial bearings. These *amatorii* pieces also occur as large plates and deep saucers, the surface of each entirely covered with a portrait of the beloved (as in the engraving p. 63) accompanied by a ribbon or banderole, on which her name or a motto is inscribed, often with the complimentary accompaniment of "bella," "diva," "paragon di tutti," &c. Jugs, vases, and other shaped pieces were also decorated in a similar style.

We find in maiolica all objects for table use : inkstands, ornamental vases, and quaint surprises ; salt-cellars of curious forms ; jugs of different size and model ; many kinds of drug pots and flasks ; pilgrims' bottles, vasques, and cisterns ; candelabra and candlesticks, rilievs and figures in the round ; in short, every object capable of being produced in varied fancy by the potter's art : even beads for necklaces, some of which are in the writer's possession, decorated with knot work and concentric patterns and inscribed severally ANDREA · BELLA = MARGARITA · BELA = MEMENTO · MEI ; these last, the only examples known, are finished with considerable care and are probably of the earlier years of the sixteenth century.

There is little doubt that many of the pieces ostensibly for table use were only intended and applied for decorative purposes (like the vase in the woodcut p. 131), to enrich the shelves of the "credenza," "dressoir," or high-backed sideboard, intermingled with gold and silver plate, Venetian glass, &c. Such pieces were known as "piatti di pompa" or show plates, and among them are some of the most important and beautiful of the larger dishes and bacili, as well as the more elaborate and elegant of the shaped pieces.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### PERSIAN, DAMASCUS, AND RHODIAN WARES.

IN a previous chapter we have traced the origin or parentage of this section of wares to the glazed pottery and artificial semi-porcelain of Egypt, and we have seen that in Assyria and at Babylon siliceous glazed tiles were used for wall decoration. Whether in Persia and in India a similar manufacture existed at that early period we have at present no exact knowledge, but we are told by the Count Julien de Rochchouart in his interesting "Souvenirs d'un voyage en Perse" that he possesses a brick glazed of dark blue colour, with cuneiform characters in white, which was found among the ruins of the ancient city of Kirman. The mosques of the 12th century in that country, particularly that at Natinz, are covered with glazed tiles of the most perfect workmanship and artistic excellence, with coloured and lustrated decoration. Later examples—of the earlier years of the 17th century—specimens of which are in the Kensington museum are also beautiful, and the fashion, though in a degenerate form, is revived in that country at the present day. The piece of glazed pottery supposed to have been of ancient Hebrew origin and now preserved in the Louvre is also of this nature, and it is suggested by M. Jacquemart that the Israelites may have acquired the art in Egypt.

The varieties of pottery known under the names of Persian, Damascus, Rhodian, and Lindus wares, composing a large family, may be classified as *siliceous or glass-glazed* wares. The leading characteristics are—

1. A paste composed of a sandy and a white argillaceous earth, and some alkali or flux, greatly varying in their relative proportions, and producing degrees of fineness and hardness from a coarse sandy earthenware to a semi-vitrified translucent body, the latter being in fact a kind of porcelain of artificial paste.
2. A glaze formed as a true glass, of siliceous sand and an alkali (potash or soda), with the addition in some cases of a small quantity of oxide of lead or other flux.

Such is the general, but by no means the constant, definition of the component ingredients of all the varieties rightly classed together as members of this group, for there can be no doubt that great variations occurred in their composition at different periods and places, and some examples of the finer kinds of Persian, Arabian, and perhaps of Damascus wares are met with in, or under, the glaze of which the oxide of tin has been used to produce a white and more even surface.

A large amount of information about Persian ware is conveyed to us in the work of the comte de Rochchouart who, during a residence of some years in Persia, gave great attention to its ceramic productions of former and of present times. After establishing the fact of the former production of at least four distinct kinds of Kaolinic porcelain, he minutely describes ancient varieties of faience of which the polychrome pieces are the more rare, the blue and white less so; he mentions one uncommon variety, believed to have been made at Cachan, as having a paste of red earth covered with a stanniferous enamel of great beauty, and painted in cobalt under a glaze highly baked; they ring like metal. We do not recollect having seen an example of this variety. Marks imitating those on Chinese porcelain occur on pieces painted in cobalt blue on white. He further tells us that the ancient faience of Persia is as admirable as the modern is detestable, notwithstanding it retains a degree of

oriental elegance. The industry at present is carried on at Nahinna ; at Natinz, where pottery has been made for some hundred years, and where some of the finest was produced but now inferior ; at Cachan, turquoise blue, and many-coloured ; while Hamadan, Kaswine and Teheran make inferior wares, the latter being the worst.

We do not derive any information from M. de Rochchouart on the subject of the lusted wares, except in his description of the tiles of the mosque of Natinz of the 12th century ; nor do we learn anything of that variety of creamy white pottery having the sides pierced through the paste but filled with the translucent glaze, and which is believed to be the Gombrōn ware of Horace Walpole's day. But he gives interesting information on the subject of the tiles used for decoration, of which the finest are those mentioned above ; those of Ispahan and of the period of Shah Abbas (1585-1629) being also admirable for their exquisite design.

The Persian glazed pottery known to us may be divided into :

- A. Wares, generally highly baked, and sometimes semi-translucent. Paste, fine and rather thin, decorated with ruby, brown, and coppery lustre, on dark blue and creamy white ground. Engraved p. 68 is a very curious and characteristic example : unfortunately imperfect. It is in the Kensington collection.
- B. Wares, of fine paste, highly baked, semi-translucent, of creamy colour and rich clear glaze, running into tears beneath the piece of a pale sea-green tint. Its characteristic decoration consisting of holes pierced through the paste, and filled in with the transparent glaze : the raised centres, &c. are bordered with a chocolate brown or blue leafage, slightly used. This is supposed to be the Gombrōn ware.
- C. Wares, frequently of fine paste, and highly baked to semi-

transparency: the ground white; decoration of plants and animals, sometimes after the Chinese, in bright cobalt blue, the outlines frequently drawn in manganese; some



pieces with reliefs and imitation Chinese marks also occur; this variety is perhaps more recent than the others.

We assign the name DAMASCUS as the chief centre of a large class of wares which were also made, in all probability, in Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Asia Minor, &c., and among which pieces of Persian manufacture may be included from our want of exact knowledge of their technical differences; a certain general character pertaining to the whole class. There can be no doubt that Damascus was an important producer of this pottery, which



was known to the commerce of the 16th century as "Damas" ware, and we have examples, in silver mountings, of the period of queen Elizabeth. It would be well, therefore, to revive the term "Damas" or "Damascus ware" for this family, of which the true Damascus and Rhodian are only local varieties, in preference to the misapplied general name of "Persian," by which they have been known.

The paste varies in quality more than in kind, being of a grey white colour and sandy consistence, analogous to that of the Persian wares. The decoration is more generally rich in colour, the ground white, blue, turquoise, tobacco colour, and lilac, sometimes covered with scale work, with panels of oriental form or leafage, large sprays of flowers, particularly roses, tulips, hyacinths, carnations, &c., the colours used being a rich blue, turquoise, green, purple, yellow, red, black. The forms are elegant; large bowls on raised feet, flasks or bottles bulb-shaped with elongated necks; pear-shaped jugs with cylindrical necks and loop-handle; circular dishes or plates with deep centres, &c. An interesting example of the highest quality of this ware is in the writer's possession, and is described and figured in colour in vol. xlii. of the "Archæologia." It is a hanging lamp made for and obtained from the mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, signed and dated June 1549.

Two leading varieties are known in collections: namely, *Damascus proper*; known by its evenness of surface and rich glaze with subdued but harmonious colouring, certain tones of which are peculiar to this variety; for example, a dull lilac or purple, replacing the embossed red so conspicuous on the Rhodian, and used against blue, which is of two or three shades, the turquoise being frequently placed against the darker tone; a sage green is also characteristic. The dishes of this variety usually have the outer edge shaped in alternating ogee.

This kind is much more uncommon than the other, RHODIAN or LINDUS, to which the greater number of pieces known in

collections as "Persian ware" belong. It is to Mr. Salzmann that we owe the discovery of the remains of ancient furnaces at Lindus, in the island of Rhodes, from the old palaces of which he collected numerous examples. This variety, although extremely beautiful, is generally coarser than the former, and the decoration



more marked and brilliant. A bright red pigment, so thickly laid on as to stand out in relief upon the surface of the piece, is very characteristic and in many cases is a colour of great beauty; the predominant decoration of the plates consists of two or three sprays of roses, pinks, hyacinths, and tulips, and leaves, sometimes tied together (as in the woodcut) at the stem and spreading over the entire surface of the piece in graceful lines; the border frequently of black and blue scroll work. Ships, birds, and

animals, are also depicted; and a shield or arms occurs on some pieces.

Another very distinct and perhaps more recent class, the ANATOLIAN, consists of those wares frequently found in collections, as cups and saucers, sprinklers, perfume vases, covered bowls, and the like, generally pieces of small size. The ground is usually white, sometimes incised with cross lines by means of a piece of wood scratching the soft paste, with a gay decoration of many colours, among which a brilliant yellow is conspicuous in scale work, lattice and diaper patterns, flowers, &c. Its glaze is frequently



not brilliant, but rather rough on the surface; but the pieces are well baked. This variety is ascribed to the fabrique of Kutahia in Anatolia.

There is yet another variety of this section which is somewhat exceptional, approaching as it does in composition to the first division of the Persian wares, and on the other hand to the decoration of the earlier pieces of the Hispano-moresque. It is composed of a sandy paste of the kind general to this section, and is decorated either in black outline relieved or filled in with blue painted directly on the paste, and covered by a thick translucent glaze of a creamy tone, running into tears at the bottom of the piece; or glazed entirely with a translucent dark blue glass, over

which the decoration is painted in a rich lustre colour, varying between the golden and ruby tints of the Italian Majolica, and differing considerably from those upon the Hispano-moresque wares.

We give on the preceding page three or four marks from various pieces of Persian or rather "Damascus" ware.

Before we pass to another class, it may be well again to direct the reader's attention to that important application of glazed oriental pottery, already referred to, and which has been in use more or less throughout the east from a period of remote antiquity. Indeed, there is perhaps no instance in which the superiority of oriental taste in surface decoration is more distinctly shown than in the use of enamelled, or more properly speaking, siliceous glazed tiles, as a covering for external and internal wall space. We have already seen how fragments of such embellishments have been yielded by the ruins of Assyria and Babylon, by Arabia in the seventh, and Persia in the twelfth century; and Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Constantinople still have brilliant examples of this exercise of the potter's art.

The distressing state of ruin or neglect into which many of the tombs and mosques, so beautified, have been reduced or permitted to fall greatly detracts from their effect, although not without its charm to the painter's eye and it is refreshing to see them, as at Constantinople, in a somewhat better state of preservation. In that city there is excellent work of this kind in the old palace of the Seraglio, where the writer noticed tiles remarkable for their size and for the perfection of their manufacture. Some of these, nearly two feet square, are covered with the most elegant arabesque diapering of foliage and flowers intertwined, among which birds and insects are depicted. These may probably have been the work of a Persian potter. But it is in the tomb of Soliman the great, built in 1544, that the effect of this mode of decoration can be studied to better advantage. Here the entire walls of the interior are faced with tiles of admirable diaper

patterns, within borders of equal elegance, adapted to the form of the wall which they panel and following the subtle outlines of the window openings, which, filled in with gem-like coloured glass between their intricate tracery, produce an effect of the greatest richness and harmony. The application of glazed pottery for decorating wall surface seems never to have taken root in Greece or Italy (although slabs of glass of various colours were used by the Romans for that purpose), where Mosaic had established itself long anterior to the advance of oriental influence; and even in the most palmy days of the production of Italian majolica and painted pottery, nothing of this kind was attempted by her artists beyond an occasional flooring—with the exception of Luca della Robbia, who not only covered ceilings with tiles between the relieve subjects on the spandrils and the centre, as seen at San Miniato and the Pazzi chapel at Santa Croce in Florence, but executed roundels and arch fillings of tiles, painted with subjects on the flat surface. Germany made great use of tiles for facing stoves and other purposes in the sixteenth century, but their inspiration was not oriental; and, again, the Dutch tiles, much used in England during the last century, are well known but ornamented on a false principle of decorative art. In the Indian court of the international exhibition of 1871 were examples of Zenana windows and wall tiles from Sinde, of recent manufacture, and of precisely similar character in body and glaze to the class of wares now under consideration. They, moreover, show another mode of decoration, known as "*pâte sur pâte*," in which the design is painted on the surface of the clay in a slip or "*engobe*" of lighter colour underneath the glaze; a manner of ornamentation found upon early Chinese porcelain, and upon that ascribed by M. Jacquemart to Persia.

These tiles, together with shaped pieces of the same Indian ware, are very interesting, being without doubt the modern representatives of a remote manufacture and having the closest affinity with the ancient Egyptian glazed pottery. Whence they were

derived or which the parent stock is a question the answer to which we are not at present in a position to do more than guess at. In France and England reproductions have appeared, many of which are excellent from the talent of their painters or from the technical qualities of their manufacture: those produced by the Messrs. Minton, copied or derived from oriental originals, are particularly beautiful.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

## CHAPTER IX.

### HISPANO-MOESQUE POTTERY.

THIS numerous and now well-defined class of wares was a few years since indiscriminately grouped with the lustred Maiolica of Italy, in which country the larger number of specimens now in our collections had been preserved, and whence they have been procured. Many hesitated to believe in their Spanish origin, thinking it more probable that they were the work of Moorish potters established in the sister peninsula. The correspondence, however, of technical character with the "azulejos," the well-known tiles which adorn the palace of the Alhambra at Seville, and with the celebrated "jarra" or Alhambra vase, as also a marked difference between these and any wares of known Italian manufacture, led to the conviction that they must be of Spanish origin, and the work of the Moorish potters and their descendants who had been established in that country.

Under this belief they were classed together as Hispano-arabian enamelled and lustred wares, but this appellation would connect them with the so-called Saracens who conquered that country in A.D. 712. The first Arab invaders were themselves expelled in 756 by Abd-el-Rhama, who caused himself to be proclaimed caliph at Cordova. This city thus became the great centre of his power, and here was erected the mosque of which the decoration attests the exquisite oriental taste of its founders. The ornamental wall tiles on this building are of truly Hispano-arabian manufacture.

The rule of the successors of Abd-el-Rhama ended and the line

became extinct in 1038, soon after which time the Moorish conquest was completed. In 1235 Granada became the chief seat of the Moorish rulers, and there they erected the fortress-palace of the Alhambra about 1273. After an occupation of the country for four centuries the Moors were conquered in 1492. The Christian element would then predominate in the decoration of the pottery; and in 1566 the last blow was struck at Moorish art by the promulgation of a decree prohibiting the speaking or writing of their language, and forbidding the use to men and women of their national dress and veil, and the execution of decorative works in the Moresque style.

When first recognized as a distinct family these wares were found to be difficult of classification, from the entire absence of dates or names of manufactories. Labarte and others considered the copper-lustred pieces to be the earlier, but Mr. Robinson, with his usual acuteness, saw in the ornamentation of various examples reasons for reversing this arrangement, and suggested one which subsequent observation has only tended to confirm. He placed those pieces having a decoration in a paler lustre with interlacings and other ornaments in manganese and blue, coats of arms, &c., in the earlier period; those having the ornament in the paler lustre only, without colour, of nearly equal date, as also some of the darker coppery examples with shields of arms; and of a later period those so glaring in copper-coloured lustre as to be more painful than pleasing to the eye.

M. Davillier (to whose researches into the history of these wares we are greatly indebted) considers that in all probability MALAGA was the earliest site of the manufacture, and argues that its maritime situation and trade with the east and its proximity to Granada would warrant that opinion, which is strengthened by the earliest documentary evidence yet brought to light. One Ibn-Batoutah a native of Tangier, writing in 1350 after journeying through the east, states that "at Malaga, the beautiful gilt pottery or porcelain is made, which is exported to the most distant coun-



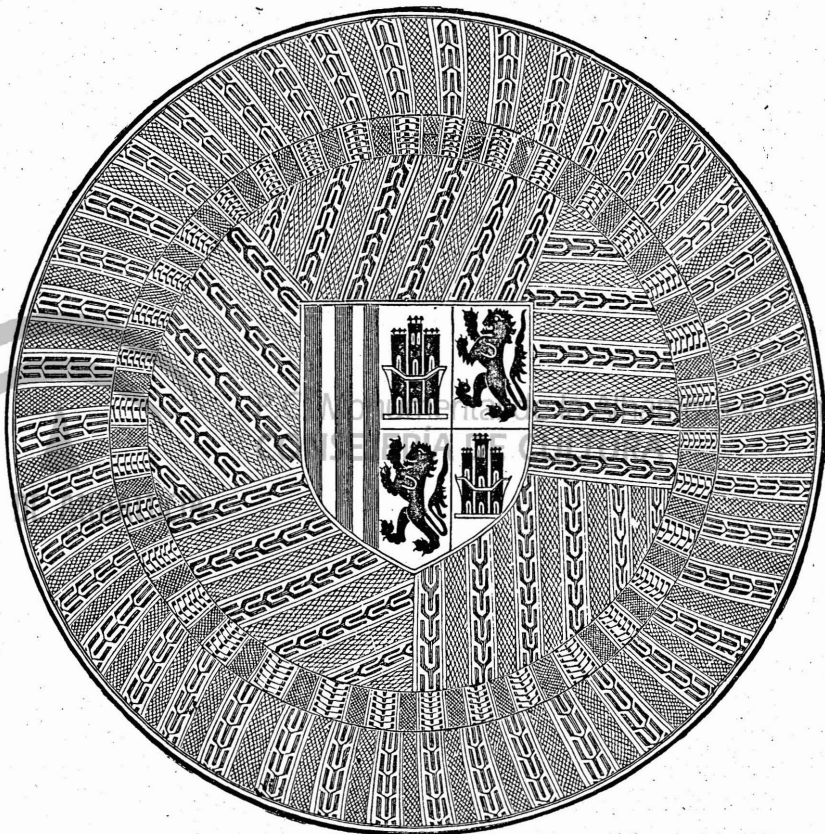
tries." He makes no mention of a fabrique at Granada in describing that city, and we may therefore reasonably conclude that Malaga was the centre of this industry in the Moorish kingdom, and if so there is great probability that the celebrated Alhambra vase was made there. From the style of its ornamentation, the form of the characters in the inscriptions, and other inferences, the date of this piece may be fairly assigned to the middle of the 14th century, which would be about the same period as that traveller's visit to the city. It has nevertheless been ascribed by others to an earlier time, about 1320. This vase is so generally and well known that we need only allude to its characteristic form and richly decorated surface. It is said to have been found in the 16th century under the pavement of the Alhambra together with several others, all of which were filled with gold; a tradition which may, perhaps, have some foundation in fact.

The Alhambra vase was copied at Sèvres in 1842, and since by the Messrs. Deck in faience, of the original size after a cast and photographs procured by M. Davillier. This last is now in the South Kensington museum.

The fabrique of Malaga existed in the sixteenth century; and the plateau engraved p. 78 was probably made there. We learn from Lucio Marineo writing of the memorable things of Spain in 1517, that "at Malaga are made also very beautiful vases of faience." After this date no further record is found, and M. Davillier thinks it probable that the works gradually declined as those of Valencia increased in importance, and that by the middle of the sixteenth century they had entirely ceased. He attributes to these potteries three large deep basins and two vases in the hôtel Cluny at Paris, which are covered with designs in golden *reflet* and blue of great similarity to those of the Alhambra vase, and also the fine vase from the Soulagés collection at South Kensington.

After the fabrique of Malaga that of MAJORCA is thought to be the most ancient, and the extension of its manufactures by commerce is indirectly proved by the adoption of the term

"Majolica" by the potters of Italy for such of their wares as were decorated with the metallic lustre. Scaliger, writing in the first half of the sixteenth century, speaks highly of the wares of the



Balearic islands: but not being an "expert" in ceramic productions, after praising the porcelain recently brought from China, admires what he calls their imitations made at Majorca. "We call them (he says) '*majolica*,' changing one letter in the name of the island where we are assured that the most beautiful are

made:" an interesting testimony to the importation of these wares into Italy and the knowledge of their origin, as also to the derivation of the term applied to the home manufacture of Pesaro and Gubbio.

Although presumably of much earlier date no record of this pottery occurs till that of Giovanni di Bernardi da Uzzano, the son of a rich Pisan merchant, who in 1442 wrote a treaty on commerce and navigation, published by Paquini, in which he speaks of the manufactures of Majorca and Minorca, particularly mentioning faience which "had then a very large sale in Italy." We have evidence that the principal seat of the manufacture was at Ynca, in the interior of the island; and in confirmation of this discovery some plates have been observed by M. Davillier in collections on which the arms of that island are represented. One is in the hôtel Cluny, and is probably of the fifteenth century. It is Moresque in style with illegible inscriptions in an odd mixture of the Arabic and Gothic characters; the lustre of a red colour and the arms in the centre. These arms are, paly gules and or, on a fess argent a dog in the act of bounding, sable.

There would seem also to have been a fabrique at Iviça for Vargas, in his description of the Balearic islands, says, "It is much to be regretted that Iviça has ceased to make her famous vases of faience, destined for exportation as well as for local consumption." But of their precise nature he gives us no information and we have no knowledge.

The kingdom of VALENCIA in the time of the Romans was noted for its works in pottery; those produced at Saguntum, the present Murviedro, having a great reputation at that period according to Pliny, who mentions the jasper red pottery of Saguntum where 1,200 workmen were employed.

To these, after the occupation of the Goths, succeeded the Arab workmen who accompanied the Mussulman conquest in 711. Again, when the Moors were in 1239 subjected to Christian domination the potters' art was considered of sufficient importance

to claim a special charter from the king, who granted it to the *Saracens* of Xativa, a small town now called San-Felipe. This charter provides that every master potter making vases, domestic vessels, tiles, "rajolas" (an Arabic name for wall-tiles, synonymous with "azulejos"), should pay a "besant" annually and freely pursue his calling.

Sir Wm. Drake in his notes on Venetian ceramics cites an ordinance of the Venetian senate in 1455, declaring that no earthenware works of any kind should be introduced into the dominions of the Signory except crucibles ("*correzzoli*") and *Majolica of Valencia*; an important fact proving the value that was attached to the Spanish lustre wares in Italy in the middle of the fifteenth century. The woodcut p. 81 represents a fine plateau at South Kensington, golden lusted; of about the year 1500.

Marineo Siculo, writing in 1517, devotes a chapter to the utensils and other objects of faience made in Spain, in which he states that "the most esteemed are those of Valencia, which are so well worked and so well gilded;" and Capmany records a decree of the municipal council of Barcelona in 1528 relative to the exportation of faience to Sicily and elsewhere, in which "la loza de Valencia" is named. Again Barreyros a Portuguese, in his "Chorographia," praising the pottery of Barcelona says that it is "even superior" to that of Valencia. The expulsion of the Moors in 1610 by Philip III. gave the fatal blow to this industry, as we learn from contemporary authors that many of the banished artisans were potters ("olleros").

From time immemorial St. John the evangelist has been particularly venerated at Valencia, and in the grand processions of Corpus Christi the emblematic eagle is carried, holding in his beak a banderole on which is inscribed the first sentence of his gospel: "*In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum.*" On some pieces of Hispano-moresque ware this sentence is inscribed, and the eagle sometimes covers the front, sometimes the back. There is therefore reason to infer that these were made in

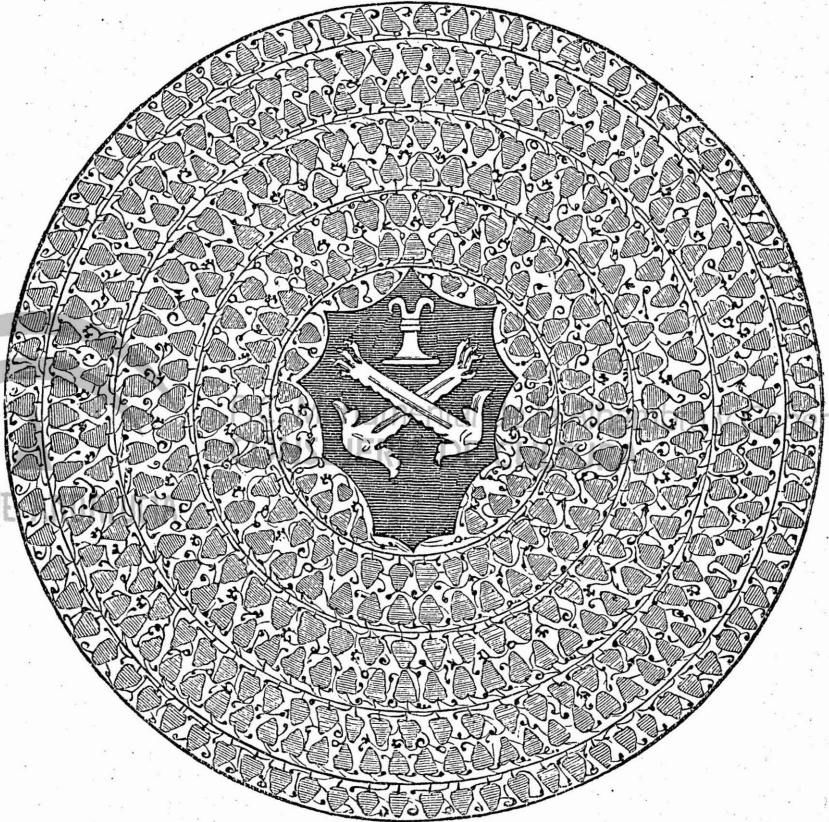
one of the fabriques of Valencia, and if so their style would be to a considerable extent typical of the Valencian pottery. The decoration was probably inspired by the wares of Malaga, and it



is likely that many of the pieces of the fifteenth century, bearing inscriptions in Gothic characters with animals, &c. in blue, may be of this fabrique.

In the British museum is a plate painted with an antelope and Moresque ornament in blue, and with the inscription "**Santa Catalina Guarda Nos:**" others occur, though very rarely, with

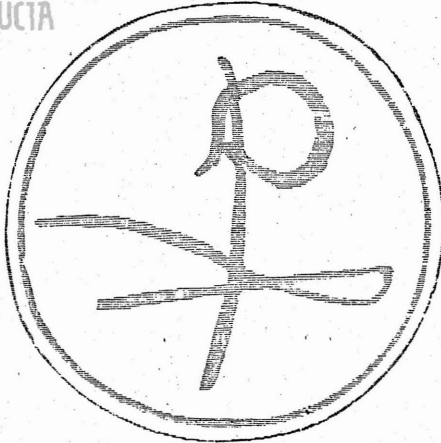
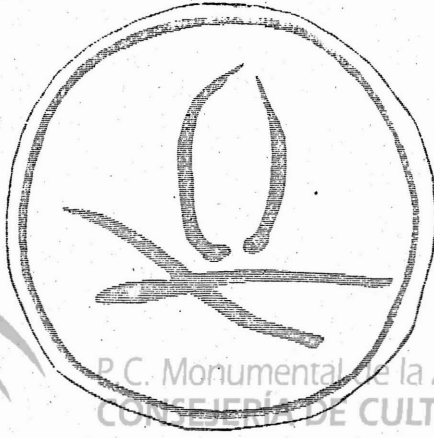
Spanish inscriptions. At the commencement of the 17th century the Valencian wares had lost nearly all their Moresque character, and the employment of the copper lustre only was retained :



the designs having figures in the costumes of that period and coarse leafage or birds with "*rocco*" ornaments.

It would thus appear that the fabrique of Malaga was the most ancient, and that of Valencia the most important in Spain ; but other potteries existed, and their productions were widely distributed. The woodcut represents a Valencian dish with golden

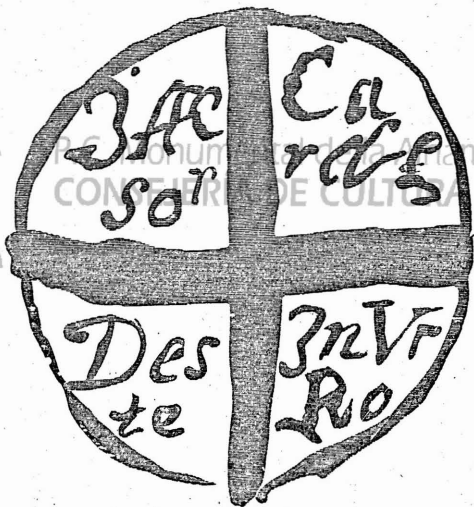
lustre, of the 15th century. That these wares were imported into England is proved by fragments found in London, on one of which, in the British museum, is represented a man in the costume of the period of Henry the fourth, about 1400.



Makers' names have never been observed upon pieces of this pottery, and marks are very rarely met with. The above marks

are on the back of two small plates with deep centres, in which is painted a shield of arms bearing a crowned eagle with open wings in blue, the rest of the surface being diapered with small vine or briony leaves and interlaced tendrils in concentric order, of golden lustre on the creamy white ground.

These pieces are perhaps of the same service, probably of Malaga or Valencia, and may be of the earlier half of the 15th century; they are in the writer's possession. In Mr. Henderson's rich collection is a vase on one side of which is the inscription, of which we give a facsimile :



It reads "Illustrissimo Signore Cardinale D'Este in Urbe Romæ."

Specimens of a lustred ware have been brought from Sicily, differing materially from that of Spain, and perhaps forming a connecting link between that and the earlier Persian pottery. They are formed of an ordinary clay covered with an earthy or stanniferous (?) wash, which is again coated with a rich trans-



lucent blue glaze on which a diapering of vermicular ornament in coppery lustre covers the whole piece, except that the edges and handles are also painted in lustre. This ware is by no means common; it occurs in the form of plates, covered bowls, and "*albarelli*:" and is supposed to be the workmanship of Moorish potters at Calata-Girone.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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

## CHAPTER X.

### ITALIAN POTTERY ; SGRAFFIATI, AND CAFFAGGIOLO.

COMING now to Italian pottery, we must speak first of *sgraffiati*, *graffiti*, or incised wares. This mode of ornamentation is one of the most primitive and universal in a ruder form, although it appears but little on the early glazed wares of our own country ; of those of France a fine example, attributed to the 14th century, is preserved at Sèvres. In Italy, as was the case in all other varieties of pictorial art, it was brought to a high degree of perfection, not merely as a manner of ornamenting pottery but applied on a large scale to mural decoration. It appears to have been in use from an early period, examples of a coarse kind occurring among the plates incrustated in the towers of churches of the 12th and 13th centuries at Pisa and elsewhere, and it was probably in use before or coeval with the earliest painted wares.

Its method as applied to pottery is described by Piccolpasso in his manuscript, and consists in covering the previously baked "biscuit" of ordinary potter's clay with a "slip" or "*engobe*" of the white marl of Vicenza, by dipping it into a bath of that earth milled with water to the consistence of cream ; when dry, this white covering, fixed by a slight baking, is scratched through with an iron instrument shewing the design in the red colour of the clay against the superimposed white ground. It is then covered with an ordinary translucent lead glaze, and clouded with yellow and green by slight application of the oxides of iron and copper.

There appears to be a considerable range in the dates of various specimens in collections, some of which are probably among the