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*REYA OF THE CHOIR*  
*(Seville Cathedral)*



THE  
ARTS AND CRAFTS OF  
OLDER SPAIN

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*VOLUME*  
*ONE*

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## PREFACE

IN preparing these volumes, it has been my aim to give a clear and fairly complete account of the arts and crafts of older Spain. It seems to me that there is room for a work of this design and scope, and that there is no reason why so attractive a subject—or rather, group of subjects—should be perpetually ignored by persons who travel through, or who profess to feel an interest in, the country of the Cid and of Don Quixote.

My account of Spanish pottery is guarded, and yet I trust acceptable. The study of this craft in Spain is far from definite, and fresh researches and discoveries may be hoped for at some future time. The history of Spanish arms has also suffered from unjust neglect. Perhaps my sketch of them may slightly compensate for this deficiency. For the rest, my book, which represents the well-meant assiduity of several years, shall speak for itself.

## PREFACE

Although I was embarrassed by too much material, the illustrations have been chosen with great care, and not, I think, inadequately. Some of the photographs were taken specially for this work. For the loan of others, or for kind assistance generally, I am indebted to Excmo. Señor Don Guillermo J. de Osma, Excmo. Señor Don José Villegas, and Excmo. Señor Don José Moreno Carbonero; to Señores Góngora and Valladar, of Granada; and to Messrs Hauser and Menet, and Mons. Lacoste, of Madrid.

*August, 1907.*

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# Gold, Silver, and Jewel Work



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

THE hyperbolic language of the ancients spoke of Spain as filled throughout, upon her surface and beneath her soil, with precious stones and precious metals. Old writers—Strabo, Pliny, Aristoteles, Pomponius Mela, and Diodorus Siculus—declare that once upon a time a mountain fire, lighted by shepherds in the Pyrenees and fanned into a conflagration by the wind, heated the earth until the ore within her entrails came bubbling to the top and ran away in rivulets of molten gold and silver, spreading all over Spain. The indigens of Lusitania as they dug their fields were said to strike their implements on nuggets half a pound in weight. The heart of the Peninsula, between the Bœtis and the Annas rivers—that is, the country of the Oretani and the Bastitani—was fabled to abound in mines of gold. The traders from Phœnicia, we are told, discovered silver to be so abundant with the Turdetani that “the vilest utensils of this people were composed

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thereof, even to their barrels and their pots." Accordingly these shrewd Phœnicians, offering worthless trinkets in exchange, loaded their ships with silver to the water's edge, and even, when their cargo was complete, fashioned their chains and anchors of the residue.

In spite of their extravagance, upon the whole these legends are not utterly devoid of truth. "Tradition," said so careful an authority as Symonds, "when not positively disproved should be allowed to have its full value; and a sounder historic sense is exercised in adopting its testimony with due caution, than in recklessly rejecting it and substituting guesses which the lack of knowledge renders insubstantial." So with the legends of the gold and silver treasure of the old-time Spaniards. Besides, it seems unquestionable that those fanciful assertions had their origin in fact. Spain stood upon the western border of the ancient world. Year in, year out, the sanguine sun went seething down into the waters at her western marge. Mariners from distant countries viewed those sunsets and associated them with Spain herself. Thus, hereabouts in the unclouded south, would gold and silver be suggested by the solar orb; or emerald and jacinth, pearl and

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amethyst and ruby, by the matchless colours of the seldom-failing sunset.

Then, too, though not of course in fabulous amount, the precious metals actually existed in this land. Various of her rivers, such as the Calom or Darro of Granada, the Tagus, the Agueda, and the Sil, rolled down, together with their current, grains of gold. "Les Mores," wrote Bertaut de Rouen of the first of these rivers, "en tiroient beaucoup autrefois ; mais cela a esté discontinué depuis à cause de la trop grande dépense qu'il y falloit faire. Il est certain que souvent on prend dans le Darro de petits morceaux d'or, et il y a des gens qui sont accôûtuméz d'y en chercher."

Centuries before this abbot wrote his book, the Arab author of the geographical dictionary known as the *Marasid Ithila* had made a similar remark upon this gold-producing stream ; and in the sixteenth century I find an Ordinance of Granada city prohibiting the townspeople from digging up the river-bed unless it were to look for gold.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ordenanza de la Limpieza* (1537), Tit. 9: "We command that nobody remove sand from the aforesaid river Darro unless to extract gold, in which case he shall fill up the holes he made, or pay a fine of fifty *maravedis* for damaging the watercourses that enter this city and the buildings of the Alhambra."

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Probably, however, and in spite of what some chroniclers suppose, the title Darro is not in any way connected with the Latin words *dat aurum*.

“Two leagues from Guadarrama,” wrote the mineralogist William Bowles, about the middle of the eighteenth century, “opposite the town and in the direction of San Ildefonso, is a deep valley where one notices a vein of common quartz containing some iron. Here, without the use of glasses, I perceived a good many grains of gold. . . . In Galicia grains of gold are found on sandy hills, and one is astonished to observe the wonderful works carried out by the Romans to bring the sands together, wash them, and extract the precious metal. Local tradition affirms that this precious sand was destined for the purses of three Roman empresses—Livia, Agrippina, and Faustina. . . . I know a German minister who employed his spare time in washing these sands and collecting the gold.”

The Romans, it is true, profited very greatly by the native wealth of the Peninsula. Helvius enriched the treasury with 14,732 pounds of Spanish silver bars and 17,023 pounds of silver money; Cornelius Lentulus, with 1515 pounds of



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gold, 20,000 pounds of bar-silver, and 34,550 pounds in coin. Cato came back from his pro-consulship with five-and-twenty thousand pounds of silver bars, twelve thousand pounds of silver money, and four hundred pounds of gold. Seventy thousand pounds of coined silver fell to the share of Flaccus, while Minutius exhibited at his triumph eight thousand pounds of silver bars, and three hundred thousand pounds of silver coin.

Mines of silver,<sup>1</sup> gold, and precious stones were also fairly numerous in Spain. Moorish authors wrote enthusiastically of the mines of precious metals in or close to the Sierra Nevada. "Even at this day," said Bowles, "the Moorish mines may be distinguished from the Roman. The Romans made the towers of their fortresses of a round shape, in order to avoid as far as possible the blows of the battering-ram; and their miners, whether from habit or intentionally, made the mouths of their mines round also. The Moors, as strangers to this engine, built their towers square and gave a square shape also to

<sup>1</sup> "I am not aware of any Spanish mine containing silver in a state of absolute purity; though some, I think, would be discovered if they were searched for."—Bowles: *Historia Natural de España*.

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the mouths of their mines. The round mouths of Roman mines are yet to be seen at Riotinto and other places, and the square mouths of Moorish mines in the neighbourhood of Linares."

Emeralds were formerly extracted from a mine at Moron, in the Sierra de Leyta; white sapphires and agates at Cape de Gata,<sup>1</sup> at the eastern extremity of the Gulf of Almeria; amethysts at Monte de las Guardas, near the port of Plata, "in a precipice (*sic*) about twenty feet in depth." According to Laborde, garnets have been discovered down to modern times "in a plain half-way on the road from Almeria to Motril. They are very abundant there, particularly in the bed of a ravine, formed by rain-torrents, at the foot of a little hill, upon which a great number of them are likewise found. The emeralds are in the kingdom of Seville, all the others in that of Granada. It has been said for some time that a pit in the mountain of Bujo, at Cape de Gata, contains a great many precious stones; but none

<sup>1</sup> Possibly, as Bowles suggests, for Cabo de Agata—"Agate Cape." "It would not be strange," he adds, "if diamonds were found at this cape, since there are signs of their presence. I found white sapphires, slightly clouded, together with cornelians, jaspers, agates, and garnets."

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could be found there, notwithstanding the prolonged and careful searches that were lately made."

Silver mines exist, or have existed, at Benasque, Calzena, and Bielza, in Aragon ; at Cuevas, near Almeria ; at Almodovar del Campo ; at Zalamea, in Extremadura ; at Puerto Blanco, in Seville province ; in the Sierra de Guadalupe ; at Fuente de la Mina, near Constantina ; and near Almazarron, in the province of Carthagen. Not far from this latter city was another mine, that sent to Rome a daily yield of five-and-twenty thousand drachmas, and was worked by forty thousand men. Twenty thousand pounds in weight of pure silver proceeded yearly from Asturias, Lusitania, and Galicia. Hannibal extracted from a Pyrenean mine three hundred pounds a day. The fair Himilca, wife of Hasdrubal, was owner of a silver mine at two leagues' distance from Linares. Laborde wrote of this mine : " It was reopened in the seventeenth century, when a vein five feet in breadth was found, from which many pieces of silver were taken ; the working of it, however, has been neglected. It belongs to the town of Baeza."

The same author, who wrote about one hundred

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years ago, gives curious and instructive notices of several other Spanish silver mines. "The mountains of the kingdom of Seville, on the confines of Extremadura, towards Guadalcanal, Alanis, Puerto Blanco, and Cazalla, which form a part of the extremity of the chain of Sierra Morena, contain several silver mines, which have been worked. There is one of these in the Sierra Morena, three miles from Guadalcanal, which to all appearance must have been very rich: there were three shafts for descending, the mouths of which are still to be seen: it was worked in the seventeenth century, and given up in 1653. It is believed that it was inundated by the workmen, in revenge for a new tax that was laid upon them. Another silver mine was also worked formerly, a league and a half from the other; it has a shaft, and a gallery of ancient construction; the vein is six feet in circumference, and is composed of spar and quartz. There is also a third mine, a league and a half from Guadalcanal, and half a league south-east of the village of Alanis, in the middle of a field; it is two feet wide; the Romans constructed a gallery in it, from south to north; a branch of it running eastward has been worked since their time: it originally contained pyrites

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and quartz, but it is by no means rich; there is lead at the bottom."

Gold mines, or traces of them, have been found in the neighbourhood of Molina in Aragon, San Ildefonso in Old Castile, and Alocer in Extremadura; in the Sierra de Leyta; in the valley of Hecho in Aragon; and at Paradeseca and Ponferrada—this latter town the *Interamnium Flavium* of the Romans.

It is said that the chieftains of the ancient Spaniards adorned their robes with rude embroidery worked in gold, and that the men and women of all ranks wore gold and silver bracelets. These statements cannot now be either proved or controverted. Gold or silver objects older than the Roman domination have not been found abundantly in Spain. Riaño describes a silver bowl, conical in shape and evidently fashioned on the wheel, engraved with Iberian characters on one of its sides. A similar bowl was found in Andalusia in the seventeenth century, full of Iberian coins and weighing ten ounces. Gold ornaments, such as earrings, and *torques* or collars for the neck, have been discovered in Galicia less infrequently than in the other Spanish regions, and may be seen to-day in private collections,

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in the Royal Academy of History at Madrid, and in the National Museum of Archæology.<sup>1</sup> Villa-amil y Castro has written fully of these *torques* (Museo Español de Antigüedades, *Adornos de oro encontrados en Galicia*). In nearly every case, he says, they consist of a plain gold bar, C-shaped and therefore not completely closed into a ring, and with a knob at each extremity, as though their pattern were suggested by the yoke of cattle. One or two are decorated with a somewhat rude design extending through a portion of their length.

On one of these occasions a pair of curious, kidney-shaped earrings was found, together with a *torque*. These earrings, apparently of later workmanship than the other ornament, are decorated over all their surface, partly with a filigree design, and partly with a fine, beadlike pattern executed with a small chisel or graving tool in the manner known in French as *fusé*, *guilloché*, or *haché*. Their material is hollow gold, and when discovered they were filled with a substance resembling powdered charcoal, mixed with a metallic clay.

<sup>1</sup> A fresh find of *torques* and *fibulæ* has occurred in the spring of this year at La Moureta, near Ferrol.

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These ornaments are ascribed by most authorities to an undetermined period somewhere previous to the Roman domination. I think, however, that less improbably they were produced by Spanish craftsmen in imitation of the Roman manner, and during the time of Roman rule in the Peninsula. This would account for their deficiencies of execution, and also for certain characteristics which they evidently share with Roman work.

We know that Rome imposed her usages on all the peoples whom she subjugated. Consequently, following this universal law, the Spaniards would adopt, together with the lavish luxury of Rome, the Roman ornaments and articles of jewellery. Such were the *annulus* or finger-ring; the *fibula*, a brooch or clasp for securing the cloak; the *torquis* or neck-ring, more or less resembling those in use among the Persians; and the *phalera*, a round plate of gold, silver, or other metal, engraved with any one of a variety of emblems, worn upon the breast or stomach by the persons of either sex, and very commonly bestowed upon the Roman soldiers in reward of military service. Then there were several kinds of earrings—the variously-designed *stalagnium* or pendant, the

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*inaures*, or the *crotalium*, hung with pearls that brushed together as their wearer walked, and gratified her vanity by their rustling; and also several kinds of bracelets—the gold or bronze *armilla*, principally worn by men; the *periscelis*, the *spathalium*, and the *dextrale*, worn round the fleshy part of the right arm.<sup>1</sup>

Discoveries of Roman jewellery and gold and silver work have occurred from time to time in the Peninsula; for example, at Espinosa de Henares and (in 1840) near Atarfe, on the southern side of the volcanic-looking Sierra Elvira, a few miles from Granada. Riaño describes a Roman silver dish found in a stone quarry at Otañez, in the north of Spain. “It weighs thirty-three ounces, and is covered with an ornamentation of figures in relief, some of which are gilt, representing an allegorical subject of the source of medicinal waters. In the upper part is a nymph who pours

<sup>1</sup> These ornaments were retained in use by the Visigoths, and find their due description in the *Etymologies* of Saint Isidore; *e.g.* :—

“*Inaures* ab aurium foraminibus nuncupatae, quibus pretiosa genera lapidum dependuntur.”

“*Tourques* sunt circuli aurei a collo ad pectus usque dependentes. Torques autem et bullae a viris geruntur; a foeminis vero monilia et catellae.”

“*Fibulae* sunt quibus pectus foeminarum ornatur, vel pallium tenetur: viris in humeris, seu cingulum in lumbris.”



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water from an urn over rocks; a youth collects it in a vessel; another gives a cup of it to a sick man; another fills with it a barrel which is placed in a four-wheeled car to which are yoked two mules. On each side of the fountain are altars on which sacrifices and libations are offered. Round it is the inscription: SALVS VMERITANA, and at the back are engraved, in confused characters, the words: L. P. CORNELIANI. PIII . . . . ”

The same author is of opinion that in the time of the Romans “objects of all kinds in gold and silver were used in Spain to a very great extent, for, notwithstanding the destruction of ages, we still possess inscriptions which allude to silver statues, and a large number of objects in the precious metals exist in museums and private collections.” Doubtless, in the case of articles and household utensils of smaller size—bowls, dishes, and the like, or ornaments for the person—the precious metals were made use of freely; but when we hear of mighty objects as also made of silver, *e.g.* principal portions of a building, we might do well to bear in mind a couple of old columns that were standing once not far from Cadiz, on a spot where in the days preceding history a temple sacred to the Spanish Hercules is rumoured

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to have been. Philostratus affirmed these columns to be wrought of solid gold and silver, mixed together yet in themselves without alloy. Strabo reduced them modestly to brass; but it was reserved for a curious Frenchman, the Père Labat, who travelled in Spain in 1705, to warn us what they really were. “Elles sont sur cette langue de terre, qui joint l’Isle de Léon à celle de Cadix; car il faut se souvenir que c’est ainsi qu’on appelle la partie Orientale, et la partie Occidentale de la même Isle. Il y a environ une lieue de la porte de Terre à ces vénérables restes de l’antiquité. Nous nous en approchames, croyant justifier les contes que les Espagnols en débitent. Mais nous fûmes étrangement surpris de ne pas rencontrer la moindre chose qui pût nous faire seulement soupçonner qu’elles fussent d’une antiquité un peu considérable. Nous vîmes que ces deux tours rondes, qui n’ont à présent qu’environ vingt pieds de hauteur sur douze à quinze pieds de diamètre, étoient d’une maçonnerie fort commune. Leurs portes étoient bouchées, et nous convinmes tous qu’elles avoient été dans leur jeune tems des moulins à vent qu’on avoit abandonnés; il n’y a ni inscriptions, ni bas-reliefs, ni reste de figures quelconques. En un mot, rien qui méritât notre

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attention, ni qui recompensât la moindre partie de la peine que nous avons prise pour les aller voir de près. Car je les avois vue plus d'une fois du grand chemin, où j'avois passé, et je devois me contenter. Mais que ne fait-on pas quand on est curieux, et aussi desœuvré que je l'étois alors."

Many of the usages of Roman Spain descended to the Visigoths. The jewels of this people manifest the double influence of Rome and of Byzantium, and the latter influenced in its turn from Eastern sources. We learn from that extraordinary encyclopædia of early mediæval Spanish lore—the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Beja—that the Visigothic women decked themselves with earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, set with precious stones of fabulous price. Leovigild is stated by the same writer to have been the first of the Visigothic princes to use the insignia of royalty. One of his coins (engraved in Florez) represents him with an imperial crown surmounted by a cross resembling that of the Byzantines. Coins of a similar design, and also bearing the imperial crown, were minted at Toledo, Cordova, or Merida, in the reigns of Chindaswint, Wamba, Ervigius, and Egica.

But the true fountain-head of all our modern

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knowledge respecting the jewellery of Visigothic Spain is in the wonderful crosses, crowns, and other ornaments discovered in 1858 upon the site of some old Christian temple, two leagues distant from Toledo. These objects, known collectively as "the treasure of Guarrazar," were stumbled on by certain peasants after a heavy storm had washed away a quantity of earth. Some were destroyed upon the spot; others were sold to the Toledo silversmiths and melted down by these barbarians of our day; but fortunately the greater part remained intact, or very nearly so. There were in all, composed exclusively of gold and precious stones, eleven crowns, two crosses containing legible inscriptions, fragments such as the arms of a processional cross, and many single stones which time had doubtless separated from the crosses or the crowns.<sup>1</sup>

Part of this treasure passed in some mysterious

<sup>1</sup> There is also in the Archæological Museum at Madrid a small collection of what has been described as Visigothic jewellery, consisting of a handsome *phalera*, necklaces, finger-rings, and earrings. Most of these objects were found at Elche in 1776. The *Museo Español de Antigüedades* published a full description by Florencio Janer. Their interest is by no means as great as that of the treasure of Guarrazar, nor is the date of their production definitely ascertained. From various details I suspect that many of them may be purely Roman.

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way to France, and is now in the Cluny Museum at Paris. The rest is in the Royal Armoury at Madrid. Paris can boast possession of nine of the crowns; Madrid, of two, together with a fragment of a third—this latter of a balustrade or basket pattern. Five of the nine crowns preserved at Paris are fashioned of simple hoops of gold. The most important of the five, the crown of Reccewinth, who ruled in Spain from 650 to 672 A.D., consists of two hinged semicircles of hollow gold, about a finger's-breadth across the interspace. It measures just over eight inches in diameter and four inches in depth. Both the upper and the lower rims are decorated to the depth of nearly half an inch with a design of four-pointed floral or semi-floral figures within minute circles. Amador de los Rios has recognized this same design in the frieze of certain buildings at Toledo, and in the edges of mosaic discovered at Italica and Lugo, as well as in the Balearic Islands. The interstices of this design upon the crown are filled with a kind of red enamel or glaze, the true nature of which has not been definitely ascertained. Riaño calls it "a delicate ornamentation of *cloisonné* work, which encloses a substance resembling red glass." The centre

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of the crown is filled with three rows of large stones, principally pearls and sapphires. There are also several onyxes, a stone which in those days was held in great esteem. The spaces between the rows of stones are ornamented with a somewhat rudimentary design of palm branches, the leaves of which appear to have been filled or outlined with the kind of red enamel I have spoken of.

This crown is suspended by four gold chains containing each of them five leaf-shaped links, *percées à jour*. The chains unite at a gold rosette in the form of a double lily, terminated by a stoutish capital of rock-crystal. This in its turn is capped by another piece of crystal holding the final stem of gold which served as a hook for hanging up the crown. Suspended from the gold rosette by a long chain is a handsome cross, undoubtedly of more elaborate workmanship, studded with union pearls and monster sapphires. Amador believed this ornament to be a brooch. If this were so it is, of course, improperly appended here. Twenty-four gold chains hang from the lower border of the crown, concluding in pyriform sapphires of large size. Each sapphire is surmounted by a small, square frame of gold containing coloured glass, and above this, in each of three-and-twenty

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of the chains, is one of the golden letters forming the inscription, ✚ RECCESVINTHVS REX OFFERET.

Besides this crown there are at Paris—

(1) A similar though slighter crown, the body of which is studded with fifty-four magnificent stones. A cross, now kept apart in the same collection, is thought by Spanish experts to have once been pendent from the crown. If so, the latter was perhaps presented to the sanctuary by one Sonnica, probably a Visigothic magnate, and not a woman, as the termination of the name induced some foreign antiquaries to suppose. The cross is thus inscribed :—

	IN	DĪ
	NOM	
	INE	
OFFERET		SONNICA
	SCE	
	MA	
	RIE	
	INS	
	ORBA	
	CES <sup>1</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> The last word is commonly believed to be the name of a place—*Sorbaces*. There has been much discussion as to its meaning.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

(2) Three crowns of plain design consisting of hoops of gold with primitive *repoussé* decoration, and, in the case of one, with precious stones.

(3) Four crowns, each with a pendent cross. The pattern is a basket-work or set of balustrades of thin gold hollow plates (not, as Riaño stated, massive) with precious stones about the intersections of the bars or meshes, and others hanging from the lower rim. Three of these crowns have three rows or tiers of what I call the balustrade; the other crown has four.

The custom of offering votive crowns to Christian temples was taken by the emperors of Constantinople from heathen peoples of the eastern world. In Spain this custom, introduced by Recared, outlived by many years the ruin of the Visigothic monarchy—survived, in fact, until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Thus in 891 Alfonso the Third presented to the monastery of San Adrian and Santa Natalia four crowns of gold and three of silver, while just a hundred years afterwards Ordoño the Second presented three silver crowns to the monastery of Samos. Other crowns were offered by the prelates and the secular nobility.

Returning to the crowns of Guarrazar, there



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has been great controversy as to whether these were worn upon the head. Some experts think they must have been so worn; and in this case the rings upon the rim, through which the chains are passed, would seem to have been added on the presentation of these objects to the sanctuary. Lasteyrie, on the other hand, considered that the crowns were merely votive and were never meant for personal use, arguing that the rings were fixed about the border from the very moment when the crowns were made;<sup>1</sup> but Amador ingeniously replied to this by pointing out that in a few of the old Castilian coins—for instance, one of Sancho the Third—the crown, with rings about its rim, is actually upon the monarch's head. It is possible, adds the same authority, that these were old votive crowns proceeding from some church, although he thinks it still more likely that they were fashioned with the rings attached to them. We should remember, too, the hinge which serves to open and close the body of these crowns. It is difficult to guess the purpose of this hinge, unless it were to fit the crown more comfortably on the head.

Of that portion of the treasure of Guarrazar

<sup>1</sup> *Description du trésor de Guarrazar.*

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

which has remained at Madrid (Plate i.), the most important object is the votive crown of King Swinthila, son of Recared, and described as "one of the most illustrious and unlucky princes that ever occupied the throne of Atawulf." This crown measures nine inches in diameter by two and a half in height. It consists of thin gold plates united at the edge, leaving, between the inner and the outer side, a hollow space about a quarter of an inch across. The exterior is divided into a central horizontal hoop or band between two others, somewhat narrower, at the top and bottom, these last being slightly raised above the level of the third. A triple row of precious stones, amounting to one hundred and twenty-five pearls and sapphires in the entire crown, surrounds the outer surface of the same, the central band or zone of which contains besides, wrought in *repoussé* on the hoop, a simple circular device wherein each centre is a sapphire or a pearl, though many of these have fallen from their setting. The spaces which describe these circles are superposed on what looks like a red enamel retaining at this moment all or nearly all its pristine brightness of twelve hundred years ago. This substance was believed by French investigators to be a coloured



TREASURE OF GUARRAZAR  
*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



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glass or paste,<sup>1</sup> but Amador, after protracted chemical experiments, declared it to be layers of cornelian. Some of these layers have fallen from their grip, and if the crown be stirred are heard to move within. It is worth remarking, too, that the fillets which form the setting of the precious stones were made apart and welded afterwards; nor are these settings uniform in shape, but tally in each instance with the outline of the gem.

The chains which served for hanging up the crown are four in number. As in the crown of Recceswinth, each of them is composed of four *repoussé* cinquefoil links adorned along their edge with small gold beads minutely threaded on a wire and fastened on by fusing. The chains converge into an ornament shaped like two lilies pointing stem to stem, so that the lower is inverted, although they are divided by a piece of faceted rock crystal.<sup>2</sup> Four gems are hung from

<sup>1</sup> "*Ce que je puis affirmer, après l'examen le plus minutieux, c'est que la matière qui fait le fond de cette riche ornementation est réellement du verre.*"—Lasteyrie, supported by Sommerard.

<sup>2</sup> "In Spain," said Bowles (*Hist. Nat. de Esp.*, p. 498), "are found two species of rock crystal. The one, occurring in clusters, are transparent, six-sided, and always have their source in rocks. There are great quantities all over the kingdom, and at Madrid they are found near the hills of San Isidro. The other species are found singly, and are rounded like a pebble. I have seen them from the size of a

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

either lily, and issuing from the uppermost of these a strong gold hook attaches to the final length of chain.

Possibly the chain and cross now hanging through the circuit of the crown were not originally part of it. This cross is most remarkable. It has four arms of equal length, gracefully curved, and is wrought of plates of gold in duplicate, fastened back to back by straps of gold along the edges. The centre holds a piece of crystal in the midst of pearls and gold bead work threaded on a wire of the same metal and attached by fusion. Several fairly large stones are hung from the lateral and lower arms of the cross by small gold chains.

The letters hanging from Swinthila's crown are cut and punched from thin gold plates. Their decoration is a zigzag ornament backed by the same mysterious crimson substance as the circular devices on the hoop. Hanging from the letters are pearls, sapphires, and several imitation stones—particularly imitation emeralds—in paste.

filbert to that of my fist. Some were covered with a thin, opaque integument. . . . The river Henares abounds with these crystals, and as it passes San Fernando, at two leagues' distance from Madrid, sweeps some of them along which are the size of the largest ones at Strasburg, though very few are perfect."

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

The cross before the letters points to a custom of that period. We find it also on Swinthila's coins, and those of other Visigothic kings. Of the letters themselves twelve have been recovered, thus :—

✠ SV TI NV REX OFF T

The chains, however, or fragments of them, amount to twenty-three—precisely (if we count the cross) the number needed to complete the dedication.<sup>1</sup>

The Royal Armoury contains another crown, a great deal smaller and less ornamented than Swinthila's. The body of this crown, which was presented by the finder to the late Queen Isabella the Second, is just a hoop of gold, two inches deep and five across, hinged like the more elaborate and larger crowns, but merely decorated

<sup>1</sup> A veritable cryptogram awaited the decipherers of these legends. When King Swinthila's crown was brought to light, four of the letters only were in place, thus :—

✠ . . . . . I . . . . V . R . . . . F . . . .

Eight of the others were recovered shortly after ; two more, an E and L, appeared at a later date, and eight continued to be missing. The inscription dangling from the crown of Recceswinth arrived at Paris in this eloquent form :—

✠ RRCCEFEVINSTVSETORHFEX

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with a fine gold spiral at the rims, a zigzag pattern in *repoussé*, and a rudely executed scale-work. The dedication on this cross is in the centre of the hoop, and says—

✠ OFFERET MVNVSCVLVM SC̄O STEFANO  
THEODOSIVS ABBĀ

We do not know who Theodosius was, but Amador, judging from the simple decoration of this crown, believes him to have been a priest of lower rank, and by no means a dignitary of the Visigothic church.

A votive cross also forms part of this collection, which has a simple sunk device along the edges and seven pendent stones, two of these hanging from each of the lateral arms, and three, a little larger, from the lower arm. The inscription, which is rough in the extreme, appears to be the work of some illiterate craftsman, and has been interpreted with difficulty :—

IN NOMINE DEI: IN NOMINE SC̄I OFFERET  
LUCETIUS E

This reading gives an extra letter at the end, which may be construed as *Episcopus*—or anything else, according to the student's fancy.



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

I may close my notice of this collection in the Royal Armoury at Madrid by drawing attention to a greenish, semi-opaque stone, three-quarters of an inch in height. It is engraved *en creux* upon two facets with the scene of the Annunciation. The gem itself is commonly taken for an emerald, of which, referring to the glyptic art among the Visigoths, the learned Isidore remarked that "*Sculpentibus quoque gemmas nulla gratior oculorum refectio est.*" I shall insert a sketch of the cutting on this stone as a tailpiece to the chapter, and here append a full description. "The Virgin listens standing to the Archangel Gabriel, who communicates to her the will of the Almighty. Before her is a jar, from which projects the stem of a lily, emblematic of the chaste and pure, that reaches to her breast. Her figure is completely out of measurement. Upon her head appears to be a *nimbus* or *amiculum*; her breast is covered with a broad and folded *fascia*, enveloping her arms, while her tunic, reaching to the ground, conceals one of her feet. The angel in the cutting on the stone is at the Virgin's right. His attitude is that of one who is conveying tidings. Large wings folded upon his shoulders and extending nearly to the

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ground are fitted to his form, better drawn and livelier than the Virgin's. He executes his holy mission with his right hand lifted. His dress is a tunic in small folds, over which is a cloak fastened by a brooch and fitting closely. Upon his head he wears a kind of helmet."<sup>1</sup>

The drawing of this design upon the stone is most bizarre and barbarous ; for the Virgin's head is so completely disproportioned that it forms the one-third part of her entire person.

The merit of all this Visigothic gem or gold and silver work has been extolled too highly by the French and Spanish archæologists.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, greatly interesting. Rudely and ponderously magnificent, it tells us of a people who as yet were almost wholly strangers to the true artistic sense. Such were the Visigoths and the Spaniards of the Visigothic era, of all of whom I have observed elsewhere that "serfdom was the dis-

<sup>1</sup> Amador de los Rios, *El Arte latino-bizantino en España y las Coronas Visigodas de Guarrazar*, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Sommerard : " *Une collection sans égale de bijoux les plus précieux qui, par la splendeur de la matière, le mérite de l'exécution, et plus encore, peut être, par leur origine incontestable et par leur étonnante conservation, surpassent tout ce qui possèdent d'analogue les collections publiques de l'Europe et les trésors les plus renommés de l'Italie.*"

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

tinguishing mark of the commons ; arrogance, of the nobility ; avarice, and ambition of temporal and political power, of the clergy ; regicide and tumult, of the crown.”<sup>1</sup> These crowns of Guarrazar proclaim to us in plainest language that the volume of the stones, and showiness and glitter of the precious metal were accorded preference of every other factor—the *pondus auri* preference of the *manus artificis*. We gather, too, from documents and chronicles and popular tradition, that the Visigothic princes, as they set apart their stores of treasure in secluded caves or in the strong rooms of their palaces, were ever captivated and corrupted by the mere intrinsic worth in opposition to the nobler and æsthetic value of the craftsmanship.

Thus we are told that Sisenand owned a plate of gold (no word is said of its design or style) five hundred pounds in weight, proceeding from the royal treasure of his race, and which, long years before, had been presented by the nobleman Accio to King Turismund. When Sisenand was conspiring to dethrone Swinthila, he called on Dagobert the king of France to come to his support, and promised him, as recompense, this golden plate. The French king lent his help

<sup>1</sup> *Toledo and Madrid* ; p. 16.

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forthwith, and then, as soon as Turismund was seated on the throne of Spain, despatched an embassy to bring the coveted vessel to his court. Sisenand fulfilled his word and placed the envoys in possession of the plate, but since his subjects, rising in rebellion, wrenched it from their power and kept it under custody, he compensated Dagobert by a money payment of two hundred thousand *sueldos*.<sup>1</sup>

Innumerable narratives and legends dwell upon the treasure taken by the Moors on entering Spain. Such as relate the battle of the Guadalete, or the Lake of Janda (as it is also called by some authorities), agree that when the fatal day was at an end the riderless steed of Roderick was found imbedded in the mire, wearing a saddle of massive gold adorned with emeralds and rubies. According to Al-Makkari, that luckless monarch's boots were also made of gold studded with precious stones, while the Muslim victors, stripping the Visigothic dead, identified the nobles by the golden rings upon their fingers, those of a less exalted rank by their silver rings, and the slaves by their rings of copper. The widow of the fallen king was

<sup>1</sup> *Ajbar Machmua*. Lafuente y Alcántara's edition ; p. 27, note.

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also famous for her stores of jewellery. Her name was Eila or Egilona (Umm-Asim of the Moors), but she was known besides as "the lady of the beautiful necklaces." After being made a prisoner she was given in marriage to the young prince Abd-al-Azis, who grew to love her very greatly, and received from her, "seeing that she still retained sufficient of her royal wealth," the present of a crown.

Muza, on returning to the East, is said to have drawn near to Damascus with a train of thirty waggons full of Spanish silver, gold, and precious stones. Tarik ben Ziyed, marching in triumph through the land, secured at Cordova, Amaya, and other towns and capitals, enormous store of "pearls, arms, dishes, silver, gold, and other jewels in unprecedented number." One object, in particular, is mentioned with insistency by nearly all the chronicles, both Mussulman and Christian. Quoting from the *Pearl of Marvels* of Ibn Alwardi, this was "the table which had belonged to God's prophet, Solomon (health be to both of them). It was of green emeralds, and nothing fairer had been ever seen before. Its cups were golden and its plates of precious jewels, one of them specked with black

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and white." All manner of strange things are said about this table, though most accounts describe it as consisting of a *single* emerald. Perhaps it was of malachite, or of the bright green serpentine stone extracted formerly as well as nowadays from the Barranco de San Juan at Granada, and several other spots in Spain. Bayan Almoghreb says it was of gold mixed with a little silver and surrounded by three gold rings or collars; the first containing pearls, the second rubies, and the third emeralds. Al-Makkari describes it as "green, with its 365 feet and borders of a single emerald." Nor is it known for certain where this "table" fell into the hands of Tarik. Probably he found it in the principal Christian temple at Toledo—that is to say, the Basilica of Santa María. Ibn Alwardi says that in the *aula regia*, or palace of the Visigothic kings, the lancers of the Moorish general broke down a certain door, discovering "a matchless quantity of gold and silver plate," together with the "table." Doubtless this strong room was the same referred to in the following lines. "It was for ever closed; and each time that a Christian king began to reign he added to its door a new and powerful fastening. In this way as many as

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four and twenty padlocks were gathered on the door.”

However, the most explicit and informative of all these ancient authors is Ibn Hayyan, who says ; “ The table had its origin in the days of Christian rulers. It was the custom in those times that when a rich man died he should bequeath a legacy to the churches. Proceeding from the value of these gifts were fashioned tables, thrones, and other articles of gold and silver, whereon the clergy bore the volumes of their gospel when they showed them at their ceremonies. These objects they would also set upon their altars to invest them with a further splendour by the ornament thereof. For this cause was the table at Toledo, and the [Visigothic] monarchs vied with one another in enriching it, each of them adding somewhat to the offerings of his predecessor, till it surpassed all other jewels of its kind and grew to be renowned exceedingly. It was of fine gold studded with emeralds, pearls, and rubies, in such wise that nothing similar had ever been beheld. So did the kings endeavour to increase its richness, seeing that this city was their capital, nor did they wish another to contain more splendid ornaments or furniture. Thus was

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the table resting on an altar of the church, and here the Muslims came upon it, and the fame of its magnificence spread far abroad."

Another chronicle affirms that Tarik found the "table" at a city called Almeida, now perhaps Olmedo. "He reached Toledo, and leaving a detachment there, advanced to Guadalajara and the [Guadarrama] mountains. These he crossed by the pass which took his name, and reached, upon the other side, a city called Almeida or *The Table*, for there had been discovered the table of Solomon the son of David, and the feet and borders of it, numbering three hundred and sixty-five, were of green emerald."

In any case this venerated jewel gave considerable trouble to its captors. When envious Muza followed up the march of Tarik, his lieutenant, he demanded from him all the spoil, and in particular the ever-famous table. Tarik surrendered this forthwith, but after slyly wrenching off a leg. Muza perceived the breakage, and inquired for the missing piece. "I know not," said the other; "'twas thus that I discovered it." Muza then ordered a new leg of gold to be made for the table, as well as a box of palm leaves, in which it was deposited. "This," says Ibn Hayyan,



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“is known to be one of the reasons why Tarik worsted Muza in the dispute they had before the Caliph as to their respective conquests.” So it proved. Ibn Abdo-l-Haquem<sup>1</sup> relates that Muza appeared before the Caliph Al-Walid and produced the table. Tarik interposed and said that he himself had taken it, and not the other leader. “Give it into my hands,” the Caliph answered, “that I may see if any piece of it be wanting,” and found, indeed, that one of its feet was different from the rest. “Ask Muza,” interrupted Tarik, “for the missing foot, and if he answer from his heart, then shall his words be truth.” Accordingly Al-Walid inquired for the foot, and Muza made reply that he had found the table as it now appeared; but Tarik with an air of triumph drew forth the missing piece which he himself had broken off, and said: “By this shall the Emir of the Faithful recognize that I am speaking truth; that I it was who found the table.” And thereupon Al-Walid credited his words and loaded him with gifts.

Comparing the statements of these writers, we may be certain that the “table” was a kind of

<sup>1</sup> *Account of the Conquest of Spain*, published, with an English translation and notes, by John Harris Jones. London, 1858.

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desk of Visigothic or, more probably, Byzantine workmanship, for holding the gospels on the feast-days of the national church. Probably, too, seeing that a palm-leaf box was strong enough to keep it in, its size was inconsiderable. Its value, on the statement of Ibn Abdo-l-Haquem, was two hundred thousand *dinaves*.

The sum of my remarks upon the Visigothic jewel-work is this. Distinguished by a coarse though costly splendour, we find in it a mingled Roman and Byzantine source, although it was upon the whole inferior to these styles, being essentially, as Amador observes, "an imitative and decadent art." Yet it did not succumb before the Moors, but lurked for refuge in the small Asturian monarchy, and later, issuing thence, extended through the kingdom of León into Castile. We find its clearest characteristics in such objects as the Cross of Angels and the Cross of Victory. Then, later still, it is affected and regenerated by the purely oriental art of the invader; and lastly, till the wave of the Renaissance floods the western world, by Gothic influences from across the Pyrenees.

A similar sketch may be applied to other arts and crafts of Spain — particularly furniture and architecture.



THE CROSS OF ANGELS  
*(Oriedo Cathedral)*



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The pious or superstitious kings and magnates of this land have always taken pride in adding (at the instigation of the clergy) to the treasure of her churches and cathedrals. Such gifts include all kinds of sumptuous apparel for the priesthood; chasubles and dalmatics heavily embroidered with the precious metals, gold or silver crowns and crosses, paxes,<sup>1</sup> chalices and patines, paraments and baldaquinos, reliquaries in every shape and style and size, and figures of the Virgin—such as those of Lugo, Seville, Astorga, and Pamplona—consisting of elaborate silver-work upon a wooden frame. Visitors to Spain, from leisurely Rosmithal five hundred years ago to time-economizing tourists of our century, have been continually astonished at the prodigal richness of her sanctuaries. Upon this point I quote

<sup>1</sup> The pax or osculatory used in celebrating High Mass is commonly, says Rosell de Torres, “a plate of gold or ivory, or other metal or material, according to the time and circumstances of its manufacture. The priest who celebrates the Mass kisses it after the *Agnus Dei* and the prayer *ad petendam pacem*, and the acolytes present it, as a sign of peace and brotherly union, to all the other priests who may be present. This usage springs from the kiss of peace which was exchanged, prior to receiving the communion, between the early Christians in their churches. The pax has commonly borne an image of the Virgin with the Holy Infant, the face of Christ, or else the *Agnus Dei*.” Its Latin name was the *deosculatorium*.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

a typical extract from the narrative of Bertaut de Rouen. "The treasure of this church," he said of Montserrat, "is wonderfully precious, and particularly so by reason of two objects that belong to it. The first is a crown of massive gold of twenty pounds in weight, covered with pearls, with ten stars radiating from it also loaded with large pearls and diamonds of extraordinary value. This crown took forty years to make, and is valued at two millions of gold money. The second object is a gold crown entirely covered with emeralds, most of them of an amazing size. Many are worth five thousand crowns apiece. The reliquary, too, is of extraordinary richness, as also a service of gold plate studded with pearls, donated by the late emperor for use in celebrating Mass."

Similar accounts to the above exist in quantities, relating to every part of Spain and every period of her history.

Reverting to the earlier Middle Ages, a few conspicuous objects thus presented to the Spanish Church require to be briefly noted here. Famous chalices are those of Santo Domingo de Silos (eleventh century), made to the order of Abbot Domingo in honour of San Sebastian, and

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showing the characteristic Asturian filigree-work ; and of San Isidoro of León, made in 1101 by order of Urraca Fernandez, sister of the fourth Alfonso. The latter vessel, inscribed with the dedication of *Urraca Fredinandi*, has an agate cup and foot. A remarkably handsome silver-gilt chalice and patine (thirteenth century) belong to Toledo cathedral. The height of this chalice is thirteen inches, and the diameter of its bowl, which has a conical shape, eight and a half inches. Inside and out the bowl is smooth, but midway between the bowl and the foot is a massive knot or swelling in the stem, and on the knot the emblematic lion, eagle, bull, and angel are chiselled in high relief. Below the knot is a ring of graceful rosettes. The patine which accompanies this chalice measures twelve inches in diameter. It has upon it, thinly engraved within a slightly sunk centre with a scalloped edge, the figure of Christ upon the cross, between the Virgin and St John. This central group of figures and the border of the plate are each surrounded with a narrow strip of decoration.

The cathedral of Valencia has a beautiful and early cup asserted to be the veritable Holy Grail (*greal*, *garal*, or *gradal*, in the old Castilian), " of

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

which," wrote Ford with his accustomed irony, "so many are shown in different orthodox *relicarios*." However this may be, the chalice of Valencia is particularly handsome. According to Riaño it consists of "a fine brown sardonyx which is tastefully moulded round the lip. The base is formed of another inverted sardonyx. These are united by straps of pure gold. The stem is flanked by handles, which are inlaid with delicate arabesque in black enamel. Oriental pearls are set round the base and stem, which alternate with rubies, sapphires, and emeralds. This chalice is a work of the Roman imperial epoch, and the mounts are of a later date."

A series of Spanish chalices, beginning chronologically with specimens which date from the early Middle Ages, and terminating with the chalice, made in 1712, of Santa María la Blanca of Seville, was shown in 1892 at the Exposición Histórico-Europea of Madrid. Among the finer or most curious were chalices proceeding from the parish church of Játiva, Las Huelgas, and Seville cathedral, and the Plateresque chalices of Calatayud, Granada, and Alcalá de Henares. Another chalice which is greatly interesting because of the date inscribed on it, is one which was presented



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to Lugo cathedral by a bishop of that diocese, Don Garcia Martinez de Bahamonde (1441-1470). The workmanship, though prior to the sixteenth century, is partly Gothic. An article by José Villa-amil y Castro, dealing with all these chalices, will be found in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones* for April, 1893.

A small exhibition was held at Lugo in August 1896. Here were shown sixteen chalices, nearly all of them of merit from the point of view of history or art. Such are the chalice of San Rosendo, proceeding from the old monastery of Celanova; the Gothic chalices of Tuy cathedral, Lugo cathedral, Santa María del Lucio, Santa Eulalia de Guilfrei, San Pedro de Puertomarín, and the Franciscan friars of Santiago; and the chalice and patine of Cebrero (twelfth century), in which it is said that on a certain occasion in the fifteenth century the wine miraculously turned to actual blood, and the Host to actual flesh, in order to convince a doubting priest who celebrated service.

The Cross of Angels and the Cross of Victory—presents, respectively, from Alfonso the Chaste and Alfonso the Great—are now preserved at Oviedo, in the Camara Santa of that stately

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temple. The former of these crosses, fancied by credulous people to be the handiwork of angels—whence its title<sup>1</sup>—was made in A.D. 808. It consists of four arms of equal length, radiating from a central rosette (Pl. ii.). The core or *alma* is of wood covered with a double plate of richly decorated gold, chased in the finest filigree (indicative already of the influence of Cordova) and thickly strewn with sapphires, amethysts, topazes, and cornelians. Other stones hung formerly from six small rings upon the lower border of the arms. The cross is thus inscribed:—

*“Susceptum placide maneat hoc in honore Dei  
Offeret Adefonsus humilis servus Xti  
Hoc signo tuetur pius  
Hoc signo vincitur inimicus.*

<sup>1</sup> This marvel is related by the Monk of Silos. A quotation from another of my books is applicable here. “Last year,” I wrote in 1902—(pp. 64, 65 of *Toledo and Madrid: Their Records and Romances*)—“the young King Alfonso the Thirteenth paid a visit to Oviedo cathedral, and was duly shown the relics and the jewels. Among these latter was the ‘Cross of the Angels.’

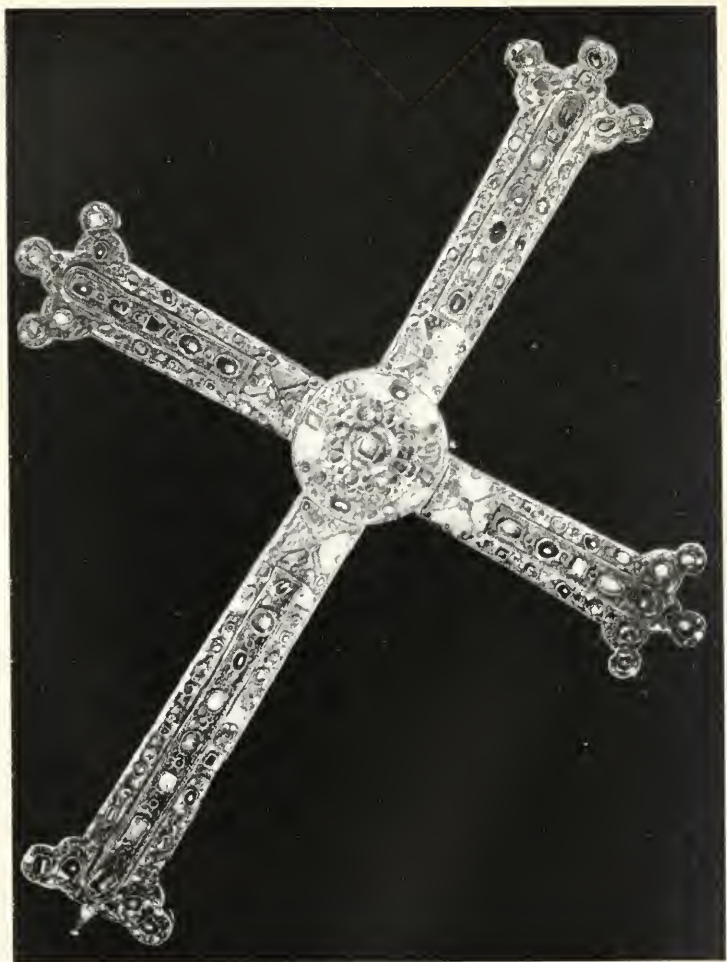
“‘Why is it so called?’ inquired the king.

“‘Because,’ replied the bishop of the diocese, ‘it is said that the angels made it to reward King Alfonso the Chaste.’

“‘Well, but,’ insisted the young monarch, ‘what ground is there for thinking so?’

“‘Señor,’ replied the prelate, ‘none whatever. *The time for traditions is passing away.*’”





THE CROSS OF VICTORY  
*(Oviedo Cathedral)*

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*Quisquis auferre presumpserit mihi  
Fulmine divino intereat ipse  
Nisi libens ubi voluntas dederit mea  
Hoc opus perfectum est in Era DCCXLVI."*

The other cross (Pl. iii.) is more than twice as large, and measures just one yard in height by two feet four and a half inches in width. Tradition says that the primitive, undecorated wooden core of this cross was carried against the Moors by King Pelayo. The ornate casing, similar to that upon the Cross of Angels, was added later, and contains 152 gems and imitation gems. The following inscription tells us that this casing was made at the Castle of Gauzon in Asturias, in the year 828:—

*"Susceptum placide maneat hoc in honore Dei, quod  
offerent  
Famuli Christi Adefonsus princeps et Scemaena  
Regina ;  
Quisquis auferre hoc donoria nostra presumpserit  
Fulmine divino intereat ipse.  
Hoc opus perfectum et concessum est  
Santo Salvatori Oventense sedis.  
Hoc signo tuetur pius, hoc vincitur inimicus  
Et operatum est in castello Gauzon anno regni nostri.  
XLII. discurrente Era DCCCLXVI."*

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

These crosses are processional. Others which were used for the same purpose are those of San Sebastián de Serrano (Galicia), San Munio de Veiga, Santa María de Guillar (Lugo), San Mamed de Fisteos, and Santa María de Arcos. The five preceding crosses are of bronze ; those of Baamorto and San Adriano de Lorenzana are respectively of silver, and of wood covered with silver plates, and all were shown at the Lugo exhibition I have spoken of.

Besides the Cross of Victory or Pelayo, and the Cross of Angels, interesting objects preserved at Oviedo are a small diptych presented by Bishop Don Gonzalo (A.D. 1162-1175), and the *Arca Santa* used for storing saintly relics. This beautiful chest, measuring three feet nine inches and a half in length by twenty-eight inches and a half in height, is considered by Riaño to be of Italian origin, and to date from between the tenth and twelfth centuries.

Another handsome box belonging to the cathedral of Astorga was once upon a time the property of Alfonso the Third and his queen Jimena, whose names it bears—ADEFONSVS REX : SCEMENA REGINA. The workmanship is consequently of the close of the ninth or the beginning

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

of the tenth century. The material is wood covered with *repoussé* silver plates on which are figured angels and birds, together with the eagle and the ox as emblems of the evangelists John and Luke, whose names are also to be read upon the casket.

Next to the sword, no object in the history of mediæval Spain was more profoundly popular or venerated than the *relicario*. This in its primitive form was just a small receptacle, such as a vase or urn of gold or silver, ivory or crystal, used by the laity or clergy for treasuring bones, or hairs, or other relics of the Virgin, or the Saviour, or the saints. In private families a holy tooth, or toe, or finger thus preserved would often, as though it were some Eastern talisman, accompany its credulous possessor to the battlefield.

As time went on, the urn or vase was commonly replaced by chests or caskets made by Moorish captives, or by tranquil and respected Moorish residents within the territory of the Christian,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In many towns a hearty friendship sprang up between the Spaniard and the Moor. This was a natural consequence in places where the vanquished had a better education than the victor. The warrior population of both races might be struggling on the field at the same moment that their craftsmen were fraternizing in the workshop. Ferdinand the First and Alfonso the Sixth

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

or wrested from the infidel in war and offered by the Spanish kings or nobles to their churches. Here they were kept on brackets, or suspended near the altar by a chain<sup>1</sup> of silver, gold, or iron. Among the Moors themselves such chests and caskets served, according to their richness or capacity, for storing perfumes, clothes, or jewels, or as a present from a bridegroom to his bride; and since the sparsely-furnished Oriental room contains no kind of wardrobe, cabinet, or chest of drawers, their use in Moorish parts of Spain was universal.

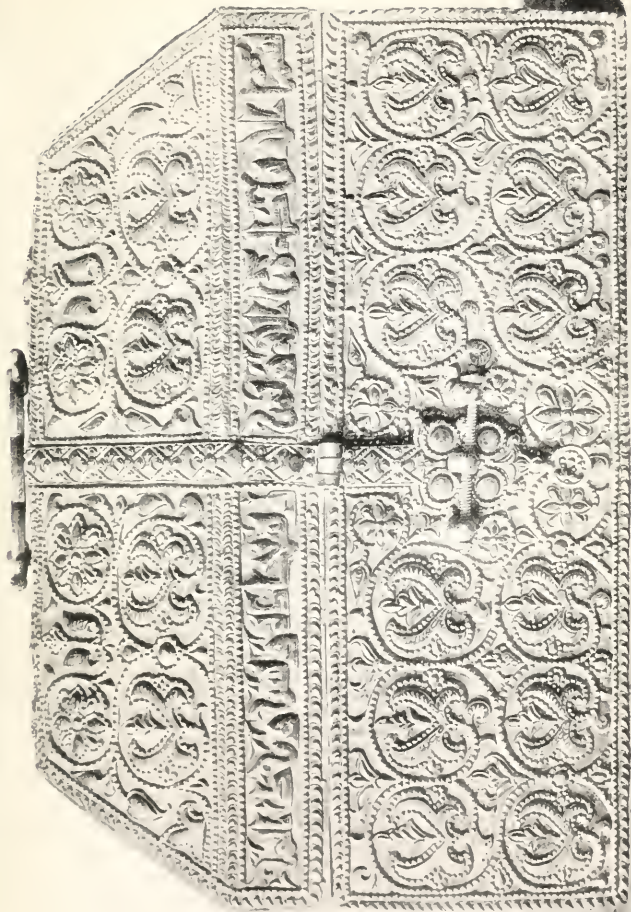
A typical Moorish casket of this kind (Plate iv.) is now in the cathedral of Gerona. It measures fifteen inches in length by nine across, fastens with a finely ornamented band and clasp of bronze, and is covered with thin silver-gilt plates profusely decorated with a bead and floral pattern superposed upon a box of non-decaying wood—

were particularly lenient in their usage of the dominated Muslim. Thus, the former of these princes recognised the Moorish townspeople of Sena as his vassals, while those of Toledo were freely allowed by Alfonso to retain their worship and their mosque.

<sup>1</sup> “*Fallaron ay de marfil arquetas muy preçiadadas  
Con tantas de noblezas que non podrian ser contadas  
Fueron para San Pedro las arquetas donadas;  
Están en este día en el su altar asentadas.*”

Poem of FERRAN GONZALVEZ (13th century).





MOOKISH CASKET

*(Girvan Cathibral)*



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

possibly larch or cedar. A Cufic inscription along the lower part of the lid was formerly interpreted as follows :—

“In the name of God. (May) the blessing of God, prosperity and fortune and perpetual felicity be (destined) for the servant of God, Alhakem, Emir of the Faithful, because he ordered (this casket) to be made for Abdul Walid Hischem, heir to the throne of the Muslims. It was finished by the hands of Hudzen, son of Bothla.”

It is supposed, however, that the part of this inscription which contains the maker's name was rendered incorrectly by Riaño, who followed, on this point, Saavedra, Fita, and other archæologists ; and that the casket was made to the order of Djaudar, as a gift to the heir to the throne, Abulwalid Hischem, the actual workmen being two slaves, Bedr and Tarif. That is to say, the name Hudzen is now replaced by Djaudar, whom Dozy mentions in his history of the Mussulman domination in Spain, and who is known to have been a eunuch high in favour with Alhakem, Hischem's father. These princes ruled at Cordova in the latter half of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh.

Spanish-Moorish caskets (*arquetas*) of ivory,

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

silver, or inlaid work, are also preserved in the South Kensington Museum, the Archæological Museum at Madrid, and the cathedrals of Braga, Tortosa, and Oviedo. There is no reason to doubt that all these boxes were made in Spain, although an Eastern and particularly Persian influence is very noticeable in their scheme of decoration.

Two silver caskets which were once in the church of San Isidoro at León are now in the Madrid Museum. The smaller and plainer of the two, elliptical in shape and measuring five inches in length by two inches and a half in depth, is covered with a leaf and stem device outlined in black enamel. A Cufic inscription of a private and domestic import, also picked out with black enamel, runs along the top. The lid is ornamented, like the body of the box, with leaves and stems surrounded by a Grecian border, and fastens with a heart-shaped clasp secured by a ring.

The other, more elaborate, and larger box measures eight inches long by five in height. In shape it is a parallelogram, with a deeply bevelled rather than—as Amador describes it—a five-sided top. Bands of a simple winding pattern outlined in black enamel on a ground of delicate niello-

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

work run round the top and body of the casket. The central band upon the lower part contains a Cufic inscription of slight interest. Some of the letters terminate in leaves. The bevelled lid is covered with groups of peacocks—symbolic, among Mohammedans, of eternal life—outlined in black enamel. These birds are eight in all, gathered in two groups of four about the large and overlapping hinges. Four leaves, trifoliate, in *repoussé*, one beneath the other, decorate the clasp, which opens out into a heart containing, also in *repoussé*, two inverted peacocks looking face to face. Between the birds this heart extremity is pierced for the passage of a ring.

Amador de los Ríos considers that both caskets were made between the years 1048 and 1089.

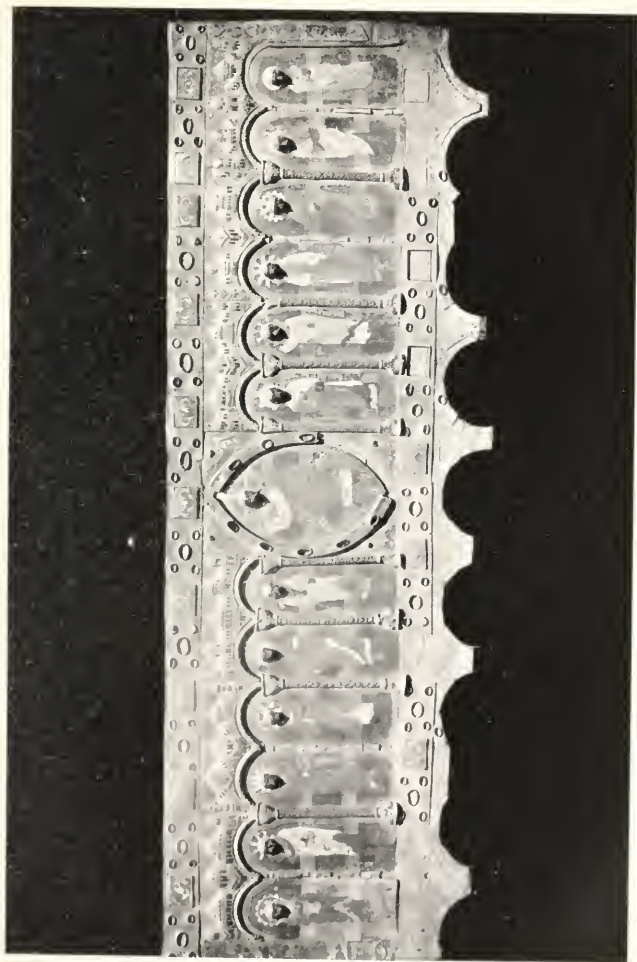
The use of coloured enamel in the manufacture of these boxes dates, or generally so, from somewhat later. Although the history of enamelling in Spain is nebulous and contradictory in the extreme, we know that caskets in *champlevé* enamel on a copper ground, with figures either flat or hammered in a bold relief, became abundant here. Two, from the convent of San Marcos at León, and dating from the thirteenth century, are now in the Madrid Museum. Labarte says that the lids of

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

these enamelled reliquaries were flat until the twelfth century, and of a gable form thenceforward.

Other old objects—boxes, triptyches, statuettes, incensories, book-covers, crucifixes, and processional crosses—partly or wholly covered with enamel, belong or recently belonged to the Marquises of Castrillo and Casa-Torres, the Count of Valencia de Don Juan, and Señor Escanciano. All, or nearly all, of these are thought to have proceeded from Limoges (Pl. v.). *Champlevé* enamel is also on the tiny “Crucifix of the Cid” (Pl. vi.) at Salamanca, as well as on the Virgin’s throne in the gilt bronze statuette of the Virgin de la Vega at San Esteban in the same city.<sup>1</sup> Of this image,

<sup>1</sup> Together with the statuette of Ujué in Navarre, the Virgin de la Vega of Salamanca may be classed as one of the earliest “local Virgins” of this country. Sometimes these images are of wood alone, sometimes of wood beneath a silver covering, sometimes, as that of the Claustro de León, of stone. But whatever may be the substance, the characteristics are the same:—Byzantine rigidity and disproportion, the crude and primitive anatomy of artists only just emerging from the dark. The Virgin and Child of Santa María la Real of Hirache in Navarre may be instanced as another of the series. This image dates from late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century, although a crown and nimbus have been added subsequently. It measures rather more than a yard in height, and consists of wood covered with silver plates, except the hands and face, which are painted. The Virgin, seated, holds



ALTAR-FRONT IN ENAMELLED BRONZE  
(14th Century, *Museum of Burgos*)





## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

although it properly belongs to another heading of my book, I think it well to give a reproduction here (Plate vii.). I will also mention, in spite of its presumably foreign origin, the enamelled altar-front of San Miguel de Excelsis in Navarre—a small sanctuary constructed by a mediæval cavalier who, by an accident occasioned by the dark, murdered his father and mother in lieu of his wife.<sup>1</sup> This altar-front, conspicuously Byzantine in its style, measures four feet three inches high by seven feet five inches long, and is now employed as the *retablo* of the little church which stands in solitary picturesqueness on the lofty mountain-top of Aralar. The figures, coloured in relief upon a yellowish enamel ground, are those of saints, and of a monarch and his queen—possibly King Sancho the Great, who is believed to have been the donor of the ornament. If this surmise be accurate, the front would date from the eleventh century.

I have said that the history of Spanish enamel-

the Infant with her left arm ; in her right hand is an apple. A kind of stole bearing the following inscription in Gothic letter falls upon the Infant's breast ; "*Puer natus est nobis, venite adoremus. Ego sum alpha et omega, primus et novissimus Dominus.*" Before this statuette the King Don Sancho is stated to have offered his devotion.

<sup>1</sup> I quote this legend in Appendix A.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

work is both confused and scanty. The subject in its general aspects has been studied by M. Roulin, whose judgments will be found in the *Revue de l'Art Ancien et Moderne*, and in his article, "Mobilier liturgique d'Espagne," published in the *Revue de l'Art Chrétien* for 1903. M. Roulin believes the altar-front of San Miguel in Excelsis to be a Limoges product, not earlier than the first half of the thirteenth century.

Ramírez de Arellano declares that no enamelling at all was done in Spain before the invasion of the Almohades. López Ferreiro, who as a priest had access to the jealously secreted archives of Santiago cathedral, gives us the names of Arias Perez, Pedro Martinez, Fernan Perez, and Pedro Pelaez, Galician enamellers who worked at Santiago in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Martin Minguez says that enamelling was done at Gerona in the fourteenth century, and Moorish enamels were certainly produced at Cordova and Cuenca from comparatively early in the Middle Ages. A few obscure workers in enamel are mentioned by Gestoso, in his *Diccionario de Artistas Sevillanos*, as living at Seville in the fifteenth century, though, in the entries which refer to them, little is told us of their lives and nothing of their labours.



"THE CRUCIFIX OF THE CID"  
*(Salamanca Cathedral)*



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

In the sixteenth century we obtain a glimpse of two enamellers of Toledo—Lorenzo Marqués and Andrés Ordoñez, and dating from the same period the Chapter of the Military Orders of Ciudad Real possesses a silver-gilt *porta-paz* with enamelling done at Cuenca. However, our notices of this branch of Spanish art have yet to be completed.

A long array of royal gifts caused, in the olden time, the treasure of Santiago cathedral to be the richest and most varied in the whole Peninsula, although at first this see was merely suffragan to Merida. But early in the twelfth century a scheming bishop, by name Diego Gelmirez, intrigued at Rome to raise his diocese to the dignity of an archbishopric. The means by which he proved successful in the end were far from irreproachable. "Gelmirez," says Ford (vol. ii. p. 666) "was a cunning prelate, and well knew how to carry his point; he put Santiago's images and plate into the crucible, and sent the ingots to the Pope."

The original altar-front or parament (*aurea tabula*) was made of solid gold. This altar-front Gelmirez melted down to steal from it some hundred ounces of the precious metal for the

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Pope, donating in its stead another front of gold and silver mixed, wrought from the remaining treasure of the sanctuary. Aymerich tells us that the primitive frontal bore the figure of the Saviour seated on a throne supported by the four evangelists, blessing with his right hand, and holding in his left the Book of Life. The four-and-twenty elders (called by quaint Morales "gentlemen") of the apocalypse were also gathered round the throne, with musical instruments in their hands, and golden goblets filled with fragrant essences. At either end of the frontal were six of the apostles, three above and three beneath, separated by "beautiful columns" and surrounded by floral decoration. The upper part was thus inscribed :—

HANC TABULAM DIDACUS PRÆSUL JACOBITA  
SECUNDUS

TEMPORE QUINQUENNI FECIT EPISCOPI  
MARCAS ARGENTI DE THESAURO JACOBENSI  
HIC OCTOGINTA QUINQUE MINUS NUMERA.

And the lower part :—

REX ERAT ANFONSUS GENER EJUS DUX RAIMUNDUS  
PRÆSUL PRÆFATUS QUANDO PEREGIT OPUS.

This early altar-front has disappeared like its pre-



THE "VIRGEN DE LA VEGA"

*Salamanca*





## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

decessor ; it is not known precisely at what time ; but both Morales and Medina saw and wrote about it in the sixteenth century.

Another ornament which Aymerich describes, namely, the *baldaquino* or *cimborius*, has likewise faded from the eyes of the profane, together with three bronze caskets covered with enamel, and stated by Morales to have contained the bones of Saints Silvestre, Cucufate, and Fructuoso. One of these caskets was existing in the seventeenth century.

The silver lamps were greatly celebrated. Ambrosio de Morales counted "twenty or more" ; but Zepedano made their total mount to fifty-one. The French invasion brought their number down to three. Three of the oldest of these lamps had been of huge dimensions, particularly one, a present from Alfonso of Aragon, which occupied the centre. The shape of it, says Aymerich, was "like a mighty mortar." Seven was the number of its beaks, symbolic of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost ; and each beak contained a lamplet fed with oil of myrtles, acorns, or olives.

All kinds of robberies and pilferings have thus been perpetrated with the once abundant wealth

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

of Santiago.<sup>1</sup> The jealous care which keeps the copious archives inaccessible to all the outside world is in itself of sinister significance. It has transpired, furthermore, that many of the bishops have "exchanged," or simply stolen, portions of the holy property. Besides these clerical dilapidations, a cartload, weighing half a ton, was carried off by Marshal Ney, though some was subsequently handed back, "because the spoilers feared the hostility of the *Plateros*, the silversmiths who live close to the cathedral, and by whom many workmen were employed in making little graven images, teraphims and lares, as well as medallions of Santiago, which pilgrims purchase."<sup>2</sup>

Among the gifts of value which this temple yet preserves are the ancient processional cross pre-

<sup>1</sup> A recent instance, not devoid of humour, is as follows. About three years ago, a silly rogue removed and carried off the crown from Santiago's head; but since the actual jewel is only worn on solemn festivals, his prize turned out to be a worthless piece of tin. An odd removal of the treasure of another Spanish church was noted by the traveller Bowles. "The curate of the place, a worthy fellow who put me up in his house, assured me that a detachment of a legion of locusts entered the church, ate up the silk clothes upon the images, and gnawed the varnish on the altars." Perhaps these adamant-stomached insects have assailed, from time to time, the gold and silver plate of Santiago.

<sup>2</sup> Ford, *Handbook*, vol. ii. p. 671. I briefly notice, in Appendix B, the Santiago jet-work, also practised by these craftsmen.





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## SAINT JAMES IN PILGRIM'S DRESS

*(Silver-gilt statuette; 15th Century.  
Santiago Cathedral)*

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

sented by the third Alfonso in the year of grace 874,<sup>1</sup> and the hideous fourteenth-century reliquary shaped to represent the head of James Alfeo, and containing (as it is believed) this very relic (Pl. viii.). I make a reservation here, because the Chapter

<sup>1</sup> To lend my censures further cogency, I leave this statement as I set it down some weeks ago ; since when, on picking up a Spanish newspaper, I read the following telegram :—

### “ THEFT IN SANTIAGO CATHEDRAL

“ SANTIAGO, *May 7th*, 1906 (9.15 *p.m.*).

“ This morning, when the canon in charge of the Chapel of the Relics unlocked the door, he was surprised to observe that some of these were lying in confusion on the floor. Fearing that a theft had been committed, he sent for the dean and others of the clergy, who had examination made, and found the following objects to be missing :—

“ *A gold cross, presented by King Alfonso the Great, when he attended the consecration of this temple in the year 874.*

“ Another cross, of silver, dating from the fifteenth century—a present from Archbishop Spinola.

“ An auricle of the fifteenth century, studded with precious stones belonging to a statuette of the apostle Santiago.

“ The authorities were summoned and at once began their search.

“ They find that two of the thick iron bars of the skylight in the ceiling of the cloister have been filed through. This cloister has a skylight which opens upon the chapel.

“ They have also found, upon the roof, a knotted rope. This rope was only long enough to reach a cornice in the chapel wall. *The wall itself affords no sign that anybody has attempted to descend by it.*”

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

have forbidden the reliquary to be opened. In either case, whether the head be there or not, heads of the same apostle are affirmed to be at Chartres, Toulouse, and other places. Similarly, discussing these Hydra-headed beings of the Bible and the hagiology, Villa-amil y Castro (*El Tesoro de la Catedral de Santiago*, published in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*) recalls to us the ten authenticated and indubitable mazzards of Saint John the Baptist.

The head-shaped reliquary is of beaten silver with enamelled visage, and the hair and beard gilt.<sup>1</sup> The workmanship is French. The cross, which hung till recently above the altar of the Relicario, but which now requires to be placed upon the lengthy list of stolen wealth, was not unlike the Cross of Angels in the Camara Santa at Oviedo, and had a wooden body covered with gold plates in finely executed filigree, studded with precious stones and cameos. Not many days ago, the

<sup>1</sup> This form of reliquary was not uncommon. Morales, in his *Viaje Sacro*, describes another one, also preserved at Santiago, saying that it was a bust of silver, life-size and gilded to the breast, "with a large diadem of rays and many stones, both small and great, all or most of them of fine quality, though not of the most precious." Other bust-reliquaries belong, or have belonged, to the Cathedrals of Burgos and Toledo.

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

wooden core, divested of the precious metal and the precious stones, was found abandoned in a field.

Visitors to the shrine of Santiago seldom fail to have their curiosity excited by the monster "smoke-thrower" (*bota-fumeiro*) or incensory, lowered (much like the deadly sword in Poe's exciting tale) on each *fiesta* by a batch of vigorous Gallegos from an iron frame fixed into the pendentives of the dome. "The calmest heart," says Villa-amil, "grows agitated to behold this giant vessel descending from the apex of the nave until it almost sweeps the ground, wreathed in dense smoke and spewing flame." Ford seems to have been unaware that the real purpose of this metal monster was not to simply scent the holy precincts, but to cover up the pestilential atmosphere created by a horde of verminous, diseased, and evil-smelling pilgrims, who, by a usage which is now suppressed, were authorized to pass the night before the services within the actual cathedral wall.

The original *bota-fumeiro*, resembling, in Oxea's words, "a silver boiler of gigantic bulk," was lost or stolen in the War of Spanish Independence. It was replaced by another of iron, and this, in 1851, by the present apparatus of white metal.

Striking objects of ecclesiastical *orfebrería* were

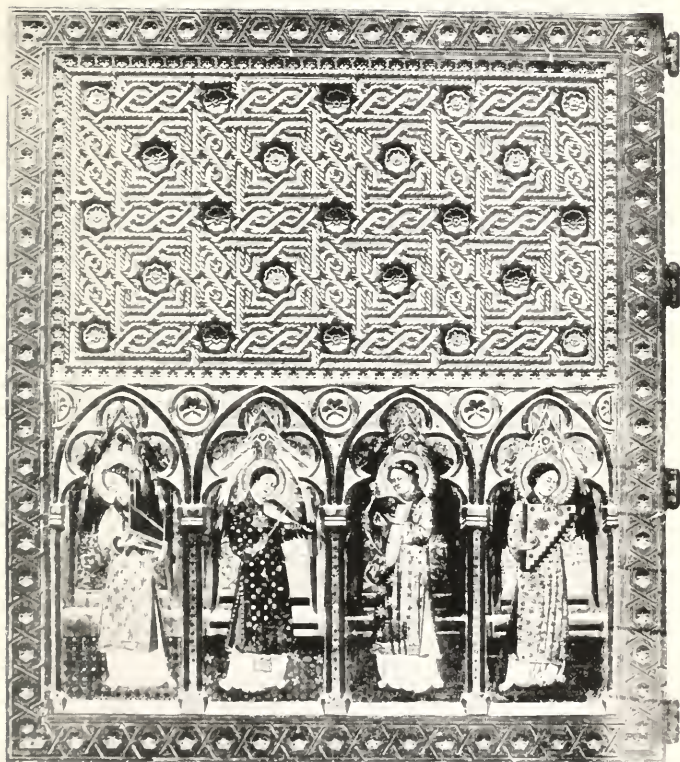
## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

produced in Spain throughout the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. Among the finest are the triptych-reliquary of Seville cathedral known as the *Alfonsine Tables*; the *retablo* and *baldaquino* of the cathedral of Gerona; the silver throne, preserved in Barcelona cathedral, of Don Martin of Aragon; and the *guión*, at Toledo, of Cardinal Mendoza.

Triptych-reliquaries, which had gradually expanded from the diptych form—three leaves or panels thus replacing two,—were generally used in Spain from the eleventh century, and varied in dimensions from a few inches in height and width to several yards. We find them in the Gothic, Mudejar,<sup>1</sup> Romanic, or Renaissance styles—wrought either in a single style of these, or in effective combination of some two or more. The Academy of History at Madrid possesses a richly ornamented Mudejar triptych (Plate ix.) proceeding from the Monasterio de Piedra. It is inferior,

<sup>1</sup> The Mudejares were the Mussulmans who submitted, in the conquered cities, to the Spanish-Christian rule. The word *Mudejar* is of modern growth, nor can its derivation be resolved with certainty. From the thirteenth century onwards, and formed by the fusion of the Christian and the Saracenic elements, we find Mudejar influence copiously distributed through every phase of Spanish life and art, and even literature.





## MUDEJAR TRIPIVCH

*(Interior of one leaf of the door. 15th Century.  
Royal Academy of History, Madrid)*



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

notwithstanding, to the *Tablas Alfonsinas*,<sup>1</sup> "a specimen of Spanish silversmiths' work which illustrates the transition to the new style, and the progress in the design of the figures owing to the Italian Renaissance."<sup>2</sup> In or about the year 1274, this splendid piece of sacred furniture was made by order of the learned king, to hold the relics of certain saints and of the Virgin Mary. The maker is thought by Amador to have been one "Master George," a craftsman held in high esteem by the father of Alfonso and the conqueror of Seville, Ferdinand the Third. Romanic influence is abundant in this triptych, showing that, although exposed to constant changes from abroad, the Spanish mediæval crafts adhered upon the whole with singular tenacity to primitive tradition.

The triptych is of larch, or some such undecaying wood, and measures, when the leaves are opened wide, forty inches over its entire breadth, by twenty-two in height. Linen is stretched upon the wood, and over that the silver-gilt *repoussé*

<sup>1</sup> Amador prefers to call these Tables "the triptych of the learned king," in order to distinguish them by this explicit title from the *Astronomical Tables* prepared by order of the same monarch.

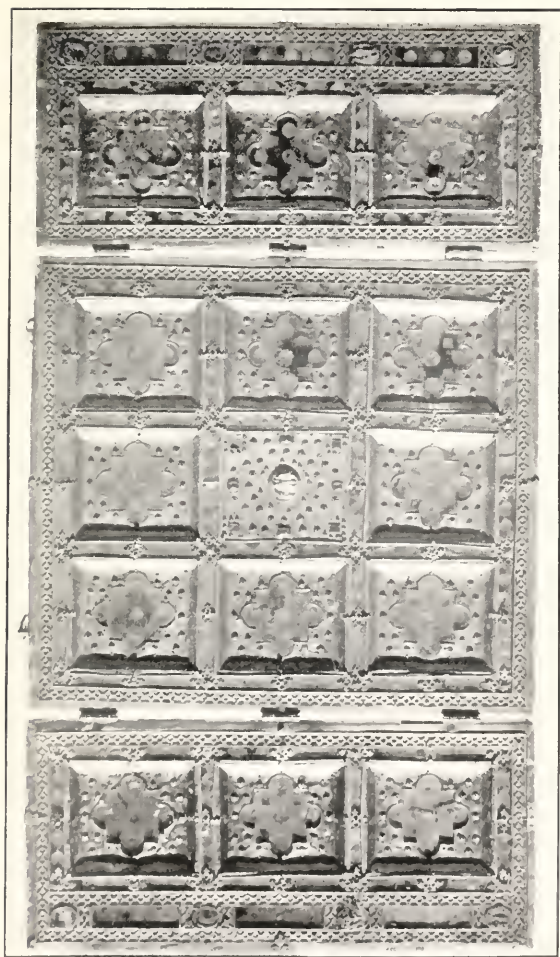
<sup>2</sup> Riaño, *Spanish Arts*, p. 16.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

plates which form the principal adornment of the reliquary. "The outside is decorated with twelve medallions containing the arms of Castile and Aragon, and forty-eight others in which are repeated alternately the subjects of the Adoration of the Magi and the Annunciation of the Virgin, also in *repoussé*. In the centres are eagles, allusive, it is possible, to Don Alfonso's claim to be crowned Emperor. . . . The ornamentation which surrounds the panels belongs to the sixteenth century" (Riaño). The arms here spoken of contain the crowned lion and the castle of three towers; and the interesting fact is pointed out by Amador that the diminutive doors and windows of these castles show a strongly pointed Gothic arch. The sixteenth-century bordering to the panels is in the manner known as Plateresque.<sup>1</sup> The clasps are also Plateresque, and prove,

<sup>1</sup> So named because the silversmiths (*plateros*) of this country used it in their monstrances (*custodias*) and in many other objects or utensils of religious worship. The most refined and erudite of Spanish silver-workers, Juan de Arfe, thus referred to it in rhyme:—

*"Usaron desta obra los plateros  
Guardando sus preceptos con zelo;  
Pusiéronle en los puntos postrimeros  
De perfección mi abuelo."*



THE "FABLAS ALFONSINAS"

*(View of Interior: 13th Century, Seville Cathedral)*



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

together with the border, that the triptych was restored about this time.

Inside (Plate x.), it consists of fifteen compartments, "full of minute ornamentation, among which are set a large number of capsules covered with rock crystal containing relics, each one with an inscription of enamelled gold, *cloisonné*. Several good cameos with sacred subjects appear near the edge of the side leaves" (Riaño). These cameos, handsomely engraved with figures of the Virgin and other subjects of religious character, are fairly well preserved; but the designs upon enamel are almost obliterated. Eight precious stones, set in as rude a style as those upon the ancient crowns and crosses of the Visigoths, have also fallen out, or been removed, from the interior.

The *retablo* of Gerona cathedral and its baldachin date from the fourteenth century. "The Retablo is of wood entirely covered with silver plates, and divided vertically into three series of niches and canopies; each division has a subject, and a good deal of enamelling is introduced in various parts of the canopies and grounds of the panels. Each panel has a cinq-foiled arch with a crocketed gablet and pinnacles on either side. The straight line of the top is broken by

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

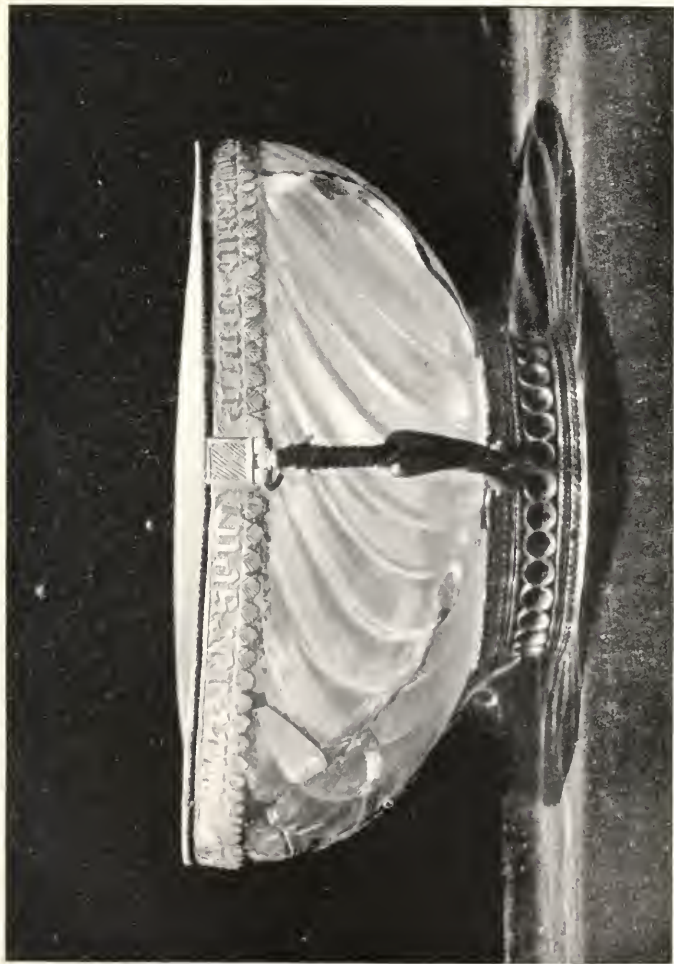
three niches, which rise in the centre and at either end. In the centre is the Blessed Virgin with our Lord ; on the right, San Narciso ; and on the left, St Filia. The three tiers of subjects contain figures of saints, subjects from the life of the Blessed Virgin, and subjects from the life of our Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

San Narciso is patron of the city of Gerona ; which explains the presence of his image here. From the treasury of the same cathedral was stolen, during the War of Spanish Independence, a magnificent altar-front of wrought gold and mosaic, a gift of Countess Gisla, wife of Ramón Berenguer, count-king of Barcelona. It had in the centre a bas-relief medallion representing the Virgin, another medallion with a portrait of the donor, and various saints in niches, interworked with precious stones.

The great armchair of Don Martin, called by Baron Davillier a “beau faudesteuil gothique,” which possibly served that monarch as a throne, and was presented by him to the cathedral of Barcelona, dates from the year 1410. The wooden frame is covered with elaborately chiselled plates in silver-gilt. This most imposing object is carried in

<sup>1</sup> Street, *Gothic Architecture in Spain*.





"THE CUP OF SAN FERNANDO"  
 (13th Century, Seville Cathedral)







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## SHIP

*(15th Century. Zaragoza Cathedral)*

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

procession through the streets upon the yearly festival of Corpus Christi.

The *guión de Mendoza*, now in Toledo cathedral, is a handsome later-Gothic silver-gilt cross, and is the same which was raised upon the Torre de la Vela at Granada on January 2nd, 1492, when the fairest and most storied city in all Spain surrendered formally to Ferdinand and Isabella. Many other interesting crosses, of the character known as processional, are still preserved in various parts of the Peninsula, at South Kensington, and elsewhere. The more remarkable are noticed under various headings of this book. Their workmanship is generally of the fifteenth or the sixteenth century.

The Seo or cathedral of Zaragoza possesses a handsome ship (Plate xii.), presented to this temple, towards the end of the fifteenth century, by the Valencian corsair, Mosén Juan de Torrellas. The hull is a large shell resting on a silver-gilt dragon of good design, with a large emerald set in the middle of its forehead, and a ruby for each eye. Ships of this kind were not uncommon on a Spanish dining table of the time, or in the treasuries of churches and cathedrals. Toledo owns another of these vessels (in both senses of the word), which once

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belonged to Doña Juana, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Hitherto I have confined my notice almost wholly to the treasure of the Spanish temples. Turning from ecclesiastical to secular life, we find, all through the Middle Ages, the humbler classes kept by constant penury and war aloof from every form of luxury. Jewellery and gold and silver work were thus essentially the perquisite or, so to speak, the privilege of princes, nobles, and the Church. The mediæval kings and magnates of this land were smitten inveterately with a passion for display, and chronicles and inventories of the time contain instructive details of the quantities of gems and precious metals employed by them to decorate their persons and their palaces. The richness of their bedsteads will be noticed under Furniture. Quantities of jewellery and plate belonged to every noble household. For instance, the testament of the Countess of Castañeda (A.D. 1443) includes the mention of "a gilded cup and cover to the same; a silver vessel and its lid, the edges gilt, and in the centre of both lid and vessel the arms of the said count, my lord; a silver vessel with a foot to it; a diamond ring; a silver vessel with gilt edges and the arms of the count, companion

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to the other vessels ; a jasper sweetmeat-tray with silver-gilt handles and feet ; four coral spoons ; a gilt enamelled cup and lid ; a small gilt cup and lid ; two large silver porringers ; two French cups of white silver ; two large plates of eight marks apiece ; two middling-sized silver vessels ; two silver-gilt barrels with silver-gilt chains.”<sup>1</sup>

On each occasion of a court or national festivity, the apparel of the great was ponderous with gold and silver fringe, or thickly strewn with pearls—the characteristic *aliofar* or *aljofar*-work (Arabic *chawar*, small pearls), for which the Moors were widely famed. Towards the thirteenth century unmarried Spanish women of high rank possessed abundant stores of bracelets, earrings, necklaces, gold chains, rings, and gem-embroidered pouches for their money. Their waist-belts, too, were heavy with gold and silver, and *aljofar*.<sup>2</sup> The poem of the Archpriest of Hita (1343) mentions two articles of jewellery for female wear called the *broncha* and the *pancha*. The former was an ornament for the throat ; the other, a plate or medal which hung to below the waist. An Arabic document quoted by Casiri, and dating from the reign

<sup>1</sup> Count of Clonard.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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of Henry the First of Castile, specifies as belonging to an aristocratic lady of that time, "Egyptian shirts of silk and linen, embroidered shirts, Persian shirts with silk embroidery, Murcian gold necklaces, ear-pendants of the same metal, set with gems; finger-rings and bracelets, waist-belts of skins, embroidered with silk and precious stones; cloaks of cloth of gold, embroidered mantles of the same, coverings for the head, and kerchiefs."

For all the frequency with which they framed and iterated sterile and exasperating sumptuary pragmatics for their people, the Spanish kings themselves went even beyond the nobles in their craze for ostentatious luxury. Upon the day when he was crowned at Burgos, Alfonso the Eleventh "arrayed himself in gold and silver cloth bearing devices of the castle and the lion, in which was much *aljofar*-work, as well as precious stones innumerable; rubies, emeralds, and sapphires." Even the bit and saddle of the monarch's charger were "exceeding precious on this day, for gems and gold and silver covered all the saddle-bows, and the sides of the saddle and its girths, together with the headstall, were curiously wrought of gold and silver thread."

Similar relations may be found at every moment



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of the history of mediæval Spain. Another instance may be quoted from the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. When these sovereigns visited Barcelona in 1481, the queen was dressed as follows :—“ She advanced riding upon a fine mule, and seated on cushions covered with brocade, rising high above the saddle. Her robe was of gold thread and jewel-work, with a rich brocade skirt. Upon her head she wore a crown of gold adorned with richest diamonds, pearls, rubies, balas rubies, and other stones of passing price.” During the same visit, a royal tournament was given in the Plaza del Born, in presence of the aristocracy and wealthy townspeople, “ the counts, viscounts, deputies, councillors, *caballeros*, *gentiles hombres*, burgesses, and others without number.” Ferdinand, who “ with virtue and benignity ” had deigned to break a lance or two in tourneying with the Duke of Alburquerque, the Count of Benavente, and several gentlemen of Cataluña, was wearing “ over his harness a jacket all of gold brocade. His horse’s coverings and poitral also were of thread of gold, richly devised and wrought, and of exceeding majesty and beauty. And on his helm he wore a crown of gold, embellished with many pearls and other stones ; and above

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the crown a figure of a large gold bat, which is the emblem of the kings of Aragon and counts of Barcelona, with white and sanguine bars upon the scutcheon.<sup>1</sup> The queen and the cardinal of Spain were in a window of the house of Mossen Guillem Pujades, conservator of the realm of Sicily. Her highness wore a robe of rich gold thread with a collar of beautiful pearls; and the trappings of her mule were of brocade."<sup>2</sup>

Eleven years later the youthful prince, Don Juan, son of these rulers, appeared before the citizens of Barcelona dressed in "a robe of beautiful brocade that almost swept the ground, and a doublet of the same material; the sleeves of the robe thickly adorned with fine pearls of large size." He carried, too, a gold collar of great size and beauty, wrought of large diamonds, pearls, and other stones."<sup>3</sup>

It was an ancient usage with the people of Barcelona to present a silver service to any member of the royal family who paid a visit to their capital. The service so presented to Ferdinand the Catholic cost the corporation a sum of

<sup>1</sup> Four pallets gules, on a field or; which were the arms of Cataluña and subsequently of Aragon.

<sup>2</sup> *Archives of the Crown of Aragon.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

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more than twelve hundred pounds of Catalan money, and included "a saltcellar made upon a rock. Upon the rock is a castle, the tower of which contains the salt. . . . Two silver ewers, gilt within and containing on the outside various enamelled devices in the centre, together with the city arms. Also a silver-gilt lion upon a rustic palisade of tree-trunks, holding an inscription in his right paw, with the arms of the city, a flag, and a crown upon his head. This object weighs thirty-four marks."<sup>1</sup> The service offered on the same occasion to Isabella, though less in weight, was more elaborately wrought, and cost on this account considerably more. It included "two silver ewers, gilt within and enamelled without, bearing the city arms, and chiselled in the centre with various designs of foliage. Also a silver saltcellar, with six small towers, containing at the foot three pieces of enamel-work with the arms of the city in relief. This saltcellar has its lid and case, with a pinnacle upon the lid, and is of silver-gilt inside and out."<sup>2</sup>

From about the fifteenth century the goldsmiths

<sup>1</sup> Sanpere y Miquel, *Revista de Ciencias Históricas*, art. *La Platería catalana en los siglos XIV. y XV.*, vol. i. p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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and the silversmiths of Barcelona enjoyed considerable fame. Among their names are those of Lobarolla, Roig, Berni, Belloch, Planes, Mellar, Corda, Fábregues, Farrán, Perot Ximenis, Rafel Ximenis, Balagué, and Antonio de Valdés. Riaño quotes the names of many more from Cean's dictionary. The most important facts relating to these artists were brought to light some years ago by Baron Davillier, who based the greater part of his research upon the *Libros de Pasantía* or silversmiths' examination-books (filled with excellent designs for jewel-work) of Barcelona. These volumes, formerly kept in the college of San Eloy, are now the property of the Provincial Deputation of this city.

The goldsmiths' and the silversmiths guild of Seville also possesses four of its old examination-books, of which the earliest dates from 1600. Gestoso, in his *Dictionary of Sevillian Artificers* describes the actual ceremony of examination for a silversmith or goldsmith. Once in every year the members of the guild assembled in their chapel of the convent of San Francisco. Here and upon this day the candidate was closely questioned, to begin with, as to his "purity of blood"—that is, his freedom from contamination

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by relationship with any Moor or Hebrew. When it was duly and precisely ascertained that he, his parents, and his grandparents were uniformly "old Christians," untainted with the "wicked race of Moors, Jews, heretics, mulattoes, and renegades," and that neither he nor his ancestors had ever been put on trial by the Inquisition or by any other tribunal, "whether publicly or secretly," he was permitted to proceed to his examination proper.<sup>1</sup> The formula of this was simple. The candidate was summoned before the board of examiners, consisting of the Padre Mayor or patriarch of the guild, and the two *veedores* or inspectors, the one of gold-work, the other of silver-work. The book of drawings was then placed upon the table, and a ruler was thrust at haphazard among its leaves. Where the ruler chanced to fall, the candidate was called upon to execute the corresponding drawing to the satisfaction of his judges.

Riaño lays too slight a stress upon the Moorish and Morisco jewellery of Spain. Although the use of gold and silver ornaments is forbidden

<sup>1</sup> Gestoso mentions that Juan de Luna, a silversmith of Seville, was turned into the gutter from the workshop where he was employed, solely because his father had been punished as a Morisco by the Inquisition (*Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*, vol. i. p. lvi.).

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by the Koran, the Muslim, wherever his vanity or his bodily comfort is involved, tramples his Bible underfoot almost as regularly, tranquilly, and radically as the Christians do their own. The Moors of Spain were not at all behind their oriental brethren in displaying precious stones and metals on their persons or about their homes. Al-Jattib tells us that the third Mohammed offered to the mosque of the Alhambra columns with capitals and bases of pure silver. Or who does not recall the Caliphate of Cordova; the silver lamp that measured fifty palms across, fitted with a thousand and fifty-four glass lamplets, and swinging by a golden chain from the cupola of the entrance to the *mirhab* in the vast *mezquita*; the silver candlesticks and perfume-burners in the same extraordinary temple; the precious stones and metals employed in mighty quantities to decorate the palaces of Az-zahyra and Az-zahra?—

“ A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,  
Far sinking into splendour without end !  
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
With alabaster domes and silver spires,  
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
Uplifted.”

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In brief, just as the prelates of the Christian Church habitually precede the Christian laity in trampling underfoot the elemental doctrine of Our Lord, so were the most exalted and responsible of all the Mussulmans—that is, their sultans— indefatigably foremost in neglect of the Koranic law.

The Spanish sultans wore a ring of gold containing one large stone (such as an emerald, or ruby, or turquoise), on which was cut the royal seal and signature. Such was the ring belonging to Boabdil el Chico, worn by him on the very day of the surrender of his capital, and by his hand presented to a Spanish nobleman, the Count of Tendilla, governor-elect of the Alhambra. According to Rodriguez de Ardila, the following inscription was upon the stone:—“*La Ala ile Ala, abahu Tabiu. Aben Abi Abdalá,*” meaning, “*There is no God but God; this is the seal of Aben Abi Abdalá.*” Ardila, who was the author of a history of the Counts of Tendilla (which still remains in manuscript), adds that he saw the ring, although, as Eguilaz observes, two words of the inscription are inaccurately rendered.

Among the Moors of Spain the use of signet

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rings was general. The stone employed was commonly cornelian, richly mounted and inscribed in various ways, as with the owner's name, his name together with a date, or the name of the town of which he was a native. In other instances we meet with pious phrases or quotations from the Koran; or perhaps a talismanic figure, such as the open eye to guard the wearer from the dreaded *mal de ojo*; or the open hand that still surmounts the gateway of the Tower of Justice at Granada.<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly, too, the Moorish sultans of this country owned enormous hoards of silver, gold, and precious stones. Al-Makkari says that the treasure of the Nasrite rulers of Granada included quantities of pearls, turquoises, and rubies; pearl necklets; earrings "surpassing those of Mary the Copt" (Mohammed's concubine); swords of the finest temper, embellished with pure gold; helmets with gilded borders, studded with emeralds, pearls, and rubies; and silvered and enamelled belts.

The Moorish women of this country, and in

<sup>1</sup> An article by Señor Saavedra on these inscribed jewels and signets of Mohammedan Spain will be found in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*.







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particular the Granadinas,<sup>1</sup> were passionately fond of jewellery. Ornaments which once belonged to them are sometimes brought to light in Andalusia, Murcia, or Valencia, including pendants, rings, necklaces, and *axorcas* or bangles for the ankle or the wrist, and bracelets for the upper portion of the arm. The National Museum contains a small collection of these objects, dating from the time of the Moriscos, and including a handsome necklace terminating in a double chain, with ball and pyramid shaped ornaments about the centre, a square-headed finger-ring with four green stones and a garnet, and a hollow bracelet filled with a substance that appears to be mastic, similar to those which are reproduced in Plate xiii.

<sup>1</sup> "As to the ornaments and jewels of the ladies of Granada, these wear at present necklaces of rich design, bracelets, rings (upon their ankles), and earrings of pure gold ; together with quantities of silver and of precious stones upon their shoes. I say this of the middle class ; for ladies of the aristocracy and of the older noble families display a vast variety of gems, such as rubies, chrysolites, emeralds, and pearls of great value. The ladies of Granada are commonly fair to look upon, shapely, of good stature, with long hair, teeth of a shining white, and perfumed breath, gracefully alert in their movements, and witty and agreeable in conversation. But unfortunately at this time their passion for painting themselves and for arraying themselves in every kind of jewellery and costly stuffs has reached a pitch that is no longer tolerable."—Al-Jattib, in *The Splendour of the New Moon concerning the Nasrite Sultans of Granada*.

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These jewels, I repeat, are of Morisco workmanship, and therefore date from later than the independent empire of the Spanish Moors. Nevertheless, the geometrical or filigree design was common both to Moorish and Morisco art. As I observed in my description of the casket-reliquaries, we note continually the influence of these motives on the arts of Christian Spain. The Ordinances relative to the goldsmiths and the silversmiths of Granada, cried at various times between 1529 and 1538, whether "in the silversmiths' street of the Alcaycería, that has its opening over against the scriveners"; or in "the street of the Puente del Carbon, before the goldsmiths' shops"; or "in the street of the Zacatin, where dwell the silversmiths," prove also that for many years after the Reconquest the character and nomenclature of this kind of work continued to be principally and traditionally Moorish.

Firstly, the Ordinances complain that the goldsmiths of Granada now employ a base and detrimental standard of the precious metals, especially in the bracelets or *manillas* of the women. The goldsmiths answer in their vindication that equally as poor a standard is employed at Seville, Cordova, and Toledo. These city laws

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herewith establish twenty carats as a minimum fineness for the gold employed in making ornaments. The makers, also, are ordered to impress their private stamp or seal on every article, or in default to pay a fine of ten thousand *maravedis*. A copy of each stamp or seal to be deposited in the city chest. The *alamín* or inspector of this trade to test and weigh all gold and silver work before it is exposed for sale.

We learn from the same source that the gold bracelets were sometimes smooth, and sometimes "covered over with devices" (*cubiertos de estampas por cima*). The technical name of these was *albordados*. The silver bracelets were also either smooth, or stamped, or twisted in a cord (*encordados*). Bangles for the ankle, upper arm, and wrist are mentioned as continuing to be generally worn, while one of the Ordinances complains that "Moorish *axorcas* are often sold that are hollow, and filled with chalk and mastic, so that before they can be weighed it is necessary to rid them of such substances by submitting them to fire, albeit the fire turns them black."

The weapons and war-harness of the Spanish Moors were often exquisitely decorated with the precious stones or metals. Splendid objects of

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this kind have been preserved, and will be noticed in their proper chapter.

The ruinous and reckless measure known to Spain's eternal shame as the Expulsion of the Moriscos, deprived this country of a great—perhaps the greatest—part of her resources. Fonseca estimates this loss, solely in the quantity of coin conveyed away, at two million and eight hundred thousand *escudos*, adding that a single Morisco, Alami Delascar de Aberique, bore off with him one hundred thousand ducats.<sup>1</sup> To make this matter worse, the Moriscos, just before they went on board their ships, fashioned from scraps of tin, old nails, and other refuse, enormous stores of counterfeit coin, and slyly sold this rubbish to the simple Spaniards in return for lawful money of the land. In the course of a few days, and in a single quarter of Valencia, more than three hundred thousand ducats of false

<sup>1</sup> There was, however, from long before this time a prohibition to export from Spain the precious metals, in any form, whether as objects of plate or as coined money. The penalty for a repetition of this offence was death. Another law prohibited all foreigners who were resident in Spain, not excluding the Moriscos, from buying gold or silver in the bar (*Suma de Leyes*, p. 46). It was also forbidden to sell the jewels or other objects of value belonging to a place of worship (*ibid.* p. 87).

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coin were thus passed off upon the Christians. Besides this exportation of good Spanish money, the cunning fugitives removed huge quantities of jewellery and plate. Chains, *axorcas*, rings, *zarcillos*, and gold *escudos* were taken from the bodies of many of the Morisco women who were murdered by the Spanish soldiery; but the greater part of all this treasure found its way to Africa. In his work *Expulsión justificada de los Moriscos* (1612), Aznar de Cardona says that the Morisco women carried "divers plates upon the breast, together with necklaces and collars, earrings and bracelets." It is recorded, too, that the Moriscos, as they struggled in the country regions to avenge themselves upon their persecutors, did unlimited damage to the ornaments and fittings of the churches. "This people," says Fonseca, "respected not our temples or the holy images that in them were; nor yet the chalices and other objects they encountered in our sacristies. Upon the contrary, they smashed the crosses, burned the saints, profaned the sacred vestments, and committed such acts of sacrilege as though they had been Algerian Moors, or Turks of Constantinople."

Legends of hidden Moorish and Morisco

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wealth are still extant in many parts of Spain. The Abbé Bertaut de Rouen<sup>1</sup> and Swinburne among foreigners, or Spaniards such as the gossiping priest Echeverría, who provided Washington Irving with the pick of his *Tales of the Alhambra*, have treated copiously of this fascinating and mysterious theme. The Siete Suelos Tower at Granada is particularly favoured with traditions of this kind. Peasants of the Alpujarras still declare that piles of Moorish money lie secreted in the lofty buttresses of Mulhacen and the Veleta, while yet another summit of this snowy range bears the suggestive title of the Cerro del Tesoro, where, almost within the memory of living men, a numerous party, fitted and commissioned by the State, explored with feverish though unlucky zeal the naked cliffs and sterile crannies of the lonely mountain.<sup>2</sup>

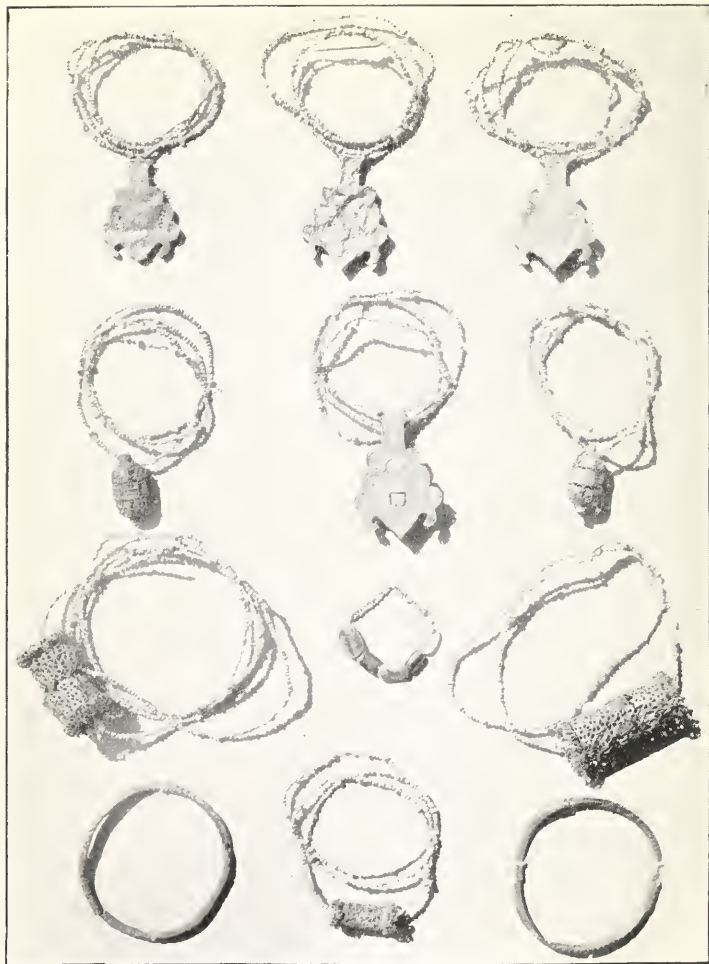
Reducing all these fables to the terms of truth,

<sup>1</sup> This entertaining and inquisitive tourist describes, in 1659, a wondrous cavern in the south of Spain, "ou l'on conte que les Mores ont caché leurs tresors en s'en retournant en Afrique, et ou personne n'ose aborder de peur des esprits que l'on dit que l'on y voit souvent. Mais comme il commençait a se faire nuit, je n'eus pas le loisir de m'y amuser beaucoup." With this our author shelved his curiosity, and prudently retired.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Williams. *Granada: Memories, Adventures, Studies, and Impressions*, p. 90.







MORISCO JEWELLERY  
*(Found in the Province of Granada)*

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Moorish and Morisco jewellery and coin are sometimes brought to light on Spanish soil. Such finds occur, less seldom than elsewhere, within the provinces of Seville, Cordova, Granada, and Almeria (Plate xiv.), but since they are neither frequent nor considerable, although the likeliest ground for them is being disturbed continually, we may conclude that nearly all the Muslim wealth accumulated here slipped from the clumsy if ferocious fingers of the mother-country, and found its way, concealed upon the bodies of her persecuted offspring, to the shores of Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes, too, an early gold or silver object would be melted down and modernized into another and a newer piece of plate. This was a fairly common usage with the silversmiths themselves, or with an ignorant or stingy brotherhood or chapter. Thus, the following entry occurs in the *Libro de Visita de Fábrica* belonging to the parish church of Santa Ana, Triana, Seville. In

<sup>1</sup> Ford was more hopeful as to the preservation of this wealth in Spain. "No doubt much coin is buried in the Peninsula, since the country has always been invaded and torn by civil wars, and there never has been much confidence between Spaniard and Spaniard; accordingly the only sure, although unproductive, investment for those who had money, was gold or silver, and the only resource to preserve that, was to hide it."—*Handbook*, vol. ii. p. 682.

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the year 1599 "the large cross of silver-gilt, together with its *mançana* and all the silver attaching thereto, was taken to the house of Zubieta the silversmith, and pulled to pieces. It weighed 25 marks and 4 *ochavas* of silver, besides 5 marks and 2 ounces and 4 *ochavas* of silver which was the weight of the three lamps delivered to Zubieta in the time of Juan de Mirando, aforetime steward of this church. It is now made into a silver-gilt cross."<sup>1</sup>

A similar instance may be quoted from a document of Cordova, published by Ramírez de Arellano in his relation of a visit to the monastery of San Jerónimo de Valparaiso. In the year 1607 Gerónimo de la Cruz, a Cordovese silversmith, agreed with the prior of this monastery to make for the community a silver-gilt *custodia*. For this purpose he received from the prior, doubtless a man of parsimonious spirit and a boor in his appreciativeness of art, eight pairs of vinegar cruets, four of whose tops were missing; a silver-gilt chalice and its patine; a *viril* with two angels and four pieces on the crown of it; a small communion cup; some silver candlesticks; four spoons and a fork, also of silver; and a silver-gilt

<sup>1</sup> Gestoso, *Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*, vol. ii. p. 360.





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SILVER-GILT PROCESSIONAL CROSS  
*(Made by Juan de Arfe in 1592. Burgos Cathedral)*

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salt-cellar. The total value of these objects was 1826 *reales*; and all of them were tossed, in Ford's indignant phrase, into the "sacrilegious melting-pot," in order to provide material for the new *custodia*.

The gold and silver work of Christian Spain attained, throughout the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, a high degree of excellence (Plates xv., xvi., etc.). The best of it was made at Seville, Barcelona, Toledo, and Valladolid. Objects of great artistic worth were also produced at Burgos, Palencia, León, Cuenca, Cordova, and Salamanca. I have already mentioned some of the principal *orfebreros* of Barcelona. Juan Ruiz of Cordova, whom Juan de Arfe applauds as "the first silversmith who taught the way to do good work in Andalusia," was also, in this region, the first to turn the precious metals on the lathe. A famous silversmith of Seville was Diego de Vozmediano, whom we find living there in 1525. Toledo, too, could boast, among an army of distinguished gold and silver smiths (Riaño gives the names of no fewer than seventy-seven), Cristóbal de Ordas, Juan Rodríguez de Babria, and Pedro Hernandez, *plateros*, respectively, to Charles the Fifth, to Philip the Second, and to the queen-dowager of Portugal; and also the silversmith

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and engraver upon metals, Pedro Angel, whose praise is sung by Lope de Vega in the prologue to his *auto* called *The Voyage of the Soul*:—

“ *Y es hoy Pedro Angel un divino artifice  
con el buril en oro, plata, ó cobre.*”

By far the greater part of all Toledo's gold and silver work was made for service in her mighty temple. Such were the statue of Saint Helen, presented by Philip the Second; the crown of the Virgen del Sagrario, wrought by Hernando de Carrión and Alejo de Montoya; the bracelets or *ajorcas* made for the image of the same Madonna by Julián Honrado; and the exquisite chests carved in 1569 and 1598 by Francisco Merino from designs by the two Vergaras, father and son, as reliquaries for the bones of San Eugenio and Santa Leocadia, patrons of this ancient capital.<sup>1</sup> A magnificent silver lamp was also, in 1565, offered by the chapter of the cathedral to the church of Saint Denis in France, in gratitude for the surrender of the bones of San Eugenio to the city of his birth. These and other objects of Toledan gold and silver work are stated to be “worthy of

<sup>1</sup> A full description of these chests will be found in Cean Bermudez, vol. iii. pp. 135-137.



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comparison with the very best of what was then produced in Germany, Italy, and France.”<sup>1</sup>

Baron Davillier also held a high opinion of the Spanish *orfebreros* of this time. After remarking that the Italian influence was powerful among the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, and more particularly for some fifty years at Barcelona, he says: “A cette époque les *plateros* espagnols pouvaient rivaliser sans désavantage avec les Italiens, les Français, les Flamands, et les Allemands.”

The same authority also says that the Spanish *plateros* of this period were skilled enamellers on gold and silver, and quotes some entries from French inventories of the time in which we read of cups, salt-cellars, washing-basins, and other objects executed or enamelled “à la mode d’Espagne.”<sup>2</sup>

As we have seen, the exodus of the Moriscos lost to Spain a great proportion of her total wealth, although, conjointly with this loss, new wealth flowed into her in marvellous abundance from the

<sup>1</sup> Rada y Delgado, in his reply to the Count of Cedillo’s address in the Royal Academy of History. For particulars of the silver lamp, which was made by Marcos and Gonzalo Hernandez, Toledanos, and by Diego Dávila, see Zarco del Valle, *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de las Bellas Artes en España*, vol. lv. p. 580.

<sup>2</sup> *Recherches sur l’Orfèvrerie en Espagne*, pp. 61 et seq.

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New World.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the silver-mines of Potosi, discovered in 1545, sent over to the mother-country, between that year and 1633, no less than eight hundred and forty-five millions of *pesos*. And yet this mighty influx of new riches cannot be said, except in the artistic sense, to have enriched the nation. She had renounced the service of the most industrious and, in many instances, the most ingenious of her native craftsmen; while on the other hand the Christians, with but limited exceptions, were far too proud and far too indolent to set their hand to any form of manual exercise; just as (I much regret to add) a great proportion of them are this very day. Foreign artificers in consequence (particularly after the royal pragmatic of 1623 encouraging their immigration), attracted by the treasure fleets that anchored in the bay of Cadiz, came trooping into Spain and filled their pockets from the national purse, fashioning, in return for money which they husbanded and sent abroad, luxurious gold and silver objects that were merely destined to stagnate within her churches and cathedrals.

Riaño and Baron de la Vega de Hoz extract from Cean Bermudez a copious list of silversmiths

<sup>1</sup> Ulloa, *Memorias Sevillanas*, vol. i. p. 199.

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who worked in Spain all through the Middle Ages. This long array of isolated names and dates is neither interesting nor informative. Newer and more attractive notices have been discovered subsequently. Thus, in the National Library at Madrid, Don Manuel G. Simancas has disinterred quite recently the copy made by a Jesuit of a series of thirteenth-century accounts relating to various craftsmen of the reign of Sancho the Fourth ("the Brave"). Two of them are concerning early *orfebreros* :—

"Juan Yanez. By letters of the king and queen to Johan Yanez, goldsmith, brother of Ferran García, scrivener to the king; for three chalices received from him by the king, CCCCLXXVIII *maravedis*."

The second entry says :—

"Bartolomé Rinalt. And he paid Bartolomé Rinalt for jewels which the queen bought from him to present to Doña Marina Suarez, nurse of the Infante Don Pedro, MCCCL *maravedis*."<sup>1</sup>

Among Spain's gold and silver craftsmen of

<sup>1</sup> *Libro de diferentes Cuentas y gasto de la Casa Real en el Reynado de Don Sancho IV. Sacado de un tomo original en folio que se guarda en la Librería de la Santa Iglesia de Toledo. Años de 1293-1294. Por el P. Andres Marcos Burriel de la Comp<sup>a</sup> de Jesus.*

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the fifteenth century we find the names of Juan de Castelnou, together with his son Jaime, who worked at Valencia; of Lope Rodríguez de Villareal, Ruby, and Juan Gonzalez, all three of whom worked at Toledo; and of Juan de Segovia, a friar of Guadalupe. Papers concerning Juan Gonzalez, and dated 1425, 1427, and 1431, are published among the *Documentos Inéditos* of Zarco del Valle. One of Segovia's masterpieces was a silver salt-cellar in the form of a lion tearing open a pomegranate—clearly allusive to the conquest of Granada from the Moors. Upon their visiting the monastery, Ferdinand and Isabella saw and, as was natural, conceived a fancy for this salt-cellar; and so, whether from inclination or necessity, the brotherhood induced them to accept it.

Sixteenth-century *plateros* of renown were Juan Donante, Mateo and Nicolás (whose surnames are unknown)—all three of whom worked at Seville; and Duarte Rodríguez and Fernando Ballesteros, natives of that city. In or about the year 1524 were working at Toledo the silversmiths Pedro Herreros and Hernando de Valles, together with Diego Vazquez, Andres Ordoñez, Hernando de Carrión, Diego de Valdivieso, Juan

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Domingo de Villanueva, Diego Abedo de Villan-  
drando, Juan Tello de Morata, Francisco de  
Reinalte, Hans Belta, and Francisco Merino.  
Several of these men were natives of Toledo.

Among the silversmiths of sixteenth - century  
Cordova were Diego de Alfaro and his son Fran-  
cisco, Francisco de Baena, Alonso Casas, Alonso del  
Castillo, Luis de Cordoba, Sebastián de Cordoba,  
Cristóbal de Escalante, Juan González, Diego  
Fernandez, Diego Hernandez Rubio (son of  
Sebastián de Cordoba), Rodrigo de León, Gómez  
Luque, Ginés Martinez, Melchor de los Reyes  
(silversmith and enameller), Andrés de Roa,  
Pedro de Roa, Alonso Sanchez, Jerónimo Sanchez  
de la Cruz, Martin Sanchez de la Cruz (Jerónimo's  
son), Pedro Sanchez de Luque, Alonso de Sevilla,  
Juan Urbano, and Lucas de Valdés.

Not much is told us of the lives and labours of  
these artists. The best reputed of them as a  
craftsman was Rodrigo de León, who stood next  
after Juan Ruiz, *el Sandolino*. Ramírez de  
Arellano, from whom I have collected these data,  
publishes a number of León's agreements or  
contracts, which from their length and dryness I  
do not here repeat. In 1603 we find him official  
silversmith to the cathedral, under the title of

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“*platero de martillo* (“silversmith of hammered work”) *de la obra de la catedral desta ciudad.*”

Francisco de Alfaro, although a Cordovese by birth, resided commonly at Seville. In 1578 he received 446,163 *maravedis* for making four silver candlesticks for use in celebrating divine service. These candlesticks are still in the cathedral.

Sebastián de Cordoba was one of the foremost artists of his age. He died in 1587, leaving, together with other children, a son, Diego, who also won some reputation as a silversmith. Ramírez de Arellano publishes a full relation of the property which Sebastián de Cordoba bequeathed at his decease, as well as of the money which was owing to him. Among the former, or the “movable effects,” we read of “Isabel, a Morisco woman, native of the kingdom of Granada; her age thirty-four years, a little less or more.” The same inventory includes a curious and complete account of all the tools and apparatus in Sebastián’s workshop.

But the quaintest notice of them all, though it does not apprise us of his merit as a silversmith, is that concerning Cristóbal de Escalante. Cristóbal suffered, we are told, from “certain sores produced by humours in his left leg; wherefore

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the said leg undergoes a change and swells." He therefore makes a contract with one Juan Jiménez, "servant in the Royal Stables of His Majesty the King," and duly examined as a herbalist ("licensed," in the actual phrase, "to remedy this kind of ailments"), who is to heal his leg "by means of the divine will of the cure." As soon as Cristobal shall be thoroughly well, "in so much that his ailing leg shall be the other's equal in the fatness and the form thereof," he is to pay Jiménez five-and-fifty *reales*, "having already given him ten *reales* on account."

Probably, as Señor Ramírez de Arellano facetiously supposes, Cristóbal, after such a course of treatment, would be lame for all his life. At any rate, he died in 1605, though whether from the gentle handling of the stableman and herbalist is not recorded in these entries.

Still keeping to the sixteenth century, in other parts of Spain we find the silversmiths Baltasar Alvarez and Juan de Benavente, working at Palencia; Alonso de Dueñas at Salamanca; and Juan de Orna at Burgos, about the same time that the foreigners Jacomi de Trezzo and Leo Leoni were engaged at the Escorial. Cuenca, too, boasted three excellent silver-workers in the

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family of Becerril, mentioned by Juan de Arfe in company with other craftsmen of the time of the Renaissance.<sup>1</sup> Stirling says of Cuenca and the Becerriles: "They made for the cathedral its great *custodia*, which was one of the most costly and celebrated pieces of church plate in Spain. They began it in 1528, and, though ready for use in 1546, it was not finished till 1573. It was a three-storied edifice, of a florid classical design, crowned with a dome, and enriched with numberless groups and statues, and an inner shrine of jewelled gold; it contained 616 marks of silver, and cost 17,725½ ducats, a sum which can barely have paid the ingenious artists for the labour of forty-five years. In the War of Independence, this splendid prize fell into the hands of the French General Caulaincourt, by whom it was forthwith turned into five-franc pieces, bearing the image and superscription of Napoleon."<sup>2</sup>

A more reliable notice says that this *custodia* was begun by Alonso Becerril and finished by his brother Francisco. The third member of

<sup>1</sup> "Con estos fué mi padre en seguimiento  
Joan Alvarez tambien el Salmantino,  
Becerril, que tambien fué deste cuento,  
Jan de Orna, y Juan Ruiz el Vandolino."

<sup>2</sup> *Annals of the Artists of Spain*, vol. i. pp. 161, 162.







GOTHIC CUSTODIA  
(15th Century)

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this family of artists, Cristóbal, who flourished towards the end of the sixteenth century, was Francisco's son.

Towards the close of the Gothic and during the earlier phases of the Renaissance movement in this country, enormous quantities of gold and silver began to be employed in making these *custodias* or monstrances of her temples ; so that the fifteenth century may well be called, in Spanish craftsmanship, the "age of the *custodia*." A century ago the reverend Townsend, loyal to the Low Church prejudices of his day, spoke of this object with something of a sneer as "the depository of the Host, or, according to the ideas of a Catholic, the throne of the Most High, when, upon solemn festivals, He appears to command the adoration of mankind." Riaño's description is more technical. "The name of *custodia*," he says, "is given in Spain, not only to the monstrance or ostensor where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, but also to a sort of temple or tabernacle, of large size, made also of silver, inside which is placed the monstrance, which is carried in procession on Corpus Christi day (Plate xvi.). In order to distinguish these objects one from another, the name of *viril* is given to the object which

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holds the consecrated Host ; it is generally made of rock crystal, with a gold stem and mount ornamented with precious stones. The small tabernacles are generally objects of the greatest importance, both from their artistic and intrinsic value." A third description of the monstrance, written in quaint and antiquated Spanish verse by Juan de Arfe, is truthfully if not melodiously translated into English rhyme by Stirling :—

“Custodia is a temple of rich plate,  
Wrought for the glory of our Saviour true,  
Where, into wafer transubstantiate,  
He shows his Godhead and his Manhood too,  
That holiest ark of old to imitate,  
Fashioned by Bezaleel, the cunning Jew,  
Chosen of God to work His sov’ran will,  
And greatly gifted with celestial skill.”<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding that the monstrance of Toledo, surmounted by a cross of solid gold, turns the scale at ten thousand nine hundred ounces, and that of Avila at one hundred and forty pounds, the weight of nearly all of these *custodias* is far exceeded by the value of their workmanship. The style employed in their construction is the Gothic, the Renaissance, or the two combined. *Custodias*

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 159, note.

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of the eastern parts of Spain are more affected than the others by Italian influence, noticeable both in decorative motives which recall the Florentine, and in the use, together with the silver-work, of painting and enamels. In other parts of Spain the dominating influence is the later Gothic. Among the former or Levantine class of monstrances, the most important are those of Barcelona, Vich, Gerona, and Palma de Mallorca; and of the others, those of Cordova, Cadiz, Sahagún, Zamora, Salamanca, and Toledo—this last, according to Bertaut de Rouen, “à la manière d’un clocher percé à jour, d’ouvrage de filigrane, et plein de figures.” *Custodias* in the purest classic or Renaissance style are those of Seville, Valladolid, Palencia, Avila, Jaen, Madrid, Segovia, Zaragoza, Santiago, and Orense.

Juan de Arfe y Villafañe, who may be called the Cellini of Spain’s *custodia*-makers, was born at León in 1535. He was the son of Antonio de Arfe, and grandson of Enrique de Arfe, a German who had married a Spanish wife and made his home in Spain. The family of Juan, including his brother Antonio, were all distinguished craftsmen, and he himself informs us that his grandfather excelled in Gothic *platería*, as may be

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judged from the *custodias*, by Enrique's hand, of Cordova, León, Toledo, and Sahagún, and many smaller objects, such as incensories, crosiers, and paxes.

The father of Juan, Antonio de Arfe, worked in silver in the Renaissance or Plateresque styles, and executed in the florid manner the *custodias* of Santiago de Galicia and Medina de Rioseco; but the training and tastes of Juan himself were sternly classical. His work in consequence has a certain coldness, largely atoned for by its exquisite correctness of design and unimpeachable proportions. Arfe's ideal in these matters may readily be judged of from his written verdict on the Greco-Roman architecture. "The Escorial," he says, in the preface to his description of the *custodia* of Seville cathedral, "*because it follows the rules of ancient art*, competes in general perfection, size, or splendour with the most distinguished buildings of the Asiatics, Greeks, and Romans, and displays magnificence and truth in all its detail."

In point of versatility Juan de Arfe was a kind of Spanish Leonardo. His book, *De Varia Conmensuración*, etc., published in 1585, is divided into four parts, and deals, the first part with the practice of geometry, the second with human

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anatomy, the third with animals, and the fourth with architecture and silver-work for use in churches.



This book is prefaced by the portrait of the author, given above. It shows us — what he really was — a quiet, cultured, gentle-hearted man. Indeed, while Arfe was studying anatomy

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at Salamanca, it gave him pain to lacerate the bodies even of the dead. "I was witness," he records, "to the flaying of several pauper men and women whom the law had executed; but these experiments, besides being horrible and cruel, I saw to be of little service to my studies in anatomy."

Arfe's workmanship of the *custodia* of Avila cathedral, which he began in 1564 and terminated in 1571, won for him an early and extended fame. He also made the *custodia* of Burgos (brutally melted during the Spanish War of Independence), and those of Valladolid (finished in 1590), Lugo, Osma, and the Hermandad del Santísimo at Madrid. The *custodia* of Palencia is also thought by some to be his handiwork.

But Arfe's crowning labour was the Greco-Roman *custodia* of Seville cathedral (Plate xvii.). The chapter of this temple selected his design in 1580, and nominated the licentiate Pacheco to assist him with the statuettes. Pacheco also carried out his portion of the task with skill and judgment. A rare pamphlet, written by Arfe and published at Seville in 1587, gives a minute description of the whole *custodia*. In Appendix C, I render this description into English, together with a similarly





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## CUSTODIA OF SEVILLE CATHEDRAL.

*(By Juan de Arp. 1st 16th century)*



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detailed notice of the *custodia* (1513 A.D.) of Cordova. This last, which we have seen to be the work of Juan de Arfe's grandfather, Enrique, is not to be surpassed for fairy grace and lightness, seeming, in the eloquent metaphor of a modern writer, "to have been conceived in a dream, and executed with the breath."

Spain in the seventeenth century had reached the lowest depth of her decadence and impoverishment; and yet we find that century an age—to quote a Spanish term—of "gallantries and pearls," in which a craze for reckless luxury continued to prevail in every quarter. Narratives innumerable inform us of the life and doings of that prodigal court and prodigal aristocracy; their ruinous and incessant festivals; the fortunes that were thrown away on furniture, and jewels, and costume. True, we are told by Bertaut de Rouen that, except upon their numerous holidays, the costume of the Spanish men was plain enough. This author, who calls them otherwise "debauched and ignorant," says that their clothes were all of "méchante frise," and adds that they continually took snuff, "dont ils ont toujours les narines pleines, ce qui fait qu'ils n'ont que des mouchoirs de laine, de toile grise, et peinte comme de la toile de la Chine." The same

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traveller, attending an ordinary reception in the royal palace at Madrid, was unable to distinguish the nobles from the lower orders, except that, by the privilege peculiar to this country, the former kept their hats on in the presence of the sovereign. Even of Philip himself he says: "Le Royd'Espagne estoit debout avec un habit fort simple et fort ressemblant à tous ses portraits"; alluding, probably, to those of Philip the Fourth by Velazquez, in which the monarch wears a plain cloth doublet.

But when the Spaniard dressed himself for any scene of gala show, his spendthrift inclinations swelled into a positive disease. The women, too, squandered enormous sums on finery. The Marchioness of Liche, said to have been the loveliest Española of that day, is spoken of by Bertaut as wearing "un corps de brocard d'argent avec de grandes basques à leur mode, la jupe d'une autre étoffe avec grand nombre de piergeries, et cela luy feioit fort bien." An anonymous manuscript of the period, published by Gayangos in the *Revista de España* for 1884, describes the *fiestas* celebrated at Valladolid in 1605, in honour of the English ambassador and his retinue. In this relation the Duke of Lerma is quoted as

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possessing a yearly income of three hundred thousand *cruzados*, besides "as much again in jewellery and furniture, and gold and silver services." At the state banquets which were given at that wasteful court, even the pies and tarts were washed with gold or silver; and at a single feast the dishes of various kinds of fare amounted to two thousand and two hundred. At the banquet given by the Duke of Lerma, three special sideboards were constructed to sustain the weight of four hundred pieces of silver, "all of them of delicate design and exquisitely wrought of silver, gold, and enamel, together with innumerable objects of glass and crystal of capricious form, with handles, lids, and feet of finest gold."

The whole of Spain's nobility was congregated at these festivals, "richly attired with quantities of pearls and oriental gems," while everybody, young and old alike, wore "diamond buttons and brooches on cloaks and doublets," feather plumes with costly medals, gold chains with emeralds, and other ornaments. The ladies of the aristocracy were also "clothed in costliest style, as well as loaded with diamonds and pearls and hair-ornaments of pearls and gold, such as the women of Castile lay by for these solemnities."

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The Spanish churches, too, continued to be veritable storehouses of treasure. The manuscript published by Gayangos says that in 1605 the church of La Merced at Valladolid had its altars "covered with beautiful gold and silver vessels, of which there are a great many in the whole of Castilla la Vieja, and particularly here at Valladolid." Bertaut de Rouen's notice of the shrine of Montserrat in Cataluña has been inserted previously. In 1775 Swinburne wrote of the same temple:—"In the sacristy and passages leading to it are presses and cupboards full of relics and ornaments of gold, silver, and precious stones; they pointed out to us, as the most remarkable, two crowns for the Virgin and her Son, of inestimable value, some large diamond rings, an excellent cameo of Medusa's head, the Roman emperors in alabaster, the sword of Saint Ignatius, and the chest that contains the ashes of a famous brother, John Guarin, of whom they relate the same story as that given in the *Spectator* of a Turkish santon and the Sultan's daughter. . . . Immense is the quantity of votive offerings to this miraculous statue; and as nothing can be rejected or otherwise disposed of, the shelves are crowded with the most whimsical *ex votos*, viz., silver legs,

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fingers, breasts, earrings, watches, two-wheeled chaises, boats, carts, and such-like trumpery.”

Many pragmatics from the Crown vainly endeavoured to suppress or mitigate the popular extravagance. Such was the royal letter of 1611, which forbade, among the laity, the wearing of “gold jewels with decoration or enamel in relief, or points with pearls or other stones. Smaller jewels, of the kind known as *joyeles* and *brincos*,<sup>1</sup> were limited to a single stone, together with its pearl pendant. The jewellery of the women was exempted from these laws, though even here were certain limitations. Rings for the finger might, however, bear enamel-work, or any kind of stone. Enamel was also allowed in gold buttons and chains for the men’s caps, as well as in the badges worn by the knights of the military orders.

“It is forbidden,” continues this pragmatic, “to make any object of gold, silver, or other metal with work in relief, or the likeness of a person; nor shall any object be gilt, excepting drinking vessels, and the weight of these shall not exceed

<sup>1</sup> *Brinco* (*brincar*, to jump or spring). These jewels were so called from their vibrating as the wearer walked. The Balearic Islands were famous for their manufacture; and the late Marquis of Arcicollar possessed a case of valuable examples, most of which proceeded from this locality.

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three marks. All other silver shall be flat and plain, without gilding ; but this does not apply to objects intended for religious worship.”

“All niello-work is prohibited, as are silver brasiers and buffets.”<sup>1</sup>

What I may call the private jewel-work of Spain, largely retains throughout its history the characteristic lack of finish of all the Visigothic treasure found at Guarrazar. From first to last, until extinguished or absorbed by foreign influences two centuries ago, it strives to compensate in ponderous and bulky splendour for what it lacks in delicacy, elegance, and taste. It is just the jewellery we should expect to find among a military people who once upon a time possessed great riches simultaneously with little education, and who, from this and other causes, such as the strenuous opposition of the national church to pagan sentiments expressed in fleshly form, were never genuinely or profoundly art-loving. Long residence and observation in their midst induce me to affirm that as a race the Spaniards are and always have been hostile, or at least indifferent, to the arts ; and that their most illustrious artists have made their power manifest and raised them-

<sup>1</sup> *Suma de Leyes*, 1628, p. 116 (2).



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selves to eminence despite the people—not, as in Italy, on the supporting shoulders of the people.

Dazzle and show monopolized, and to a great extent monopolize still, the preference of this race. The Spanish breast-ornaments of the seventeenth century, preserved at South Kensington and reproduced by Riaño on pages 37 and 39 of his handbook, are strongly reminiscent of the Visigothic ornaments. Who would imagine that a thousand years had come and gone between the execution of the new and of the old? As late as the reign of Charles the Second the culture of a Spanish lady of high birth was little, if at all, superior to a savage's. "False stones enchant them," wrote Countess d'Aulnoy. "Although they possess many jewels of considerable value and the finest quality, it is their whim to carry on their person wretched bits of glass cut in the coarsest fashion, just like those which pedlars in my country sell to country girls who have seen nobody but the village curate, and nothing but their flocks of sheep. Dames of the aristocracy adorn themselves with these pieces of glass, that are worth nothing at all; yet they purchase them at high prices. When I asked them why they like false diamonds, they told me they prefer them

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to the genuine as being larger. Indeed, they sometimes wear them of the bigness of an egg." Even where the stones were real, the Spanish taste in setting and in wearing them was no less execrable. The Countess says: "the ladies here possess great stores of beautiful precious stones, and do not wear, like Frenchwomen, a single article of jewellery, but nine or ten together, some of diamonds, others of rubies, pearls, emeralds, and turquoises, wretchedly mounted, since they are almost wholly covered with the gold. When I inquired the cause of this, they told me the jewels were so made because the gold was as beautiful as the gems. I suppose, however, the real reason is the backwardness of the craftsmen, who can do no better work than this, excepting Verbec, who has no lack of skill, and would turn out excellent jewels if he took the trouble to finish them."

"In the neck of their bodices the ladies fasten pins profusely set with precious stones. Hanging from the pin, and fastened at the lower end to the side of their dress, is a string of pearls or diamonds. They wear no necklace, but bracelets on their wrists and rings on their fingers, as well as long earrings of so great a weight that I know not how they can support them. Hanging from

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these earrings they display whatever finery they may fancy. I have seen some ladies who wore good-sized watches hanging from their ears, strings of precious stones, English keys of dainty make, and little bells. They also wear the *agnus*, together with little images about their neck and arms, or in their hair. They dress their hair in various ways, and always go with it uncovered, using many hairpins in the form of coloured flies or butterflies of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies."

Book-worm authorities, addicted to "dry bones" of letters, are prone just now to doubt this visit of Countess d'Aulnoy to the capital of Spain. But if such patient doubters will compare her narrative with those of other foreigners, *e.g.* Bertaut de Rouen, or the manuscript description of Valladolid, written by a Portuguese, and now in the British Museum library, their scepticism will—or should—be done away with on the moment. The letters of the countess make it plain by copious inner testimony that she actually performed her Spanish visit; and though from time to time she over-colours or misreads the truth, it was the very usages of Spain that were absurd and out of joint, and not, except in isolated instances, the

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sprightly and observant Frenchwoman's account of them.<sup>1</sup>

Elsewhere the Countess says: "Utensils of common metal are not employed here, but only those of silver or of ware. I hear that a little while ago, upon the death of the Duke of Albuquerque, six weeks were needed to make out an inventory of his gold and silver services. His house contained fourteen hundred dozen plates, five hundred large dishes, and seven hundred of a smaller size, with all the other pieces in proportion, and forty silver ladders for climbing his sideboard, made in grades like an altar in a spacious hall."

These statements have been proved in later years. Dating from 1560, an inventory of the ducal house of Albuquerque was found not many years ago. In it we find the detailed list of gold and silver; cups and dishes, bowls and basins,

<sup>1</sup> But on the other hand I much suspect that the following passage in Alvarez de Colmenar's *Annales d'Espagne et de Portugal* (vol. iii. p. 326) is stolen from Countess d'Aulnoy. "Elles ne portent point de colier, mais en échange elles ont des bracelets, des bagues, et des pendans d'oreille, plus gros que tous ceux qu'on voit en Hollande. Telle est la diversité des goûts des nations différentes, en matière de beauté. Il y en a même quelques-unes, qui attachent quelque beau joli bijou à leurs pendans d'oreilles, quelque ornement de pierreries, par exemple, ou d'autres choses semblables, selon leur quantité ou leur pouvoir."

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plates and salt-cellars, trenchers, wine and water flagons, sauce-spoons, salad-spoons, conserve-spoons, and innumerable other articles. Here, too, we find, upon the mighty sideboard mounted by its forty silver stairs, such objects as the following :—

“A gold cup with festoon-work above and beneath, wrought with leaves in relief. At the top of the foot there issue some leaves that fall down over a small gold staple, and below this, about the narrowest part of the foot, are leaves in relief and several dolphins. The broad part of the foot is decorated with festoons. The lid of this cup is wrought with leaves in relief, and on the crest thereof is a lion, crowned. The cup weighs three hundred and fifty-one *castellanos* and a half.”

“A Castilian jar from which my lord the duke was wont to drink, weighing two marks and five ounces.”<sup>1</sup>

“A cup with a high foot, gilt all over, with the figure of a woman in its midst, and decorated in four places in the Roman manner.”

“A flagon of white silver, flat beneath the stem,

<sup>1</sup> The mark was a standard of eight ounces, and was divided into fifty *castellanos*.

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with a screw-top surmounted by a small lion ; for cooling water."

"A small silver dish, of the kind they call meat-warmers."

"A large silver seal for sealing provisions, with the arms of my lord the duke, Don Francisco."

"A large silver vessel, embossed, with a savage on top."

"A gold horse, enamelled in white upon a gold plate enamelled in green and open at the top ; also a wolf, upon another gold plate enamelled in green, with lettering round about it ; also a green enamelled lizard upon blue enamel ; and a gold toothpick with four pieces enamelled in green, white, and rose ; also a small gold column enamelled in black and rose."

"A silver lemon-squeezer, gilt and chiselled, with white scroll-work about the mesh thereof, through which the lemon-juice is strained."

"A large round silver salt-cellar, in two halves, gilt all over, with scales about the body, and two thick twisted threads about the flat part. One side of it is perforated."

Among the property of the duchess, Doña Mencía Enriquez, we find "a small gold padlock, which opens and closes by means of letters" ; two

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gold bangles ; a gold necklace consisting of forty-two pieces "enamelled with some B's" ;<sup>1</sup> a gold signet ring with the duchess's arms ; and "a gold and niello box with relics, for wearing round the neck." Also, resting on a table covered with silver plates, "a box of combs ; the said box wrought in gold upon blue leather, containing five combs, a looking-glass, a little brush, and other fittings ; girt with a cord in gold and blue silk."

The seventeenth century and a race of native Spanish kings declined and passed away together. A dynasty of France succeeded to the throne of Spain, and with the foreigner came a fresh reactionary movement towards the neo-classic art, coupled with the canons of French taste. Henceforth a century of slow political reform goes hand in hand with slow suppression of the salient parts of Spanish character. Madrid transforms or travesties herself into a miniature Versailles, and national arts and crafts belong henceforward to a Frenchified society which found its painter in Goya, just as the preceding and eminently Spanish society had found its painter in Velazquez.

Another of the causes of the falling-off in Spanish *orfebrería* at this time, is stated to have

<sup>1</sup> For Beltran de la Cueva, ancestor of this family.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

been the craftsmen's overwhelming tendency to substitute the slighter though venerable and beautiful gold or silver filigree (Plate xviii.), for more artistic and ambitious, if less showy work in massive metal. Thus, in 1699, a supplementary chapter of the Ordinances of Seville complained in bitter phrases of this tendency, denouncing it as "a source of fraud and detriment to the republic," and deploring that "of the last few years we have forsaken our goodly usages of older times, in the matter of the drawings entrusted to the candidates who come before us for examination."

In the same year the goldsmiths' and the silversmiths' guild of Seville enacted that none of its members were to work in filigree, unless they were qualified to execute the other work as well. Such efforts to suppress this evil were not new. More than a century before, on April 15th, 1567, the inspectors of the guild had entered the shop of Luis de Alvarado, silversmith, and seized some filigree earrings "of the work that is forbidden," breaking these objects on the spot, and imposing a fine of half-a-dozen ducats on the peccant or oblivious Alvarado.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gestoso, *Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*, vol. ii. p. 134.





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## EARLY CHALICE AND CROSS IN FILIGREE GOLD-WORK

*(Chalice of Saint Isidore, León)*



## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

The modern gold and silver work of Spain is thus exempted from a lengthy notice, seeing that its typical and national characteristics have succumbed, or very nearly so. I may, however, mention the giant silver candelabra in the cathedral of Palma de Mallorca, which were made at Barcelona, between 1704 and 1718, by Juan Matons and three of his assistants. They measure eight feet high by four feet and a quarter across, weigh more than eight thousand ounces, and cost 21,942 pounds, 15 *sueldos*, and 11 *dineros* of Majorcan money. The State seized them during the Napoleonic wars, in order to melt them down for money ; but the chapter of the cathedral bought them back for eleven thousand dollars.

During this century Riaño mentions several factories of silver articles established at Madrid, including that of Isaac and Michael Naudin (1772) and the Escuela de Platería (1778), protected by Charles the Third ; but since the work of these was purely in the French or English manner, they call for no particular notice. The principal objects they produced were “inkstands, dishes, dinner-services, chocolate-stands, cruets, knives and forks, together with buckles, needle-cases, brooches, snuff-boxes, frames for miniatures, and similar trinkets.”

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Early in the nineteenth century Laborde wrote that "the fabrication of articles of gold and silver might become an important object in a country where these metals abound; but it is neglected, and the demand is almost entirely supplied from foreign markets. What little they do in this branch at home is usually very ill executed, and exorbitantly dear. Madrid, however, begins to possess some good workmen; encouragement would increase their number and facilitate the means of improvement; but manual labour is there excessively dear. Hence the Spaniards prefer foreign articles of this kind, which, notwithstanding the expense of carriage, the enormous duties that they pay, and the profits of the merchants, are still cheaper than those made at home."

Several of the inherent characteristics of the national *orfebrería* may yet be noticed somewhat faintly in the ornaments and jewels of the Spanish peasants, though even these are being discarded. A century ago Laborde described the dress of the Mauregata women, near Astorga, in the kingdom of León. "They wear large earrings, a kind of white turban, flat and widened like a hat, and their hair parted on the forehead. They have a chemise closed over the chest, and

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

a brown corset buttoned, with large sleeves opening behind. Their petticoats and veils are also brown. Over all they wear immense coral necklaces, which descend from the neck to the knee; they twist them several times round the neck, pass them over the shoulders, where a row is fastened, forming a kind of bandage over the bosom. Then another row lower than this; in short, a third and fourth row at some distance from each other. The last falls over the knee, with a large cross on the right side. These necklaces or chaplets are ornamented with a great many silver medals, stamped with the figure of saints. They only wear these decorations when not working, or on festivals."

I have a manuscript account in French of Spanish regional costumes at the same period. The dress of the peasant women of Valencia is thus described: "Elle se coiffe toujours en cheveux, de la manière appelée *castaña*, et elle y passe une aiguille en argent que l'on nomme *rascamoño*; quelque fois elle se pare d'un grand peigne (*peincta*) en argent doré. Son cou este orné d'une chaine d'or ou d'argent (*cadena del cuello*) à laquelle est suspendue une croix ou un reliquaire." This was the Valencian peasant's

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

dress for every day. On festivals the same woman would adorn her ears with "pendants (*arracadas*) de pierres fausses; mais lorsque la jardinière est riche, elles sont fines. Une relique (*relicario*) dans un petit médaillon en argent, est suspendue à son cou; ainsi qu'un chapelet très mince (*rosario*) en argent doré."

The peasant women of Iviza, in the Balearics, are described in the same manuscript as wearing "un collier en verre, quelque fois en argent, et rarement en or"; while Laborde wrote of Minorca, another of these islands, that "the ladies are always elegantly adorned; their ornaments consist of necklaces, earrings, bracelets, rings, and chaplets. *The peasants wear these also.*" Of the women of Barcelona he said: "Silk stockings are very common in every class; and their shoes are embroidered with silk, gold, silver, pearls, and spangles."

But Spain, like Italy or Switzerland, or many another country, is throwing off her regional costumes, of which these various jewels form a prominent and even an essential feature. More rarely now we come across the gold and seed-pearl necklaces of Salamanca, the Moorish filigree silver-work of Cordova, the silver-gilt necklaces

## GOLD, SILVER, AND JEWEL WORK

of Santiago, and the heavy *arracadas*, hung with emeralds and sapphires, of Cataluña. Murcia, nevertheless, retains her *Platería*, a street of venerable aspect and associations, where to this hour the oriental-looking silver pendants of the neighbourhood are made and trafficked in.







# Iron-work



## IRON-WORK

THE ancient iron mines of Spain were no less celebrated than her mines of silver and of gold. Nevertheless, the history of Spanish iron-work begins comparatively late. Excepting certain swords and other weapons which require to be noticed under *Arms*, and owing to the commonness and cheapness of this metal, as well as to the ease with which it decomposes under damp, few of the earliest Spanish objects made of iron have descended to our time.<sup>1</sup> Even Riaño pays

<sup>1</sup> A small collection, formed by Don Emilio Rotondo, of primitive iron rings, bracelets, brooches, and other ornaments, is preserved in the Schools of Aguirre at Madrid. Villa-amil y Castro (*Antigüedades prehistóricas y célticas*, and *Castros y Mamoas de Galicia*, published in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*, describes some iron objects of uncertain use discovered in Galicia, together with spear-heads and other weapons or pieces of weapons which will be noticed under *Arms*, and also an object which he says may once have been a candlestick, or else a kind of flute. All these are probably pre-Roman. Dating from the Roman period are an iron ploughshare and some sickles, discovered at Ronda

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

but little notice to this craft in the Peninsula before the second half of the fifteenth century. Henceforth, he says, "it continued to progress in the sixteenth, and produced, undoubtedly, at that period works which were unrivalled in Europe."

The decorative iron-work of Spain may suitably be dealt with in three classes: railings, screens, or pulpits of churches, chapels, and cathedrals; balconies and other parts or fittings applied to public or private buildings of a non-ecclesiastical character; and smaller, though not necessarily less attractive or important objects, such as knockers, locks and keys, and nail-heads.

The last of these divisions, as embracing Spanish-Moorish craftsmanship, shall have, as far as order is concerned, our preferential notice.

Surely, in the whole domain of history, no object has a grander symbolism than the key. In mediæval times the keys of cities, castles,

in Andalusia, and now in the Madrid Museum. Góngora, however (*Antigüedades prehistóricas de Andalucía*), inclines to think that previous to the Roman conquest the occupants of Betica were ignorant of this metal, though not of gold, from which they fashioned diadems and other articles of wear. See also Caballero Infante, *Aureos y barras de oro y plata encontrados en el pueblo de Santiponce*, Seville, 1898.

## IRON-WORK

towns, and fortresses were held to be significant of ownership, or vigilance, or conquest. Especially was this the case in Spain—a nation incessantly engaged in war. Probably in no country in the world has the ceremony of delivering up this mark of tenure of a guarded and defended place occurred so often as here. Do we not read of it in stirring stanzas of her literature? Do we not find it in her paintings, on her stone and metal *rilievi*, or carved in wood upon the stalls of her cathedrals? Therefore the key, just like the sword, seemed, in the warm imagination of the Spaniards, to be something almost sacred. The legislative codes of Old Castile are most minute in their relation of its venerated attributes. Nor were the Spanish Muslims less alive to its importance than their foe, taking it also for an emblem of their own, and planting it in lordly eminence upon their gates and towers of Cordova, and Seville, and Granada. For what was Tarik's Mountain but the key of the narrow gate that led to their enchanted land, as sunny as, and yet less sultry than, their sandy home; truly a land of promise to the fiery children of the desert, panting for the paradise that smiled at them

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

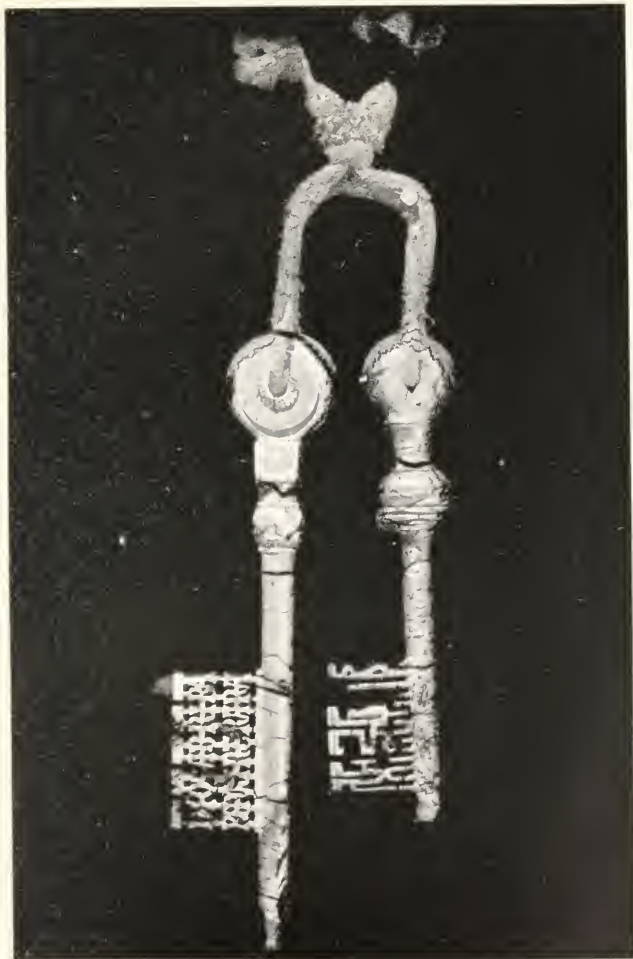
across the storied strip of emerald and sapphire water?

So was it that both Moors and Spaniards made their keys of fortresses and citadels almost into an object of their worship. In hearing or in reading of such keys, the mind at once recurs to those of Seville (Plate xix.), two in number, famed throughout the world of mediæval art, and stored among the holiest relics in the sacristy of her cathedral. The larger is of silver, in the style now known as Mudejar, and dates from the second half of the thirteenth century. The length is rather more than eight inches, and the whole key is divided into five compartments, ornamented in enamels and in gold. Castles, ships, and lions adorn the thicker portion of the stem between the barrel proper and the handle; and on the rim of the latter is this inscription, in Hebrew characters:—

*“The King of Kings will open; the king of all the land shall enter.”*<sup>1</sup>

The wards are also beautifully carved into the following legend, distributed in two rows, one

<sup>1</sup> Riaño's reading was, “*the King of the whole Earth will enter.*” But is not this contradicted by the other inscription on the same key?



1:6

OLD KEYS  
*(Seville Cathedral)*





## IRON-WORK

superposed upon the other, of two words and of ten letters apiece :—

*“ Dios abrirá ; Rey entrará.”*

*“ God will open ; the king shall enter.”*

The iron key is purely Moorish, smaller than its fellow, and measures just over six inches. Like the other, it consists of five divisions, and the wards are in the form of an inscription in African Cufic characters, which Gayangos and other Arabists have variously interpreted. Five of the commonest readings are as follows :—

(1) *“ May Allah permit that the rule (of Islam) last for ever in this city.”*

(2) *“ By the grace of God may (this key) last for ever.”*

(3) *“ May peace be in the King’s mansion.”*

(4) *“ May God grant us the boon of the preservation of the city.”*

(5) *“ To God (belongs) all the empire and the power.”*

Our earliest tidings of this iron key are from the Jesuit Bernal, who wrote in the seventeenth century. It was not then the property of the cathedral chapter, for Ortiz de Zúñiga says that it belonged, in the same century, to a gentleman of Seville named Don Antonio Lopez de Mesa, who had inherited it from his father.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Tradition declares that both this key and its companion were laid at the feet of Ferdinand the Third by Axataf, governor of Seville, when the city capitulated to the Christian prince on November 23rd, 1248. But Ortiz is careful to inform us that he neither countenances nor rejects the popular notion that the iron key was thus delivered as the token of surrender, "although," he says, "the owners of it are strongly of this judgment." What we do know is that on June 16th, 1698, the iron key was presented to the cathedral by Doña Catalina Basilia Domonte y Pinto, niece of the Señor Lopez de Mesa aforesaid; and that the chapter forthwith accepted it with solemn gratitude as "one of the keys delivered by the Moors to the Rey Santo on the conquest of the city," ordering it to be guarded in a special box.

Such is the popular fancy still accepted by the Sevillanos. However, Amador de los Rios has sifted out a good deal of the truth, showing that the iron and the silver key are wrought in different styles, and were intended for a different purpose. He places the iron instrument among the "keys of conquered cities," and its silver neighbour among the "keys of honour, or of

## IRON-WORK

dedication"; and he declares as certain (although the reasons he adduces do not quite convince me) that this iron key is actually the one which figured in the ceremony of surrender. The other he considers to have been a gift from the Sevillians to the tenth Alfonso, son of Ferdinand the saint and conqueror, as a loyal and a grateful offering in return for his protection of their industries and commerce. However this may be, the decorative aspect of the larger key, together with the choice material of which it is made, appears to prove that it was not associated with the rigours of a siege, but served in some way as a symbol of prosperity and peace. It was a common custom at a later age for Spanish cities to present their sovereign, when he came among them, with a richly ornamented key. Such keys were offered to Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second when, in 1526 and 1570, respectively, they visited Seville; while Riaño reminds us that "even in the present day the ceremony is still kept up of offering a key to the foreign princes who stay at the royal palace of Madrid." Similarly, as an ordinary form of salutation, does the well-bred Spaniard place his house at your disposal.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

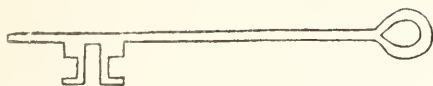
Five Moorish keys—one of bronze and four of iron—are in the Museum of Segovia, and bear, as Amador observes, a general resemblance to the iron key of Seville. The wards of four of them are shaped into the following inscriptions: the first key, "*In Secovia (Segovia)*"; the second, "*(This) key was curiously wrought at Medina Huelma, God protect her*"; the third, "*Open*"; and the fourth, "*This work is by Abdallah.*"

The first and smallest of these keys informs us, therefore, that it was manufactured at Segovia. The third key is that which is of bronze, and bears the word "*Open,*" probably addressed to Allah. The second, which is also the largest and the most artistic and ornate, belonged, we read upon its wards, to Huelma, a fortress-town upon the frontiers of the kingdom of Granada. This town was wrested from the Moors on April 20th, 1438, by Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, first Marquis of Santillana, who possibly sent this key to Castile as a present to his sovereign, Juan the Second, in company with the usual papers of capitulation.

Other Moorish keys are scattered over Spain in various of her public and private collections, though none are so remarkable as those of Seville

## IRON-WORK

and Segovia. The town of Sepúlveda possesses seven early iron keys, several of which are Moorish. Others are at Burgos, Valencia, Palma, Jaen, and Granada. At the last-named city the following key, dating undoubtedly from the period of the Muslim domination, was discovered, in 1901, among the débris of the Palace of Seti Meriem.<sup>1</sup>



Keys of awe-inspiring magnitude are still preferred among the Spaniards to a handier and slighter instrument, this people seeming to believe that the bigger the key the more inviolable is the custody which it affords—a theory not at all upheld by modern experts in this venerable craft. Perhaps this singular and local preference is derived from Barbary. At any rate it still obtains across the Strait. “Our host,” wrote Mr Cunninghame Graham in *Mogreb-El-Aksa*, “knocks off great pieces from a loaf of cheap French sugar with the key of the house, drawing

<sup>1</sup> *La Alhambra* (from which this sketch is taken) for September 30th, 1901; article on the Palace of Seti Meriem, by F. de Paula Valladar.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

it from his belt and hammering lustily, as the key weighs about four ounces, and is eight or nine inches long." Of such a length are nearly all the house-keys of contemporary Spain; and with this apparatus bulging in his belt the somnolent *sereno* or night-watchman of this sleepy, unprogressive, Latino-Mussulmanic land prowls to this hour along the starlit streets of Barcelona, Seville, or Madrid.

The city Ordinances of Granada form a valuable and interesting link between the Spanish-Moorish craftsmanship and that of Spaniards Christian-born. The *Ordenanzas de Cerrageros*, or Locksmiths' Ordinances, though not voluminous, are curious and informative beyond the rest, and show us that a general rascality was prevalent in Granada after her reconquest from the Moor. Locksmiths were forbidden now to make a lock the impression of which was put into their hands in wax, even if the order should be sweetened by "a quantity of maravedis," since the effect of such commissions, whose very secrecy betrayed illicit and improper ends in view, was stated to be "very greatly perilous and mischief-making."

Another Ordinance reveals the Christian lock-

## IRON-WORK

smiths of Granada as arrant scoundrels, almost as troublesome to deal with as the pestering little shoeblacks of to-day. "Word is brought us," groaned the aldermen, "how many locksmiths, foreigners that dwell within this city as well as naturals that go up and down our thoroughfares, in taking locks and padlocks to repair, do, at the same time that they set the keys in order, contrive to fit them with new wards inferior to the older ones, so as to be able to open and close them with the keys they have themselves in store, wherein is grave deceitfulness, seeing that the aforesaid locks and padlocks may be opened in such wise without a key at all."<sup>1</sup>

If we except the vast dimensions of the common keys of houses, this branch of Spanish craftsmanship has now no quality to point it from the rest of Europe, having become, in Riaño's words, "simply practical and useful." Laborde observed in 1809 that "locks and various iron utensils are made in divers places. Locksmiths are numerous at Vega de Ribadeo in Galicia, at Helgoivar in Biscay, at Vergara in Guipuscoa, at Solsona and Cardona in Catalonia. Different kinds of iron goods are manufactured at Vergara, Solsona,

<sup>1</sup> *Ordenanzas de Granada*, p. 191.

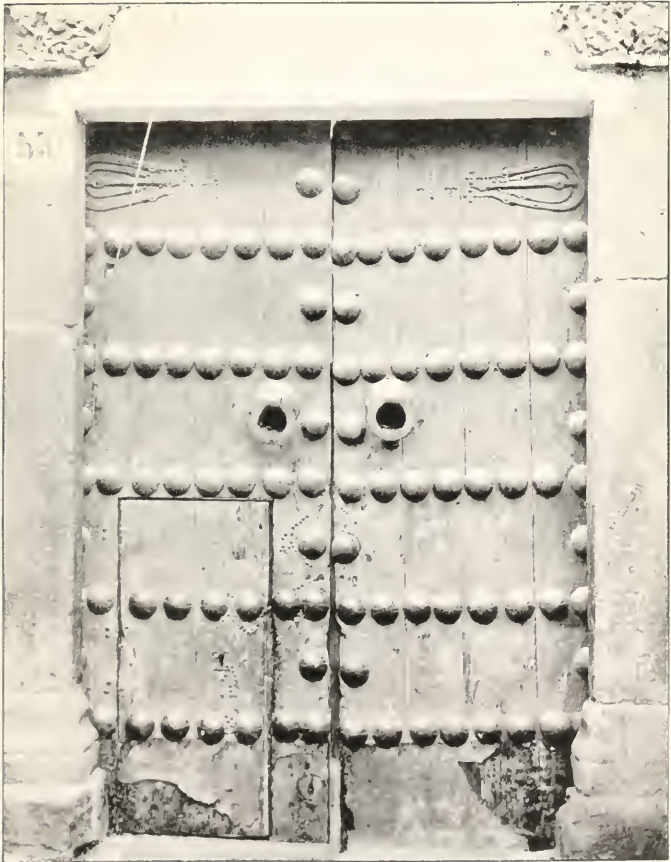
## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

and Cardona. The articles made of iron and steel at Solsona are in high estimation, notwithstanding they are destitute of taste and elegance, badly finished, and worse polished; and can by no means be put in competition with similar articles introduced from other countries.”<sup>1</sup>

Iron nails with ornamented heads and decorative door-knockers are other objects which reveal the influence of Mohammedan Spain. A number of artistic Spanish nails are in the South Kensington Museum. “Some doors,” says Riaño, “still exist at the Alhambra, Granada, covered with enormous heads of nails of a half-spherical form with embossed pattern. These same nails are constantly to be found on old Spanish houses, to which are added in the angles pieces of iron of a most artistic order” (Pl. xix.A). In the same city, though

<sup>1</sup> Those of my readers who have visited Spain will probably have seen the inlaid iron-work of Eibar and Toledo. The objects chiefly manufactured in this style are brooches, bracelets, scarf and hat pins, photograph frames, jewel and trinket boxes, watches, and cigarette cases. The workmanship is often elaborate and costly, nor can it be denied that the red or greenish gold has an effective look against the jet-black surface of the polished or unpolished iron. Upon the other hand, the taste displayed in the design is seldom good; while in a climate with the slightest tendency to damp, the iron is apt to rust and tarnish, and the fine inlay to loosen.





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DECORATIVE NAIL-HEADS

*(Convent of San Antonio, Toledo)*



## IRON-WORK

not precisely in the Alhambra, I have seen upon the doors of private houses nails of a decorative kind which appear to consist of a single piece, but which are really formed of two—an ornamental boss perforated through its centre, and the nail proper, which fastens through it to the wood-work of the door behind. Thus, when the nail is hammered tight upon the boss, the effect is naturally that of a single piece of metal. Similar nails are on the door of Tavera's hospital at Toledo.

The *Ordenanzas* of Granada tell us minutely of the nails which were produced there in the sixteenth century. They were denominated *cabriales*, *costaneros*, *palmares*, *bolayques*, *vizcainos*, *sabetinos*, and *moriscos*; of all of which I can only find that the *cabriales* and *costaneros* were used for beams and rafters, and the *moriscos* for fixing horse-shoes. In Spain the custom of fastening down the decorative coverings of chairs or benches dates from comparatively late; and it was probably with this innovation that iron-workers began to exercise their ingenuity upon the heads of nails.

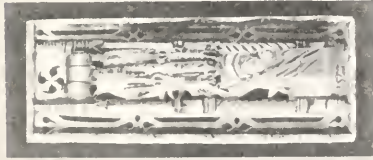
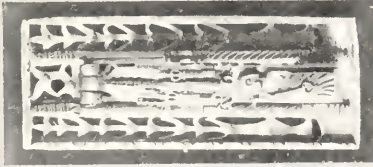
Towards the close of the Middle Ages the city of Segovia was celebrated for her locks and keys, her knockers, and her *rejas*. In 1892, collections

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

of iron objects, chiefly manufactured in this town, were shown by the duke of Segovia, Don Nicolás Duque, and Don Adolfo Herrera at the Exposición Histórico-Europea of Madrid. Segovia still preserves an old door covered with extraordinary iron spikes, that once belonged to the castle of Pedraza; many curious balconies, such as that in a first floor of the Calle del Carmen; and the grilles—proceeding from the old cathedral—of the chapel of the Cristo del Consuelo and the chapel of the Piedad.

Another interesting collection of early decorative Spanish iron, belonging to the well-known painter, Señor Rusiñol, is kept at the town of Sitjes, in Cataluña. The late Marquis of Arcicollar possessed a number of specimens of Spanish manufactured iron of the later Middle Ages, such as boxes, candelabra, locks, nails, door-knockers, *braseros*, and a rare and curious iron desk (fourteenth century), with leather fittings.

The collection of the late Count of Valencia de Don Juan included four door-knockers of Spanish iron, dating from late in the fifteenth century or early in the sixteenth. I give a reproduction of these knockers (Pl. xx.). The two which occupy



DOOR-KNOCKERS  
*(15th Century)*



## IRON-WORK

the centre are evidently from a sacred building ; while the other pair are just as evidently *señoriales*, and belonged to a noble house. In the former pair, the clumsy carving of the saints, Peter and James, is attributed by Serrano Fatigati to the native coarseness of the iron.

Proceeding from the same collection are a pair of ceremonial maces and a ceremonial lantern, which I also reproduce (Pl. xxi.), since the Spanish writer from whom I have just quoted pronounces them to be "excellent specimens of the iron-work of our country at the close of the Middle Ages." He says that, as we notice in the pinnacles, they show a tendency to copy architectural detail, and are otherwise characteristic of the period. Towards the fourteenth century the file replaced the hammer, and the sheet of iron was substituted for the bar. These objects, dating from the fifteenth century, duly reveal this change. Also, as was usual at the time, they are composed of separate pieces stoutly riveted. In the knockers with the figures of the saints "we notice the partial use of the chisel, which became general in the sixteenth century, at the same time that iron objects were loaded with images, forms of animals, and other capricious figures. These may be said

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

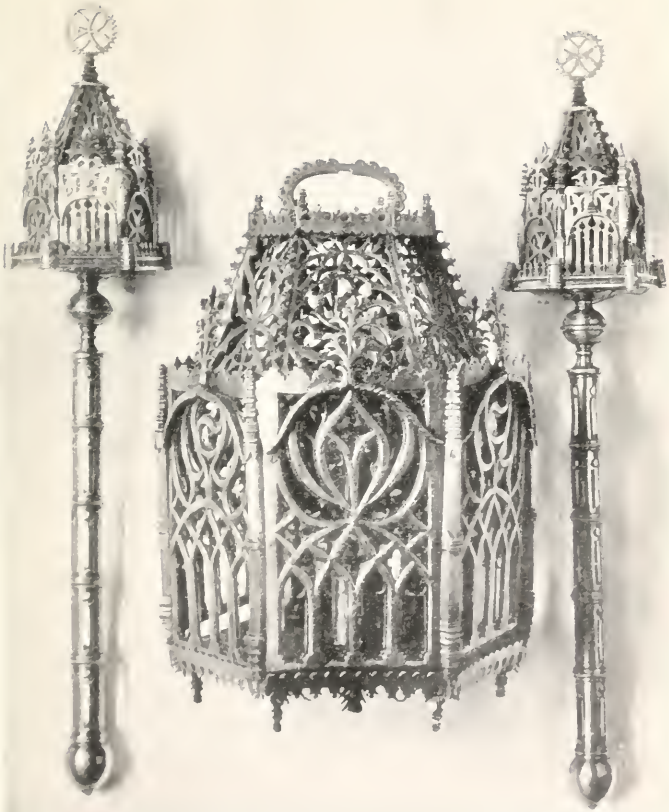
to belong to a period of transition, culminating in the *rejas*.”<sup>1</sup>

The Madrid Museum contains a sixteenth-century cross of *repoussé* iron, in the Greek form, and which is certainly of Spanish make. According to Villa-amil, it formerly had a gilded border and was painted black, which leads this writer to suppose that it was used at funerals. Iron crosses may be seen occasionally on churches and on other public buildings, and Stirling has inserted cuts of several in his *Annals of the Artists of Spain*. Crosses of large size were sometimes planted on the highway. Such was the elaborate but ugly iron cross, measuring three yards in height, made by Sebastian Conde in 1692 for the Plazuela de la Cerrajería in Seville, and now preserved in her Museum.

The iron balustrade or *verja* of the marble tomb of Cardinal Cisneros is finely wrought in Plateresque-Renaissance, with elaborate designs of gryphons, foliage, urns, birds, masks, sheep's heads, swans, coats of arms, dolphins, and other ornament in great profusion. The craftsman was Nicolás de Vergara the elder. Lesser in size,

<sup>1</sup> Serrano Fatigati, in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*.





CEREMONIAL MACES AND LANTERN

*(15th Century)*



## IRON-WORK

though not less striking in its execution, is the railing, by Francisco de Villalpando, which surrounds the *Altar de Prima* in the choir of Toledo Cathedral.

“Iron pulpits,” says Riaño, “have been made in Spain with great success.” He mentions five : two in Avila Cathedral (Plate xxii.); two at Seville; and one at the church of San Gil at Burgos. The latter is described by Street, who says : “It is of very late date, end of the fifteenth century, but I think it quite worthy of illustration. The support is of iron, resting on stone, and the staircase modern. The framework at the angles, top and bottom, is of wood, upon which the iron-work is laid. The traceries are cut out of two plates of iron, laid one over the other, and the iron-work is in part gilded, but I do not think that this is original. The canopy is of the same age and character, and the whole effect is very rich at the same time that it is very novel. I saw other pulpits, but none so old as this.”

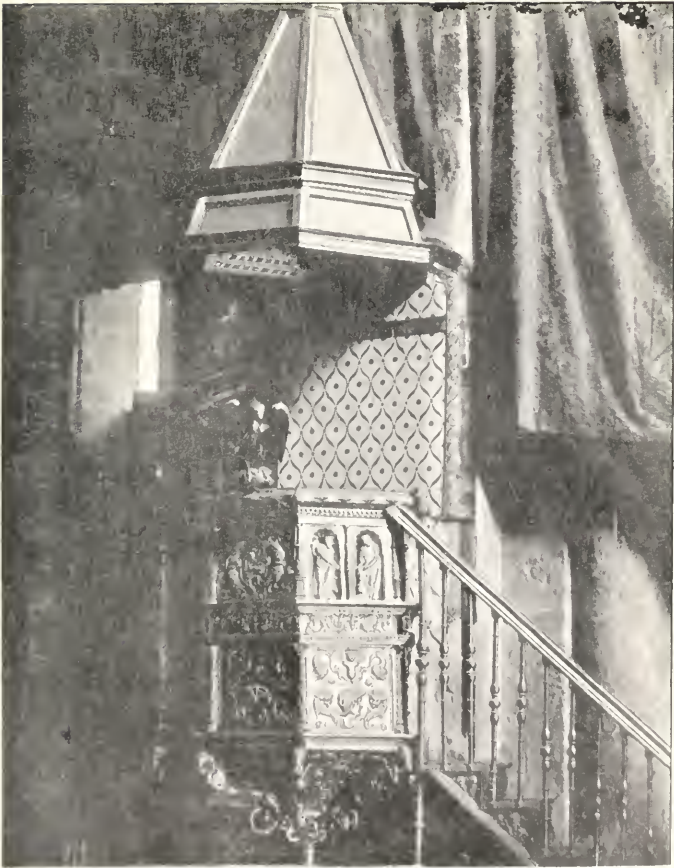
The iron pulpits of Salamanca, “covered with bas-reliefs representing the Evangelists and subjects taken from the Acts of the Apostles and the apocalypse,” were made at the same time as the *reja* by Fray Francisco de Zalamea or

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Salamanca, Fray Juan, and other artists. The two at Avila are stationed one on either side of the Capilla Mayor, and are of gilded iron, hexagonal in form, and measuring about ten feet in height. Gryphons or other beasts support the pulpit on its stem or column. The body of each pulpit bears the arms of the cathedral, namely, the *Agnus Dei*, a lion, and a castle—the whole surmounted by a crown—and is divided lengthways by a central band into a double tier, closed by a richly decorated cornice at the upper and the lower border. Otherwise the pulpits are quite dissimilar. In one the decorative scheme is almost purely geometrical, while in the other it consists of foliage, birds and beasts, and niches containing statuettes of saints. The stair-railings are modern; but the primitive carving still adorns the end of every step.<sup>1</sup>

We do not know who was the maker of these pulpits. Some believe him to have been a certain Juan Francés, to whom our notice will again be called as figuring among the earliest masters of this eminently Spanish craft, and who, on strongish evidence, is thought to be the author of the *rejas*

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed account of these pulpits see Villa-amil y Castro's article in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*.



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IRON PULPIT

*St. Catharine's*



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in the same cathedral which enclose the choir, and the front and sides of the Capilla Mayor. This is the only reason for supposing him to have made the pulpits also. One of these, however, is in the Flamboyant, and the other in the Renaissance style; so it may well be doubted whether both were produced by the same hand, or even at exactly the same period.<sup>1</sup>

It is, however, in the *rejas* that the craftsmanship of older Spain attains its loftiest pinnacle. They consist, says Banister Fletcher, of "rich and lofty grilles in hammered and chiselled iron . . . strongly characteristic of the national art. The formality of the long and vertical bars is relieved by figures beaten in *repoussé*, in duplicates, attached back to back, and by crestings and traceries adapted to the material, and freely employed. Few things in Spain are more original and artistic."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Payments made to "Master Juan Francés" are recorded by Zarco del Valle, *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de las Bellas Artes en España*, pp. 320, 321.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Architecture*, p. 303. They possess, too, the advantage, from their ponderous solidity and fixedness, that most of them are still extant and in the best of preservation, although Napoleon's Vandals rooted up the chapel *rejas* of the Church of Santo Domingo at Granada, and turned them into bullets; just as their general, Sebastiani, threw down the tower of San Jerónimo to

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The *reja* generally was not, as many have supposed, of late invention. It existed from the earliest days of Christianity; but it was only in the Gothic and Renaissance ages that Spain converted it into a vehicle for decorative art. The growth of these ornamental *rejas* may be traced in cities of Old Castile, together with Seville, Salamanca, Cuenca, and Toledo. Spain, it is idle to observe, was at no moment so appreciative of her craftsmen as was Italy, so that our information as to mediæval Spanish craftsmen and the process of their lives and labours is, upon the whole, deplorably deficient. Nevertheless, among the oldest of her artists known in Spanish as *rejeros*, or (a finer and more venerable term) "*reja*-masters"—*maestros de rejas*—appears Juan Francés, working in 1494 in Toledo Cathedral and, in the same capacity (for he seems to have been an armourer besides, and to have held the title of "master-

make a trumpery bridge across the trickling stream of the Genil. Scores of thousands of such crimes, not to forget the blowing up of the gate and tower of the Siete Suelos, were perpetrated by the French all over Spain; yet Washington Irving, in a strangely infelicitous passage of his *Tales of the Alhambra*, congratulates the invaders for their reverential treatment of the noblest monuments of Spanish art!



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maker of iron arms in Spain")<sup>1</sup> at Alcalá de Henares, as well as, in 1505, at Osma, in whose cathedral he made the *rejas* of the choir and high chapel.<sup>2</sup>

Although the craftsman's name has rarely been recorded, we know that excellent *rejería* was made at Barcelona in the fifteenth century. Also dating from the fifteenth century, and therefore prior to the Plateresque, is the *reja*, ornamented with leaves and figures of centaurs and other creatures, mythical and real, enclosing the sepulchre of the Anayas in the old cathedral of Salamanca. During the first quarter of the sixteenth century much work in decorative *rejería*

<sup>1</sup> So, in Spain, does war appear to have been connected even with the peaceful *reja*. Similarly, in 1518, the contractors for the grille of the Chapel Royal of Granada were Juan Zagala and Juan de Cubillana, "master-artillerymen to their highnesses." Valladar, *Gula de Granada*, 1st ed., p. 302, note.

<sup>2</sup> A quaint but somewhat tautological and prosy letter concerning matters of his craft, addressed by Francés to the cardinal-archbishop of Toledo, is published in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*, article *Los Púlpitos de la Catedral de Avila*, by Villa-amil y Castro. The *reja* of the presbytery at Burgo de Osma is thus inscribed: "*Izo esta obra maestre Joan Francés maestre mayor.*" The top consists of repetitions of a shield containing five stars and supported by angels, lions, and gryphons. Two iron pulpits project from the lower part of the grille, and a swan of the same metal, with extended wings, rests upon either pulpit.

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was completed in Seville Cathedral by Fernando Prieto, Fray Francisco de Salamanca,<sup>1</sup> Sancho Muñoz, Diego de Adrobo, and others (*vide* Frontispiece). Taught by these, while yet belonging to a slightly later time, and linking in this way the riper and decadent Gothic with the new Renaissance and the Plateresque, were Pedro de Andino, Antonio de Palencia, and Juan Delgado. Rosell observes that without doubt these artists, excepting only Juan Francés—the pioneer of them all—were Spanish-born; and they in their turn were succeeded by other Spaniards who worked most regularly at Toledo; such as Bartolomé Rodríguez, Luis de Peñafiel, and Francisco de Silva.

<sup>1</sup> A Dominican friar, summoned to Seville in 1518, to make her cathedral *rejas*. He also made the pulpits of the high altar in 1531, and was working in this city as late as 1547. Account-sheets penned by his hand were still extant a century ago, and Cean conveys to us some knowledge of Fray Francisco, receiving as the wages of his labour, now a score or so of ducats, now a bushel or two of corn. The friar, whom the canons spoke of with affection for his many virtues, seems to have been a handy man, seeing that between his spells of *reja*-making he put the clock of the Giralda into trim, and built an alarum apparatus to rouse the cathedral bell-ringer at early morning.

For the sums paid to Fray Francisco and to Sancho Muñoz for their work, see Gestoso, *Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*, vol. ii. pp. 365 *et seq.*

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An excellent *rejero* named Hernando de Arenas completed the grille of Cuenca Cathedral in 1557. Three years before, a Cordovese, Fernando de Valencia, had made the intricate Renaissance *reja* of the Chapel of the Asunción in the mosque of that most ancient capital—a noble piece of work, which still exists. Other *rejeros* who were either natives of, or who resided in, this city were Pedro Sanchez, Alonso Perez, Pedro Sanchez Cardenosa, Francisco Lopez, Juan Martinez Cano, and Diego de Valencia.

One of these men, Alonso Perez, a native of Jaen, contracted, on April 13th, 1576, to make the *rejas* of the Capilla Mayor in the church of the convent of the Trinity at Cordova. He was to finish them within one year, at a cost of fifty-one *maravedis* for every pound of iron, of sixteen ounces to the pound. Ramírez de Arellano, who has extracted these notices of Cordovese artists from the city archives,<sup>1</sup> says that the *reja* in question is no longer standing; but a document of the time informs us that it was of an elabor-

<sup>1</sup> Consult his valuable studies, *Artistas exhumados*, published in various numbers of the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursionistas*.

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ate character, and carried architraves, cornices, and the usual decorative detail of the Spanish Renaissance.

In 1593 Pedro Sanchez agreed to make, within four years, a grille for the old chapel of the Concepción, also in Cordova, at a cost of forty-nine maravedis for every pound of iron that the finished *reja* should contain; and a year later the same artist signed a contract for what is thought to be his masterpiece—the *reja* of the chapel of the Holy Cross, in the nave of the *sagrario* of the same temple. The stipulated time was two years only; but the cost amounted in this instance to one hundred maravedis for every pound of the completed *reja*.

Marvels of power and of patience are among the *rejas* of this land. In them, obedient to the genius of the craftsman, the ponderous metal assumes the gossamer lightness of the finest gauze, now seeming to be breathed rather than built across the entrance to some side-chapel, now tapering skyward till we fancy it to melt away, like vapour, on the surface of the lofty roof. Such are the screens—which here demand a brief description—of Toledo and Palencia and Granada; that of Cuenca, where Arenas plied

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his master-hand ; and, first in merit of them all, the peerless *reja*, royal in magnificence and faultless taste, that closes in at Burgos the no less royal-looking chapel of a Count of Haro, sometime Constable of all Castile.

The *reja* of the Capilla Mayor of Toledo Cathedral is twenty-one feet high by forty-six in breadth. "Armies of workmen," wrote Mendez Silva, referring to this screen and to its neighbour, that of the *coro*, "were toiling at them for ten years, nor would their cost have been greater had they been of founded silver." The cost of which he speaks was more than a quarter of a million *reales*, although the workmen's daily wage was only two *reales* and a half, or, in the case of the particularly skilled, four *reales*.

The author of this admirable screen was Francisco de Villalpando, whose plans and estimate were approved by Cardinal Tavera in 1540. "The *reja* consists of two tiers resting on different kinds of marble. Attic columns ornamented with handsome *rilievi* and terminated by bronze caryatides, divide these tiers into several spaces. The upper tier is formed by seven columns of ornate pattern, containing, on a frieze of complicated tracery, figures of animals

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and angels, and other delicately drawn and executed objects in relief. Upon the cornice are coats of arms, angels, and other decoration; and in the centre, the imperial arms of Charles the Fifth, together with a large crucifix pendent from a massive gilded chain. On the frieze of the second tier are the words, ADORATE DOMINUM IN ATRIO SANCTO EJUS KALENDAS APRILIS 1548, and on the inner side, PLUS ULTRA." <sup>1</sup>

The other of the larger *rejas* in this temple—that of the choir—is not inferior in a great degree to Villalpando's masterpiece. It was made by "Maestre" Domingo (de Céspedes),<sup>2</sup> who, in his estimate of June 18th, 1540, engaged to finish it at a total cost of 5000 ducats, "he to be given the necessary gold and silver for the plating" (*Archives of Toledo Cathedral*, quoted

<sup>1</sup> Rosell y Torres; *La Reja de la Capilla del Condestable en la Catedral de Burgos*, published in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*.

<sup>2</sup> He is called Domingo de Céspedes by Cean Bermudez, although, as Zarco del Valle remarks, the surname does not appear in any of the documents relating to this craftsman which are yet preserved in the archives of Toledo cathedral. These documents merely tell us that Domingo was his Christian name, that his own signature was *Maestre Domingo*, and that he and Fernando Bravo were required to find surety to the value of 375,000 *maravedis* for the faithful and expert performance of their work, which they were to complete within two years, receiving for it the sum of six thousand ducats.



REJA OF CHAPEL ROYAL.  
*(Granada Cathedral)*









REYA OF CHAPEL ROYAL  
*(View from interior. Granada Cathedral)*

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by Rosell). This Maestre Domingo was aided by his son-in-law, Fernando Bravo, and both of them, says de la Rada y Delgado, were probably natives of Toledo.<sup>1</sup> In the same city they also made the *rejas* for the Baptismal Chapel, and for the chapels of the Reyes Viejos and Reyes Nuevos.

Excellent Plateresque *rejas* are those of the Capilla Mayor and Coro of Palencia Cathedral—the latter from the hand of Gaspar Rodriguez of Segovia, who finished it in 1571 at a cost of 3400 ducats. In the same city is the *reja* of the chapel of Nuestra Señora la Blanca, finished in 1512 by Juan Relojero, a Palencian, who received for his labour 25,000 *maravedis* and a load and a half of wheat.

The noble and colossal gilt and painted<sup>2</sup> *reja* of the Chapel Royal of Granada Cathedral was wrought between the years 1518 and 1523 by one Master Bartholomew, whose name is near the keyhole. This was a person of obscure life

<sup>1</sup> Conde de Cedillo, *Toledo en el Siglo XVI*. Reply to the Count's address, by J. de Dios de la Rada y Delgado.

<sup>2</sup> The painting of a *reja* was commonly executed by the "image-painter" (*pintor de imaginera*). As the term implies, it was this artist's business to gild or colour sacred furniture, such as altars, panels, images, and decorative doors and ceilings.

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though mighty powers as a craftsman. We know that he resided at Jaen, and, from a document which still remains,<sup>1</sup> that he petitioned Charles the Fifth for payment (sixteen hundred ducats) of this grille, because the clergy had continually refused to liquidate it. He made, besides the work I herewith describe, the *reja* of the presbytery for Seville cathedral,<sup>2</sup> and possibly, as Sentenach suggests, the iron tenebrarium, ten feet high by five across, for the cathedral of Jaen.

The *reja* of the Chapel Royal of Granada, "of two faces, the finest that was ever made of this material,"<sup>3</sup> has three tiers. "The first tier contains six Corinthian pilasters and a broad frieze covered with Plateresque ornamentation, as are the pedestals on which the pilasters rest. In the second tier are the arms of Ferdinand and

<sup>1</sup> Archives of Simancas. *Descargos de las R.C.*; *Legajo 23 prov. Valladar, Guía de Granada* (1st ed.), p. 302, note.

<sup>2</sup> "To Master Bartholomew, *rexero*, twenty gold ducats for the days he took in travelling from Jaen, and for those on which he was at work upon the *reja* of the high altar here in Seville." On March 18th, 1524, the same craftsman was paid 13,125 *maravedis* for making the "samples and other things belonging to the *reja* of the high altar."—*Libro de Fábrica* of Seville Cathedral. Gestoso, *Sevilla Monumental y Artística*, and *Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*, vol. xi. p. 362.

<sup>3</sup> Pedraza, *Historia de Granada* (1636), p. 40.

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Isabella within a garland supported by two lions, and other crowns together with the yoke and arrows;<sup>1</sup> all intertwined with stems, leaves, and little angels of an exquisite effect. Before the pilasters of this tier and of the one immediately above it are figures of the apostles on Gothic brackets—a style we also notice on the fastening of the gate and on the twisted railing; but every other detail of the grille is Plateresque. Upon the top are scenes of martyrdoms and of the life of Christ, the whole surmounted by a decorative scheme of leaves and candelabra, and, over this, a crucifix together with the figures of the Virgin and Saint John. The designing of the figures is only moderately good, but all remaining detail and the craftsmanship are admirable”<sup>2</sup> (Plates xxiii. and xxiv.).

Last on my list of Spanish *reja*-makers I place the greatest and most honoured of them all—Cristóbal de Andino, who, as a modern writer has expressed it, “uttered the last word in the

<sup>1</sup> The yoke and sheaf of arrows were the emblems of these princes—the yoke, of Ferdinand; the arrows, of his queen. Shields of their reign, whether employed in architecture or on title-pages, almost invariably include these emblems and the well-known motto, *Tanto Monta*.

<sup>2</sup> Gómez Moreno, *Gula de Granada*, p. 291.

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matter of giving shape to iron." Cristóbal, son of Pedro de Andino—himself an artist of no mean capacity—excelled in architecture, sculpture, *rejería*, and probably in silver-work as well. "Good craftsmen," wrote his contemporary, Diego de Sagredo, "and those who wish their work to breathe the spirit of authority and pass without rebuke, should follow—like your fellow-townsmen, Cristóbal de Andino—ancient precepts, in that his works have greater elegance and beauty than any others that I witnessed heretofore. If this (you think) be not the case, look at that *reja* he is making for my lord the Constable, which *reja* is well known to be superior to all others of this kingdom."

Such is the *reja* thought, both then and now, to be the finest ever made. The style is pure Renaissance. Two tiers of equal height consist of four-and-twenty ornamented rails or balusters disposed, above, between four columns; below, between four pilasters. An attic is upon the cornice, and contains two central, semi-naked, kneeling figures which support a large, crowned shield. This is surmounted by a bust of God the Father, enclosed in a triangular frame, and raising the hand to bless. On either side of the

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attic are S-shaped crests sustaining circular medallions with the likenesses, in bold relief, of Christ and Mary. Along the friezes are the legends; EGO SUM ALPHA ET  $\Omega$ ; EGO SUM LUX VERA; and ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI, together with the words, referring to the artist, AB ANDINO, and the date A.D. MDXXIII. The decorative scheme is spirited and delicate at once, whether we observe it on the railing, pilasters, and columns, or on the horizontal parts and members of the *reja*. The attic which surmounts the double tier and cornice is finally surmounted by a gilt Saint Andrew's cross; and the entire screen is lavishly painted and gilded throughout.

Here is a thing — almost a being — created out of iron, so intensely lovely that the eye would wish to contemplate it to the end of time; and, as we linger in its presence, if perchance the dead are privileged to hear their earthly praises echoed in the silence of the tomb, surely from his marble sepulchre Cristóbal de Andino listens to such praises at this hour. For yonder, in the neighbouring parish church of San Cosmé, beside a wife devoted and well-loved the great artificer is laid to rest, where Latin words (although of idle purport while the

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*reja* of the Constable remains) are deep engraved to thus remind us of his worth :—

CHRISTOPHORUS ANDINO EGREGIUS  
ARTIFEX ET IN ARCHITECTURA OMNI-  
UM SUI SEculi FACILE PRINCEPS  
MONUMENTUM SIBI PONENDUM LE-  
GAVIT ET CATERINA FRIAS EJUS  
UXOR HONESTISSIMA STATIM MARI-  
TI VOTIS ET SUIS SATISFACIENDUM B-  
ENIGNE CHRISTIANEQUE CURAVIT URNAM CU-  
JUS LAPIDES SOLUM AMBORUM OSSA TEGUNT  
SED ADMONET ETIAM CERTIS ANNUI HE-  
BDOMADE CUJUSQUE DIEBUS SACRIFICIA  
PRO EIS ESSE PERPETUO FACIENDA

But if these splendid *rejas* of her temples constitute to-day a special glory of this nation, her private balconies and window-gratings were in former times, though from profaner motives, almost or quite as notable. Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, few of the foreigners who visited Spain omitted to record their admiration of these balconies, crowded upon a holiday with pretty women. “Il y avoit,” wrote Bertaut de Rouen in 1659, “autant de foule à proportion qu’à Paris ; et mesme ce qu’il y avoit de plus beau, c’estoit que comme il y avoit des balcons à toutes les fenestres et qu’elles







*REYA*  
(*Casa de Pilatos, Seville*)

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estoyent occupées par toutes les dames de la ville, cela faisoit un plus bel effet que les échaffauts que l'on fait dans les rues de Paris en semblables rencontres."

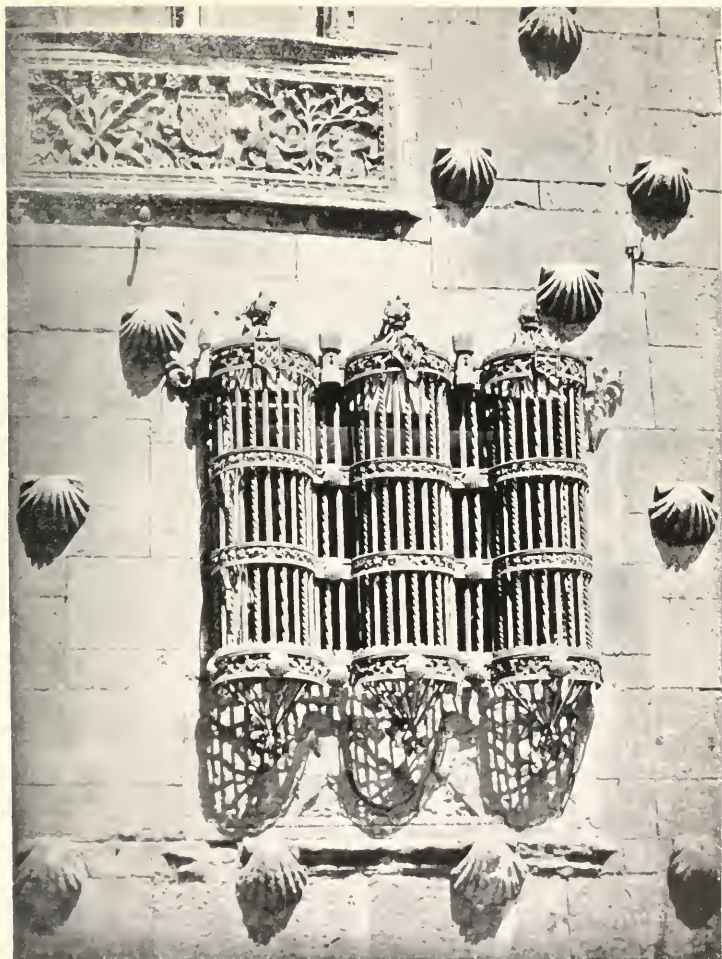
Pinheiro da Veiga, in his queer *Pincigraphia*, or "Description and Natural and Moral History of Valladolid," written earlier in the same century, and published twenty years ago by Gayangos from a manuscript in the British Museum, is more plain-spoken than the Frenchman on the various merits and peculiarities of the Spanish balconies and *rejas*. "All of these churches have the most beautiful iron balustrades and iron open-work doors (*cancelas*) that can be found in Europe, for nowhere is iron worked so skilfully as here in Valladolid. These objects are made by the Moriscos with turned balusters, foliage, boughs, fruits, war-material, trophies, and other contrivances, which afterwards they gild and silver into the very likeness of these metals. I say the same of window-balconies; for nearly every window has its balcony. There are in Valladolid houses up which one might clamber to the very roof from balcony to balcony, as though these were a hand-ladder. So too from balcony to balcony (for the distance from one to

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other is never greater than a palm's breadth) one might climb round the whole Plaza. By reason of this, we Portuguese were wont to say that if there were as many thieves or lovers in Valladolid as in Portugal, verily both one and other of this kind of folks would have but little need of hand-ladders. Yet here the thieves content themselves with stealing by the light of day, while as for the women (crafty creatures that they are!), they perpetrate their thefts away from home; and, having all the day at their disposal, prefer to thief while daylight lasts, rather than pass the night uncomfortably. To this I heard a lady of Castile declare, when one of my friends, a Portuguese, petitioned her for leave to speak with her at night across her *reja*: 'That would be tantamount to passing from one *hierro* to another *yerro*;<sup>1</sup> and in my house (which is also your worship's) it would not look well for you to seem a window-climbing thief.'"

It is curious, in the foregoing narrative, to read of Morisco craftsmen working as late as 1600, and as far north as Castile. Perhaps the notice of Moriscos doing Spanish iron-work may be traced

<sup>1</sup> *Hierro* means *iron*; *yerro*, a *fault*, *faux pas*. Thus glossed, the somewhat feeble pleasantry or pun is able to explain itself.



KEY OF THE CASTLE OF LAS COCHAS

*Salamanca*



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to certain Ordinances of Granada, published about three-quarters of a century before. On October 14th, 1522, the councillors of that town confabulated very lengthily and seriously as to the damage caused by "balconies and *rejas* in the streets, fixed in the basements and the lower rooms of houses, or projecting portals which extend beyond the level of the wall. For we have witnessed, and do witness daily, numerous mishaps to wayfarers, alike on horseback and on foot, whether by day or night, because the highways, narrow in themselves, are rendered yet more narrow by such balconies and *rejas*. Whereas in winter persons seeking to escape the filth by keeping to the wall are thwarted, or at night-time injured, by these *rejas*. Or yet in summer, when the waters swell, and conduits burst and overflow the middle of the street, then neither can they keep the middle of the way, nor pass aside (by reason of the balconies aforesaid) to its edges."

Having regard to all these grievances, the councillors decreed that "none of whatsoever order or condition shall dare henceforth to place, or cause to be placed, about the lower floors or entrance of their dwelling, *rejas* or iron

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balconies, or anything projecting much or little from the level of the wall. But all projections shall be set three yards, not any less, above the street. If not so much, they shall be set within the wall, on pain of a fine of ten thousand *maravedis*, and five thousand *maravedis* to the mason and the carpenter that shall repair their fixing. Further, we order that all balconies and *rejas* now at a height of less than the aforesaid three yards be taken away within three days from the crying in public of these Ordinances.”<sup>1</sup>

For this deplorable state of things a double influence was to blame; namely, the oriental narrowness of the street, and also the elaborate ornamentation, proceeding very largely from a northern Gothic and non-Spanish source, of these annoying yet impressive gratings. Some of them, sweeping the very soil, and boldly and fantastically curved, may yet be seen at Toro. Those of Granada are no more. Indeed, not only have the *rejas* of the Spanish private house long ceased

<sup>1</sup> These laws affecting balconies were not, or not as time went on, restricted to Granada. “Nobody,” prescribes the general Spanish code in force in 1628, “shall make a balcony or oversailing part to fall upon the street, nor yet rebuild or repair any that shall fall.”—Pradilla, *Suma de Todas las Leyes Penales, Canonicas, Civiles, y destos Reynos*.



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to show the decorative cunning of the craftsman, but even in their present unartistic form are largely limited to Andalusia. Yet even thus, they seem to guard a typical and national air, mixed with a subtle, semi-Mussulmanic poetry. Across them, while the term of courtship lasts, the lover whispers with his mistress, oblivious of the outer world, fixing his gaze within, until his sultaness emerges from the gloom, and holds his hand, and looks into his eyes, and listens to his vow. Therefore, in "April's ivory moonlight," beneath the velvet skies of Andalusia, one always is well pleased to pass beside these children of romantic Spain, warming the frigid iron with the breath of youth, and hope, and happiness, and telling to each other a secret that is known unto us all—at once the sweetest and the saddest, the newest and the oldest story of all stories.



# Bronzes



## BRONZES

THE earliest objects of bronze discovered in this country are comparatively few. As in other parts of Europe, they consist mostly of weapons, such as spear-heads and hatchets (which will be noticed under *Arms*), or bracelets, necklaces, and clasps or brooches. Earrings (*inaures*), brooches (*fibulæ*), and other objects of a similar purpose dating from the Roman period have been discovered in Galicia, while plates of the same alloy<sup>1</sup> which imitate a shell were used as personal ornaments by the men and women of the ancient Spanish tribes.

The province of Palencia is a fertile field for archæological discovery. Here have been found some curious clasps, intended, it would seem, to represent the old Iberian mounted warrior, sometimes brandishing the typical Iberian lance. The

<sup>1</sup> Le Hon reminds us, in *L'homme fossile*, that before the Iron Age all bronzes of our western world contained one part of tin to nine of copper.

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following is a sketch in outline of an object of this kind, fashioned as clumsily and crudely as the cheapest wooden plaything of our time :—



Two parts—the figure of the horseman, and a four-wheeled stand on which the warrior's steed is resolutely set—compose this comical antiquity. The rider's only article of clothing is a helmet; while the horse, without a saddle or a bridle, is completely nude. This toy, or table ornament, or whatever it may be, was found not far from Badajoz, where other prehistoric bronzes are preserved in the museum of the province;<sup>1</sup> and Mr E. S. Dodgson says that in possession of an Englishman at Comillas he has seen another bronze rider of primitive workmanship, with the head of a wild boar under his left arm. Those who are interested in the meaning of these early

<sup>1</sup> See Romero de Castilla, *Inventarios de los objetos recogidos en el Museo Arqueológico de la Comisión de Monumentos de Badajoz*. Badajoz, 1896. Plate xxvii. represents another of these objects.



"MELEAGER'S HUNT"  
*(Primitive Spanish Form)*





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bronzes should consult an article, *El jinete ibérico*, by Señor Mélida, published in Nos. 90–92 of the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*.

We know that the use of Roman lamps grew to be general in this land—a fact which justifies my noticing the specimens preserved in the museum of Madrid; and more particularly so because their shape and general character have been perpetuated through the Spanish Moors and Christians of the Middle Ages till this very moment.

The Roman lamp, shaped somewhat like a boat by reason of the *rostrum* or beakish receptacle for the wick, consisted of an earthenware or metal vessel with a circular or oblong body and a handle, together with at least one hole for pouring in the oil. The commonest material was earthenware, and next to this, bronze. The lamp was either suspended by a chain or chains, or else was rested on a stand. Plato and Petronius tell us that the stand was borrowed from the rustic makeshift of a stick, or the stout stem of a plant, thrust into the ground. As time went on, the stem or stick in imitative metal-work was rendered more or less artistic and ornate. But there was more than a single kind of lampstand. The *lychnuchus* (*λυχνούχος*), invented by the Greeks, held various

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

lamps suspended from its branches, while, on the other hand, the Roman *candelabrum* supported but a solitary lamp upon the disc or platform at its top extremity.<sup>1</sup> The island of Egina was famed for the production of these discs, and Pliny tells us that the decorated stem or *scapus* was chiefly manufactured at Tarentum.

The Roman lampstands also varied in their height. When the stem was long they stood upon the ground—a fashion we have seen revived in recent years, and even where electricity replaces oil. When, on the contrary, the stem was short, the stand was known as a *candelabrum humile*, and rested on a table or a stool.

The Madrid Museum contains a remarkable bronze lamp in the form of an ass's head adorned with flowers and with ivy. The ass is holding in its mouth the *rostrum* for the wick. The hole for the oil is shaped like a flower with eleven petals, under one of which is the monogram M†R. The

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly the use of the Roman *candelabrum* was continued by the Spanish Visigoths. "*Candelabrum*," says Saint Isidore, "*a candelis dictum, quasi candela feram, quod candelam ferat*" (*Originum*, book xx., chap. x.). The Spanish word *candela* is loosely used to-day for almost any kind of light or fire, or even for a match; but an ordinary candle is generally called a *vela* or *bugia* (*bougie*).



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A C ANDH  
(Modern)



## BRONZES

back of this lamp consists of an uncouth human male figure, in a reclining posture, wearing a Phrygian cap and holding the ass's head between his legs.

Other lamps of bronze, including several of an interesting character, are in the same collection. One of these represents a sea-deity; another has its handle shaped like a horse's head and neck; and in a third the orifice for the oil is heart-shaped, while the handle terminates in the head of a swan.

There is also a series of three pensile lamps—two in the likeness of the head and neck of a griffin, and the third in that of a theatrical mask; as well as a candelabrum fourteen inches high, terminating beneath in three legs with lions' claws (foreshadowing or repeating oriental motives), and above in a two-handled vessel on which to place the lamp. This vessel supports at present a fine *lucerna* in the form of a peacock.

Probably no people in the world have kept extant, or rather, kept alive, their oldest forms of pottery or instruments for giving light more steadfastly or more solicitously than the Spaniards. Their iron *candil*<sup>1</sup> and brass *velón* of nowadays

<sup>1</sup> "A small open lamp with a beak, and a hook to hang it, within which is another of the same make that contains oil and a wick to

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

(Pls. xxviii. and xxix.)—the one of these the primitive lamp that hangs; the other, the primitive lamp that rests upon a table or the ground—are borrowed with but a minimum of alteration from the lighting apparatus of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and possess, for all their coarse and cheap and unpretentious workmanship, a subtle interest and elegance attributable only to the inspiration of antiquity.

More than the shape of these old objects seems to have passed to modern Spain—if any phase at all of Spanish life can ever justly be accounted modern. The ancients had an almost superstitious reverence for a lighted lamp, and were accustomed to declare that “*lucerna, cum extinguitur, vocem emittit, quasi necata*”; “a lamp, on being put out, utters a sound as though it were being murdered.” Now, it may be a coincidence—although I cannot but regard it as distinctly more than a coincidence—that even at this day give light, commonly used in kitchens, stables, and inns.”—Fathers Connelly and Higgins, *Spanish-English and English-Spanish Dictionary*. Swinburne wrote of these *candiles*:—“The Spaniards delight in wine that tastes strong of the pitched skin, and of oil that has a rank smell and taste; indeed, the same oil feeds their lamp, swims in their pottage, and dresses their salad; in inns the lighted lamp is frequently handed down to the table, that each man may take the quantity he chooses.”



A LAMP  
(Modern)





## BRONZES

a large proportion of the Andalusian people are markedly averse to blowing out a kindled match ; nor do they think it of good augury to be in a room where three lights—candles, matches, or whatever they may be—are simultaneously aflame. I have noticed, too, that, whether from utter carelessness or whether from ancestral superstition handed down from Rome, one rarely sees upon the staircase or the doorstep of a Spanish public building a vesta that has been (if I may be allowed the term) extinguished *artificially*.<sup>1</sup>

In the Madrid Museum are several military bronze *signa* which were found in Spain and date from the Roman era, as well as a *vexillum*, or one of the T-shaped frames on which the warriors of that people used to hang their standards. One of these *signa* is in the form of a wild boar ; another in that of a saddled and bridled horse. Beneath this latter is the word VIVA and a cross, which shows that the object dates from a period not earlier than the reign of Constantine.

It is strange—or rather, would be strange in any

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it is not foreign to my theme to add that the current name in Spanish for an oil lamp is *quinqué*, from Quinquet, the Parisian chemist who invented the *tuyau-cheminée* a hundred and odd years ago. The same word passes also into Spanish slang, “*tener quinqué*”—*i.e.* to be quick-witted and perceptive.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

country that had been less constantly afflicted both with civil and external warfare—that hardly anything remains of all the bronze artistic objects manufactured by the Spanish Moors. Poets of this race have sung of gold and silver fountains, door-knockers, and statues that adorned the buildings of Cordova. In many of these instances the hyperbolic gold and silver of the writers would undoubtedly be bronze. Al-Makkari quotes an Arab poet who extols in passionate terms Almanzor's dazzling mansion of Az-zahyra. "Lions of metal," sang this poet, "bite the knockers of thy doors, and as those doors resound appear to be exclaiming *Allahu akbar*" ("God is great"). Another bard describes the fountains of the same enchanted palace. "The lions who repose majestically in this home of princes, instead of roaring, allow the waters to fall in murmuring music from their mouths. *Their bodies seem to be covered with gold*, and in their mouths crystal is made liquid.

"Though in reality these lions are at rest, they seem to move and, when provoked, to grow enraged. One would imagine that they remembered their carnage of past days, and bellowing turned once more to the attack.





BRONZE LION

*(Found in the Province of Palencia)*

## BRONZES

“When the sun is reflected from their *bronze* surface, they seem to be of fire, with tongues of flame that issue from their mouths.

“Nevertheless, when we observe them to be vomiting water, one would think this water to be swords which melt without the help of fire, and are confounded with the crystal of the fountain.”

Figures in bronze, of eagles, peacocks, swans, stags, dragons, lions, and many other creatures were set about in garden and in hall, to decorate these splendid palaces of ancient Cordova.

A specimen of this class of objects is a bronze lion of small dimensions (Plate xxx.) found not many years ago in the province of Palencia, and believed to date from the reign of Al-Hakem the Second of Cordova. It belonged for some time to the painter Fortuny—a diligent and lucky hunter of antiquities,—and was subsequently purchased in 1875 by M. Piot. The modelling and decoration of this beast, especially the mannered and symmetrical curls which are supposed to form its mane, are quite conventional and strongly reminiscent of Assyrian art, such as pervades the various lions rudely wrought in stone and still existing at Granada; whether the celebrated dozen that support and guard the fountain in

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

the courtyard of the Moorish palace,<sup>1</sup> or else the greater pair of grinning brutes proceeding from the ruins of the palace of Azaque (miscalled the Moorish Mint), which may be noticed squatting with their rumps towards the road, beside the garden entrance to the Carmen de la Mezquita.

This little bronze lion measures about twelve inches high by fourteen inches long. The legs and part of the body are covered with a pattern representing flowers. The mane is described by comma-shaped marks. The tail, bent not ungracefully along the animal's back, is decorated with a kind of plait through nearly all its length. The eyes are now two cavities, but seem in other days to have contained two coloured stones or gems. Upon the back and flanks is a Cufic inscription which says, "*Perfect blessing. Complete happiness.*"

Mussulman historians have described, in terms of cloying praise, the "red gold animals contrived with subtle skill and spread with precious stones" which Abderrahman placed at Cordova upon the

<sup>1</sup> Swinburne fell into a comical error concerning these. "In the centre of the court are twelve ill-made lions *muzzled*, their fore-parts smooth, their hind-parts rough, which bear upon their backs an enormous bason, out of which a lesser rises."—*Travels through Spain*, p. 180.





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## BRONZE STAG

*(Moorish. Muscut of Cordova)*



## BRONZES

fountains of his palaces. "Rivers of water issued from the mouth of every animal, and fell into a jasper basin." The words "red gold" are patently an oriental term for bronze. In view of this, and of the fact that the lion of Palencia is hollow-bellied, with his mouth wide open for ejecting water, and with a tail of cunning craftsmanship, which would avail, on being rotated, to produce or check the current of the "liquid crystal," we may conclude that it was intended both to form a part of, and to decorate a Moorish fountain of old days, and is the kind of beast "with precious stones for eyes" so often and so ecstatically lauded by the Muslim writers.

Similar to the foregoing object, and dating from about the same period, is a small bronze stag (Pl. xxxi.) in the provincial museum of Cordova. It is believed to proceed originally from the famous palace (tenth century) of Az-zahra, and used to be kept, some centuries ago, in the convent of San Jerónimo de Valparaiso.

The museum of Granada contains some interesting Moorish bronzes, found on the site of the ancient city of Illiberis, abandoned by its occupants on their removal to Granada at the beginning

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

of the eleventh century. The most remarkable of these discoveries are pieces of a fountain, a small temple (Plate xxxii.), an *almirez* or mortar (Plate xxxiii.), similar to one (not mentioned by Riaño) which was discovered at Monzón, and a few lamps. The fragments of a fountain end in the characteristic Assyrian-looking lions' heads, with lines in regular zones to represent the eyes and other features. One of the lamps (Pl. xxxiii.) is far superior to the rest. Notwithstanding Riaño's assertion that all of these antiquities are "incomplete and mutilated," this lamp is well preserved, and still retains, secured by a chain, the little metal trimming-piece or *emunctorium* of the Romans. The small bronze temple is sometimes thought (but this hypothesis seems rather fanciful) to be a case, or part of a case, designed for keeping jewellery. The height of it is two-and-twenty inches, and the form hexagonal, "with twelve small columns supporting bands of open work, frescoes, cupola, and turrets; in the angles are birds" (Riaño).

The most important object in this substance now extant in any part of Spain is probably the huge and finely decorated lamp of Mohammed the Third of Granada (Pl. xxxiv.), called sometimes



BRONZE TEMPLE  
*(Mo'ish, Museum of Granada)*



## BRONZES

“the lamp of Oran,” from a mistaken belief that it had formed part of the booty yielded by this city after her capture in 1509 by Cardinal Jimenez de Cisneros.

The material of this lamp is bronze, possibly provided by the bells of Christian churches taken and pillaged by the Moors. It has four parts or tiers of varying shape, delicately wrought in open-work, and reaching a height of nearly seven feet in all. The third and largest tier, corresponding to the shade, is in the form of a truncated pyramid, and shows a different design on each of its four sides. The lamp bears several inscriptions, interrupted here and there through breakage of the metal. The longest of these legends is interpreted as follows :—

“ In the name of God the Merciful. (May) the blessing of God be on our lord Mohammed and his kin ; health and peace. (This lamp) was ordered (to be made) by our Lord the egregious sultan, the favoured, the victorious, the just, the happy, the conqueror of cities, and the extreme boundary of just conduct among the servants (of God) ; the emir of the Mussulmans Abu-Abdillah, son of our lord the emir of the Mussulmans Abu-Abdillah, son of our lord Al-Galib-Billah, the conqueror

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

through God's protection, the emir of the Mussulmans Abi-Abdillah ; (may) God aid him (praised be God)." Here is a breakage and a corresponding gap in the inscription, which continues, "beneath it, lighted by my light for its magnificence and the care of its *xeque*, with righteous purpose and unerring certainty. And this was in the month of Rabié the first blessed, in the year 705.<sup>1</sup> May (God) be praised."

The history of this lamp has been explored with scholarly care by Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos, whose monograph will be found in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*. He says that the lamp was formerly suspended from the ceiling of the chapel of San Ildefonso in the university of Alcalá de Henares. Here, too, he has discovered entries which relate to it in two separate inventories, dated 1526 and 1531, from which we gather that the lamp, excepting the lowest part or tier, which probably proceeded from Oran, was brought to Alcalá by Cardinal Cisneros from the mosque of the Alhambra of Granada.

All of the lamp (continues Amador) that properly belongs to it, is the open-work shade, together with the graduated set of spheres which

<sup>1</sup> September 20th to October 19th, A.D. 1305.



MOORISH LAMP AND MORTAR  
*(Museum of Granada)*





## BRONZES

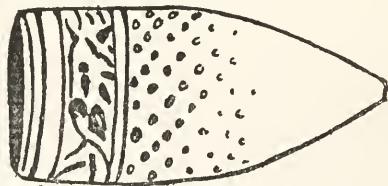
we now observe on top.<sup>1</sup> The lowest part is clearly an inverted bell, from which project four decorative pieces. This is believed by Amador to be a Spanish bell, dating from the fifteenth century, designed for striking with a hammer, and proceeding from some monastery or convent plundered by the Moors. Indeed, one of the two inventories discovered at Alcalá mentions "a bell with a hole in it, *which used to belong to a Moorish lamp,*" thus countenancing the widespread supposition that the lamps of the mosque of Cordova were made of the Christian bells of Compostela, which the fierce Almanzor caused to be conveyed upon the aching backs of Christian captives to the Moorish court and capital of Andalusia.

It is probable, therefore, that the lamp of the third Mohammed of Granada is now composed of two lamps, and that the primitive arrangement

<sup>1</sup> These spheres recall the four great gilded globes of bronze, tapering from the bottom to the top, that crowned in olden days the Giralda tower of Seville. According to the *Crónica General* the glitter of these globes "de tan grande obra, é tan grandes, que no se podrían hacer otras tales," could be distinguished at a distance of eight leagues. On August 24th, 1395, when Seville was assailed by a frightful tempest accompanied by an earthquake, the metal rod which pierced and held the globes was snapped, and the globes themselves were dashed into a myriad pieces on the *azotea*, scores of yards below.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

of its parts was altered by the ignorant. Eight chains would formerly suspend it, in the following order of its tiers or stages, from the dome of the *mezquita*. First and uppermost would come the shade; then, next to this, the set of tapering spheres; and, last and lowest, the saucer or *platillo*, which has disappeared. Further, and as Koranic law prescribed, the lamp would hold two lights—one to be kindled on the saucer, and the other underneath the shade.



Other articles of Spanish-Moorish ornamented bronze are thimbles, buckets, and the spherical perfume-burners which were used to roll upon the stone or marble pavement of a dwelling. Moorish thimbles, conical and uncouthly large, are not uncommonly met with at Granada. I have one, of which the above is an outline sketched to size.

Sometimes these Moorish thimbles are inscribed



LAMP OF MOHAMMED THE THIRD  
*(Madrid Museum)*



## BRONZES

in Cufic lettering with phrases such as—“(May) the blessing of God and every kind of happiness (be destined for the owner of this thimble)” ; or else the maker’s name—“The work of Saif” ; or a single word—“Blessing.”

The thimbles from which I quote these legends are in the National Museum. The same collection includes a very finely wrought bronze bucket or *acetre* (Latin *situlus* ; Arabic *as-setl*, the utensil for drawing water for a bath). The outside is covered with delicate ornamentation, varied with inscriptions of no great interest, invoking Allah’s blessing on the owner or employer of the bucket, which is thought by Amador to be of Granadino workmanship, and to date from about the middle of the fourteenth century.

Not many specimens remain of early mediæval Spanish bronzes wrought by Christian hands. Riaño, who admits that “we can hardly trace any bronze of this period other than cathedral bells,” mentions as probably proceeding from abroad the altar-fronts and statuettes, in gilt enamelled bronze, of Salamanca and elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> and gives a short description of the bell, about six inches high (Pl. xxxv.), known as the Abbot

<sup>1</sup> See p. 50.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Samson's, now in Cordova Museum. This object bears an early date (875 A.D.), and is inscribed, "*Offert hoc munus Samson abbatis in domum Sancti Sebastiani martyris Christi, Era D.C.C.C.C.XIII.*"

It is curious that Riaño should make no mention of Spanish bronze processional crosses. In my chapter on gold, silver, and jewel work I mentioned those belonging to churches in the north of Spain. A bronze crucifix (Plate xxxvi.), believed to date from the beginning of the twelfth century, and proceeding from the monastery of Arbós, in the province of León, is now in the possession of Don Felix Granda Builla. It is undoubtedly of Spanish make, and probably was carried in processions. The style is pure Romanic, and the drawing of the ribs, extremities, and limbs is typically primitive. The *sudarium* is secured by the belt or *parazonium*. The feet, unpierced, rest on a *supedaneum*.

A bronze Renaissance parish cross of the sixteenth century, once hidden in a village of Asturias, was bought some thirty years ago by the museum of Madrid. The body of the cross is wood, covered on both sides with bronze plates wrought with figures of the Saviour as the holy infant and as full-grown man, and also with a



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ABBOT SAMSON'S BELL.  
*19th Century. Museum of Cordoba.*





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figure of the Virgin. These figures were formerly painted, and traces of the colour yet remain. The cross was also silvered. The rest of the ornamentation consists of vases, flowers, and other subjects proper to Renaissance art.

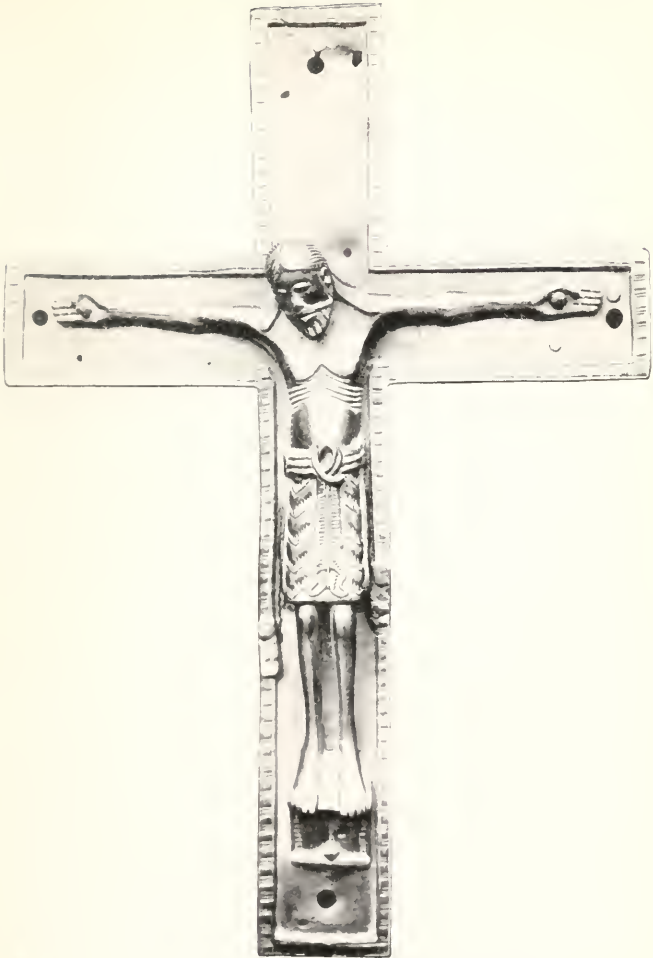
A similar cross belongs to the parish church of San Julian de Recaré, in the province of Lugo, while San Pedro de Donas, near Santiago in Galicia, possesses a processional cross of bronze, pierced along the edges in a pattern of trefoils and *fleurs-de-lis*, but otherwise undecorated.

Sometimes in Spanish bronze we find the handiwork of Moors and Christians picturesquely intermingled, as in the gates of Toledo cathedral (1337), and the Puertas del Perdon—forming the principal entrance to the Court of Orange Trees—of the mosque of Cordova, made of wood and covered with bronze plating decorated with irregular hexagons and Gothic and Arabic inscriptions. The knockers contain a scroll and flowers, and on the scroll the words, *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*. The gate of the same name of Seville cathedral (Pl. xxxvii.) is similar in workmanship, and is considered by Riaño to be a good example of Moresque bronze-work.

While speaking of these doors, we should

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

remember that Moorish craftsmen were employed to decorate or to repair the mosque of Cordova long after it had been converted to the worship of the Christians. When he was acting as viceroy in the year 1275, the Infante Don Fernando confirmed a letter of his father, King Alfonso, remitting tolls and taxes that would otherwise be leviable upon four Moors who worked in the cathedral. The Infante's confirmation, after recording that "one (of the four Moors) is dead and the other blind, in such wise that he can work no more," consents to the engagement of another two, Famet and Zahec by name, to fill their places, and who also are hereby exempted from the payment of all dues. Five years afterwards this privilege was reconfirmed by King Alfonso, and we are further told on this occasion that two of the Moorish four were *albañís*, or masons, and the others *añaiares*, or carpenters. As time progressed, the situation of the vanquished and humiliated Mussulmans grew more irksome. On October 25th, 1320, the Infante Don Sancho, who had usurped the throne, proclaimed, in ratification of a letter issued by his father, that all the Moorish carpenters, masons, sawyers, and other workmen and artificers of Cordova must work in the



BRONZE CRUCIFIX  
*(12th Century)*



## BRONZES

cathedral (presumably without a wage) for two days in every year.<sup>1</sup>

In the latter half of the sixteenth century, Bartolomé Morel, a Sevillano, produced some notable work in bronze.<sup>2</sup> Three objects by his hand—namely, the choir lectern and the tenebrarium of Seville cathedral, and the weathercock or *Giraldillo* which crowns the celebrated tower of the same enormous temple—are specially distinguished for their vigour and effectiveness.

The least important of these objects is the choir lectern, for which Morel was paid six hundred ducats. The decoration is of statuettes and *rilievi*, well designed and better executed. The tenebrarium, aptly defined by Amador as “an article of church furniture intended to make a show of light,”<sup>3</sup> is more ambitious and original.

<sup>1</sup> *Libro de las Tablas*, pp. 17, 18. See Madrazo, *Cordova*, pp. 273 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> In documents which relate to him (see Gestoso's *Dictionary of Sevillian Artificers*) Morel is often called an *artillero*. His father, Juan Morel, was also a founder of cannon, and signed a contract in 1564 to cast two bronze pieces or *tiros*, with the royal arms on them.

<sup>3</sup> The efficacy of light in illuminating, or may be in dazzling and confounding, Christian worshippers is too self-evident to call for illustration. The symbolic meaning of church candles is, however, neatly indicated by the wise Alfonso in his compilation of the seven *Partidas*. “Because three virtues dwell in candles, namely, wick, wax, and flame, so do we understand that persons three dwell in the

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

“ It was designed and made by Morel in the year 1562. Juan Giralte, a native of Flanders, and Juan Bautista Vazquez helped him to make the statues at the head of this candelabrum, and Pedro Delgado, another noted sculptor of Seville, worked at the foot of it. It is eight and a half yards high, and the triangular head is three yards across. Upon this upper part are fifteen statues, representing the Saviour, the apostles, and two other disciples or evangelists. In the vacant space of the triangle is a circle adorned with leaves, and in the centre of this circle is a bust of the Virgin in relief, and, lower down, the figure of a king. All of this part is of bronzed wood, and rests upon four small bronze columns. The remainder of the candelabrum is all of this material, and the small columns are supported by four caryatides, resting upon an order of noble design decorated with lions' heads, scrolls, pendants, and other ornamentation, the whole resting upon a graceful border enriched with harpies.”

Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ; and we may understand three other things that dwell in Jesus Christ ; to wit, body, soul, and godhead. Hence the twelve lighted candles manifested to each quarter of the church exhibit unto us the twelve apostles who preached the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ through all the earth, and manifesting truest wisdom illumined all the world.”



THE PUERTA DEL PERDÓN  
*(Cathedral of Seville)*





## BRONZES

This description of the Seville tenebrarium is translated from Cean Bermudez, and is the one most commonly quoted, though Amador complains that it is not precise, and fails to dwell upon the symbolism of this mighty mass of bronze.<sup>1</sup> Thus, what Cean affirms to be the bust of a king is declared by Amador to be the head of a pope, probably Saint Gregory the Great. Metal, as Cean remarks, is not employed throughout. In order to preserve its balance, the upper part of the tenebrarium, containing the triangle which is said by some to symbolize "the divinity of Jesus as God the triple and the one," is merely wood bronzed over. Amador adds that the foot and stem are intended to represent "the people of Israel in their perfidy and ingratitude." He also says that the statue in the centre of the triangle is that of Faith, and that which crowns the entire tenebrarium, of the Virgin Mary.

Morel, like Brunelleschi, was an architect as well as a craftsman in bronze.<sup>2</sup> He completed this tenebrarium in 1562, and the chapter of the cathedral were so contented with it that

<sup>1</sup> The English rendering of Cean's description inserted by Riaño is inaccurate throughout.

<sup>2</sup> As architect, he made a monument (which exists no longer) for the festivals of Holy Week at Seville.

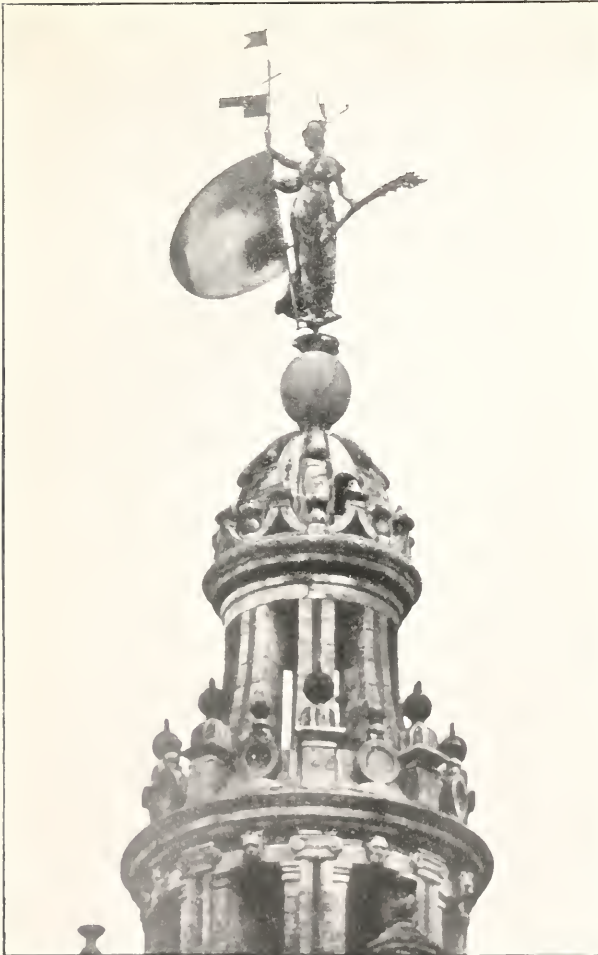
## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

instead of paying him the stipulated price, namely, eight hundred ducats, they added of their own accord a further two hundred and fifty. They also commissioned him to make a handsome case to keep it in ; but the case has disappeared, and the naked tenebrarium now stands in the Sacristy of Chalices of the cathedral.<sup>1</sup> It is still used at the Matin service during the last three days of Holy Week, and still, in the *Oficio de Tinieblas*, the custom is observed of extinguishing the fifteen tapers, one by one, at the conclusion of each psalm.

The title of the object which surmounts the famed Giralda tower of Seville is properly "the Statue of Faith, the triumph of the Church" (Pl. xxxviii.); but it is known in common language as the Giraldillo (weathercock), which name has passed into the word Giralda, now applied to all the tower. The populace of Seville also call it, in the *argot* of their cheerful town, the *muñeco* or "doll," the "Victory," and the "Santa Juana."

This statue, made of hollow bronze, rotates

<sup>1</sup> In 1565 Juan del Pozo, an ironsmith, received one hundred *reales* "on account of an engine which he made of iron for moving the tenebrarium of the cathedral, and other heavy things."—Gestoso, *Diccionario de Artifices Sevillanos*, vol. i. p. 313.



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THE WEATHERCOCK OF THE GIRALDA TOWER

(15th Century, Seville Cathedral)



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upon an iron rod piercing the great bronze globe which lies immediately beneath the figure's feet. The globe is nearly six feet in diameter. The figure itself represents a Roman matron wearing a flowing tunic partly covering her legs and arms. Sandals are secured to her feet by straps. Upon her head she wears a Roman helmet crested by a triple plume. In her right hand she holds the semicircular Roman standard of the time of Constantine, which points the direction of the wind and causes the figure to revolve, excepting when the air is very faint, in which case it is caught by two diminutive banners springing from the large one.<sup>1</sup> So huge are the proportions of this metal lady that the medal on her breast contains a life-size head which represents an angel.

<sup>1</sup> The statue, which looks so tiny from the street, measures nearly fourteen feet in height, and weighs more than two thousand two hundred pounds. The banner alone weighs close upon four hundred pounds. The figure was raised into its place in 1568, in which year I find that eighteen Moriscos were paid seventy-eight *reales* between them all for doing the work of carriage (*Gestoso, Diccionario*). *Gestoso* also mentions a large bronze plate made by Morel for the pavement of the cathedral, and which has disappeared. It weighed 2269 pounds, or about the same as the weathercock of the Giralda, and Morel was paid for it the sum of 289,361 *maravedis*.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

The Spanish Moors were also well acquainted with the use of weathercocks. During the reign, in the eleventh century, of the Zirite kingling of Granada, Badis ben Habbus, a weathercock of strange design surmounted his *alcázar*. The historian Marmol wrote in the sixteenth century that it was still existing on a little tower, and consisted of "a horseman in Moorish dress, with a long lance and his shield upon his arm, the whole of bronze, with an inscription on the shield which says: "Badis ben Habbus declares that in this attitude should the Andalusian be discovered (at his post)."

Not many other objects in this substance can be instanced as the work of Spanish craftsmen of the sixteenth and succeeding centuries, or of the later-Gothic age immediately preceding. Among them are the pulpits of Santiago cathedral, made by Celma, an Aragonese, in 1563; the choir-screen (1574-1579) in the cathedral of Zaragoza, made by Juan Tomás Cela, also a native of Aragon; the gilt lecterns of Toledo cathedral, which are the work of Nicolás Vergara and his son; the Gothic lectern of the mosque of Cordova; the choir-lectern (1557) of Cuenca, made by Hernando de Arenas, who will also be remembered

## BRONZES

as having made the *reja* of the same cathedral ; and the octagonal gilt-bronze pulpits of Toledo, wrought by Francisco de Villalpando, as are the bas-reliefs (1564) upon the door of Lions, executed by the same craftsman from designs by Berruguete.

These last-named pulpits are associated with a legend. Within this temple, once upon a time, rested the metal sepulchre of the great Don Alvaro de Luna, so constructed by his orders that upon the touching of a secret spring the statue of the Constable himself would rise into a kneeling posture throughout the celebration of the mass. His lifelong and relentless foe, the Infante Enrique of Aragon, tore up the tomb in 1449 ; and from its fragments, superstition says, were made these pulpits.

Spanish Renaissance door-knockers in bronze are often curious. Fifteen large bronze rings adorned with garlands, heads of lions and of eagles, or with the pair of columns and the motto *PLUS OULTRE* of Charles the Fifth, were formerly upon the pilasters of the roofless, semi-ruined palace of that emperor at Granada. Removed elsewhere for greater safety,<sup>1</sup> they will now be

<sup>1</sup> Spaniards have a very scanty confidence in one another's

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found among the couple of dozen curiosities preserved in a chamber of the Moorish royal residence of the Alhambra.

Herewith I end my sketch of Spanish bronzes, without delaying to describe the tasteless *transparente* behind the altar of Toledo cathedral, or the neo-classic, Frenchified productions of the reign of Charles the Third, such as the table-mountings of the Buen Retiro, or trifles from the silver factory of Antonio Martinez. At the Escorial, the shrine of the Sagrario de la Santa Forma and the altar-front of the pantheon of the kings of Spain, wrought by Fray Eugenio de la Cruz, Fray Juan de la Concepción, and Fray Marcos de Perpignan, are meritorious objects of their time. But the history of Spanish bronzes properly ends with the Renaissance. This material, possibly from its cost, has not at any time been greatly popular in Spain. Wood, plain or painted, was preferred to bronze in nearly all her statuary. Her mediæval and Renaissance *reja* and *custodia* makers can challenge all the world. So can her

honesty, as well as in the competence of their police. Often, at Madrid, and at this day, the porter of a house, as soon as it is dark, unscrews the knockers from the downstairs door, and guards them in his *conciergerie* until the morning.



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potters, armourers, leather-workers, and wood-carvers. But if we look for masterpieces in the art of shaping bronze, our eyes must turn to Italy, where, to astonish modern men, the powers of a Donatello or Ghiberti vibrate across all ages in the bas-reliefs of Saint Anthony at Padua, or in the gates of the Baptistery of Florence.



# Arms



## ARMS

LOVERS of the old-time crafts approach a fertile field in Spanish arms; for truly with this war-worn land the sword and spear, obstinately substituted for the plough, seem to have grown well-nigh into her regular implements of daily bread-winning; and from long before the age of written chronicle her soil was planted with innumerable weapons of her wrangling tribesmen.

The history of these ancient Spanish tribes is both obscure and complicated. If Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy, and other authors may be credited, the Celtic race invaded the Peninsula some seven centuries before the Christian era, crossing the river Ebro, founding settlements, and fusing with the natives into the composite people known henceforward as the Celtiberians. Thus strengthened, they extended over nearly all the land, and occupied, by a dominative or assimilative policy, the regions corresponding to the modern Anda-

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lusia, Portugal, Galicia, and the flat and central elevations of Castile.

These Spanish tribes were ever quarrelling, and knew, in Strabo's words, "no entertainment save in horsemanship and in the exercise of arms." Quantities of their weapons have been found all over Spain, such as the heads of spears and arrows, or the blades of daggers, hatchets, knives, and swords. With these Iberian tribesmen, as with other peoples of the ancient world, the truly prehistoric age is that of stone; hence they advanced to bronze, and finally to iron. Beuter, the historian of Valencia, wrote in 1534 that near to the town of Cariñena, in Aragon, on digging out some earthen mounds the excavators came upon enormous bones, flint lance and arrow heads, and knives the size of half an ordinary sword; all these in company with "many skulls transfixed by the said stones." In the collection at Madrid, formed by Don Emilio Rotondo y Nicolau, these primitive Spanish weapons number several thousands; and many more are in the National Museum.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to Tubino, the existence of a prehistoric age of stone was not suspected in Spain until the year 1755, when Marin y Mendoza affirmed that a state of society had existed in the Peninsula before the age of metals. Since then the Celtic remains

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Discoveries of ancient Spanish arms of bronze occur less often and in smaller quantities than those of stone or iron. Bronze hatchets, principally of the straight-edged class (*à bords droites*) have been found in Galicia and certain other provinces. Villa-amil y Castro describes a bronze dagger of curious workmanship, which was found in Galicia in 1869. The point of the blade is missing. If this were included, the length of the weapon would be about six inches.

Other examples, now in the Madrid Museum, include two swords, two daggers, and two arrow-heads. The swords, sharp-pointed, narrow in the blade, and used by preference for thrusting, were found not far from Calatayud—the ancient town renowned, as Roman Bilbilis, for weapons of incomparable temper. The daggers were probably used for fighting hand to hand.

At the time of the Roman invasion we find, of Spain and Portugal have been investigated by many scientists, including Assas, Mitjana, Murguía, and Casiano de Prado, who discovered numbers of these weapons. Towards the middle of last century Casiano de Prado, aided by the Frenchmen Verneuil and Lartet, explored the neighbourhood of San Isidro on the Manzanares, and found large quantities of arms and implements of stone. Valuable service in the cause of prehistoric Spanish archæology has also been performed by Vilanova, Torrúbia, and Machado.

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course, the Spaniards using iron weapons. I shall not tax the patience of my readers by enumerating all these weapons. Their names are many, and the comments and descriptions of old authors which refer to them are constantly at variance. Nevertheless, the sword most popular with the Celtiberians at the period of the Roman conquest seems to have been a broad, two-handed weapon with a point and double edge, and therefore serviceable both for cutting and for thrusting. Another of the Celtiberian swords, called the *falcata*, was of a sickle shape. It terminated in the kind of point we commonly associate with a scimitar, and which is found to-day in Spanish knives produced at Albacete. One of these swords, in good condition, is in the National Museum. It has a single edge, upon the concave side of the blade, and measures rather less than two feet. Other weapons in common use among the Celtiberians were an iron dart—the *sannion* or *soliferrea*; the javelin; the lance—a weapon so immemorially old in Spain that patriotic writers trace its origin to the prehistoric town of Lancia in Asturias; and the *trudes* or *bidente*, a crescent blade mounted upon a pole, mentioned by Strabo and Saint Isidore, and identical with





CREST OF JOUSTING HELMET

*(Royal Armoury, Munich)*



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the cruel weapon used until about a quarter of a century ago for houghing coward cattle in the bull-ring.

Thus, when the Romans entered Spain the natives of this country were experienced in the use of arms, and made their own from such materials as their own soil yielded. Their tempering was excellent, for Diodorus Siculus tells us that they had already discovered the secret of burying the metal in order that the moisture of the earth might eat away its baser portions. Besides the ancient Bilbilis in Aragon, a Spanish city famous for her faultless tempering of implements and weapons was Toledo. Martial,<sup>1</sup> the most illustrious son of Bilbilis, has sung the praises of the one; less celebrated poets, such as Gracio Falisco, of the other.<sup>2</sup> Even the armourers of Rome were found to be less skilful and successful swordsmiths than the Spaniards;<sup>3</sup> and so, before the second Punic War, the model

<sup>1</sup> "*Gerone qui ferrum gelat.*" This river, the purity and coldness of whose waters lent, or so it is supposed, its virtues to the steel, rolls past the walls of Calatayud, and is called in later ages the Jalon.

<sup>2</sup> "*Imo Toletano præcingant ilia cultro.*"

<sup>3</sup> "*Romani patriis gladiis depositis Hannibatico bello Hispaniensium assumpserunt . . . sed ferri bonitatem et fabrica solertiam imitari non potuerunt.*"—Suidas.

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or the models of the Spanish sword had been adopted by the Roman army.

Various of the native peoples of Iberia were distinguished by a special instrument or mode of fighting. Strabo says that the Iberians as a general rule employed two lances and a sword. Those of Lusitania were especially adroit in hurling darts. Each of their warriors kept a number of these darts contained within his shield. Upon the head they wore a helmet of a primitive pattern strapped beneath the chin. This helmet, called the *bacula*, protected all the wearer's face, and had a mitred shape, with three red feathers on the crest. Together with these arms, the Lusitanians used a copper-headed lance and the typical form of Celtiberian sword. More singular and celebrated in their mode of fighting were the Balearic islanders, who carried, through persistent exercise, the art of slinging stones and leaden plummets to the utmost limit of perfection. The beaches of these islands, we are told, abounded, then as now, in small, smooth pebbles, "weapons of Nature's own contrivance," rarely suited to the sling.<sup>1</sup> These slings were of three patterns, severally designed for near, far, and middling

<sup>1</sup> *Descripciones de las Islas Pithiusas y Baleares.* Madrid, 1787.

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distances. The lead or stone projectile sometimes weighed a pound. Accordingly—so strenuous was their zeal to be unrivalled in the practice of this arm—even as little children the Balears went without their dinner, till, with the formidable *funda* in their hand, they struck the stick their parents planted for them in the soil. Pliny and Polybius, notwithstanding, state that the sling itself was not indigenous in this region, but imported from Phœnicia. However this may be, the islanders within a little time contributed to swell the power of the Roman legions.

The Visigoths continued using many of the Roman or Ibero-Roman arms. Nevertheless, the solid armour of the Romans, such as their greaves and thigh-pieces and breastplates, was now replaced by primitive chain-mail resembling scales of fishes. According to Saint Isidore, Procopius, and other writers, the favourite weapons of the Spanish Visigoths were the sword or *spatha*, long, broad-bladed, with a double edge; the hatchet, the bow, the sling, the lance, the scythe, the mace, the *pilum* or javelin (used extensively in Spain throughout the Middle Ages),<sup>1</sup> the *dolon*, a

<sup>1</sup> A javelin made throughout of iron was found in Spain some years ago, completely doubled up, so as to admit of its being thrust

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dagger which concealed itself within a wooden staff, and took the name of "treacherous" or "wily" from this circumstance; and the *conto*, a keenly pointed pike. We also find among the military engines of the Visigoths the *balista*, for hurling stones and darts of large size, and the *ariete* or battering-ram, constructed from a gnarled and powerful tree-trunk braced with iron and suspended by a cable. Their defensive body-armour consisted of a coat of mail composed of bronze or iron scales, and called the *loriga* or *perpunte*. This was worn above the *thorachomachus*, a kind of tunic made of felt, in order to shield the body from the roughness of the mail. Upon their heads they wore an ample helmet.

A fragment of stone carving preserved in Seville museum shows us two Visigothic Spanish warriors who wear a tunic and helmet of a simple pattern, and carry a two-edged sword and a large shield. García Llánsó says, however, that the nobles of this people wore close-fitting mail tunics covered with steel scales, a kind of bronze bassinet,

into a burial urn. The javelin in question is now in the Madrid museum, and a similar weapon may be seen in the provincial museum of Granada.



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## SPANISH CROSSBOWMAN

*15th Century. Royal Armoury, Madrid*





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tight breeches, and high boots, and carried, besides the sword which was slung from their belts, a large, oval shield.<sup>1</sup>

From about the time of the Moorish invasion, the changes in the arms and armour of the Spaniards coincided in the main with those in other parts of western Europe. Nevertheless, as late as the eleventh century the Spanish sword retained the characteristic which had endeared it to the Roman legionaries—namely, a hilt of small dimensions and a broad and shortish blade. In course of time the blade grows narrower and begins to taper towards the point. The *quillons* or crossbars (Spanish *arriaces*, from the Arabic *arrias*, a sword-hilt) were originally straight or semicircular, and ended in a knob (*manzana*, literally “apple”; Latin *pomum*, English *pommel*). Thus, in the *Poem of the Cid* we find the verse:—

“*Las manzanas é los arriaces todos de oro son.*”

Throughout these early times the scabbard was of wood lined with leather or with velvet, and strengthened and adorned with leather bands; but when the owner was of high estate, it often

<sup>1</sup> *Historia General del Arte*: García Llánsó; *Armas*, pp. 439, 440.

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bore enamels in the *cloisonné* style; that is, with patches of the coloured, vitreous substance bordered and fastened in by metal wire. In Spain this style, undoubtedly of foreign origin, was superseded in the thirteenth century by *champlevé* enamelling, in which the enamel lies within a hollowed ground.

Spanish mediæval weapons down to the fourteenth century are specified in the *fuero* of Cáceres and other documents contemporary with their use. Next always in importance to the sword we find the hatchet, lance, crossbow, and mace. Montaner's *Chronicle of the Kings of Aragon* tells us that the sovereign, mace in hand, dealt one of his enemies "such a blow upon his iron hat that his brains came oozing out at his ears." Covarrubias mentions a dart-shaped missile called the *azcona*—a word which some authorities derive from the Arabic, and others from the Basque *gascona*, an arm employed by the natives of Gascony. The former derivation seems the likelier. The *fuero* of Cáceres mentions the *tarágulo*, described by the Count of Clonard as a kind of dagger; and at the close of the thirteenth century appears in Spain the poniard, which was called among the Germans

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*panzerbrecher*, or "breaker of cuirasses," and among the French the *misericorde*.

The *fuero* of Cáceres tells us, furthermore, what was the regular equipment of the Spanish foot and mounted soldier of that period. "Each horseman shall go forth to battle with a shield, a lance, a sword, and spurs; and he that carries not all these shall pay each time five sheep where-with to feed the soldiers. . . . Each mounted man or pawn that trotteth not or runneth not to quit his town or village as he hears the call,—the first shall have his horse's tail cut off; the other shall have his beard clipped."

Defensive arms included various kinds of coverings for the head; the *loriga* or covering for the body, the *cálcias* or covering for the legs, and the shield.

The *loriga* (Latin *lorica*) was the ordinary hauberk or shirt of mail, such as was worn all over military Europe, made of rings or scales sewed strongly on a linen or leather under-tunic consisting of a single piece, and reaching to the knee. The *Gran Conquista de Ultramar* of Alfonso el Sabio also informs us that it was tied at certain openings known as *ventanas* ("windows"), and that the collar of the tunic

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was called the *gorguera*. The resistance of the Spanish *loriga* to a pointed weapon does not seem to have been great, for the Chronicle of the Monk of Silos says that at the siege of Viseo the arrows of the Moorish bowmen went through the triple *lorigas* of their foe.

Towards the twelfth century the custom arose of wearing over the coat of mail a loose, sleeveless frock (the *waffenrock* of Germany), woven of linen or some other light material, painted or embroidered with the owner's arms. As the Count of Clonard observes, it is clearly this kind of frock that is referred to in the following passage of the *Leyes de Partida*: "For some (of the knights) placed upon the armour carried by themselves and by their horses,<sup>1</sup> signs that were different one from another, in order to be known thereby; while others placed them on their heads, or on their helmets."

The Normans used a form of hauberk with attached mail-stockings. In Spain we find in

<sup>1</sup> The horse was also covered with a *loriga*, on which, from about the twelfth century, were thrown the decorative trappings of *cedal* or thin silk, painted or embroidered with the warrior's arms.



THE BATTLE OF LA HIGUERUELA  
(Wall painting, Hall of battles, El Escorial)



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lieu of this leg-covering, the Roman *cálcia* (Latin *caliga*), extending from the foot to just below the thigh, and subsequently called the *brafonera*.<sup>1</sup> This was, in fact, a separate mail-stocking, made of closely interlacing steel rings, and worn above the leather boots or *trebuqueras*.

The Spanish *escudo* or shield was usually made of wood covered with leather, and painted with the arms or the distinguishing emblem of its lord. Sometimes it was made of parchment. Thus the Chronicle of the Cid informs us that this hero after death was equipped with "a painted parchment helm and with a shield in the same wise." Another form of Spanish shield, the *adarga* (*atareca*, *atarca*; Arabic *ad-darka*, to hold upon the arm), of which I shall subsequently notice specimens in the Royal Armoury, was commonly in the shape of a rough oval or of a heart, and made of various folds of leather sewn and glued together. The Chronicle of Alfonso the Eleventh speaks of a certain famine which broke out among the Spanish troops, and caused them such priva-

<sup>1</sup> "Calzó las brafoneras que eran bien obradas  
Con sortijas de acero, sabet bien enlazadas;  
Así eran presas é bien trabadas,  
Que semejaban calzas de las tiendas tejadas."

*Poem of the Cid.*

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tion that "they chewed the leather of their shields."<sup>1</sup>

The battle headgear of this people passed through many changes. "The helmet of the eighth century," says the Count of Clonard, "was the same which had been used by the Cantabrians and Vascones before the general peace proclaimed by Augustus Cæsar. Helmets of this design are engraved upon the medals (reproduced by Florez) of the imperial legate Publius Carisius. They covered the entire head and face, leaving only two holes for the eyes, as we see upon the carved stone fragments in relief at the door of the church of San Pedro de Villanueva, representing the struggle of King Froila with a bear."

Another form of helmet which the Spaniards began to use about this time was the *almofar* (Arabic *al-mejfar*), made of iron scales. It covered all the head, with the exception of the eyes, nose, and mouth, and corresponds to the *camail* of the Normans. Beneath it was worn the linen *cofia*, a kind of bag or cap in which the warrior gathered up his hair. After about another century a round or conical iron helmet

<sup>1</sup> Count of Clonard, *op. cit.*



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(*capacete*), fitted with cheek-pieces, was superposed on the *almofar* and fastened round the chin with straps. The *capacete* of a noble was often adorned with precious stones and coronets of pure gold, while a spike projecting from the top was tipped with a large carbuncle, in order to catch and to reflect the flashing sunbeams.

The substitution for this spike of multiform and multicolor figures or devices dates from a later age. The Chronicle of Alfonso the Eleventh describes as something altogether novel and surprising, the crests upon the helmets of the foreign knights who flocked, in 1343, to Algeciras to aid the cause of Christianity against the Moor. "All of them," says this narrative, "placed their helmets at the door of their dwellings, supporting them on stout and lofty staves; and the figures on the helmets were of many kinds. On some was the figure of a lion; on others that of a wolf, or ass's head, or ox, or dog, or divers other beasts; while others bore the likeness of the heads of men; faces, beards, and all. Others, too, had wings as those of eagles or of crows; and so, between these various kinds there were in all as many as six hundred helmets."

This brings us to the celebrated helmet or

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*cimera* (Plate xxxix.), now in the Royal Armoury of Madrid, believed till recently to have belonged to Jayme the First, conqueror of Palma and Valencia, and the greatest, both in spirit and in stature, of the old-time kings of Aragon.

Such part of this interesting helmet as is left consists of two pieces, one of them resting loosely on the other. Baron de las Cuatro Torres infers, from a detail which will presently be noted, that the lower of these two pieces is not original; and his opinion was shared by the Count of Valencia de Don Juan, who, notwithstanding, thought the spurious part to be coeval with the actual crest. The upper part consists of a fragment of a helm, made, like some flimsy theatre property, of linen, card, and parchment, and surmounted with the figure of the mythical monster known in the Lemosin language as the *drac-pennat*, or winged dragon, which formed, conjointly with the royal crown, the emblem or device of all the Aragonese sovereigns from Pedro the Fourth to Ferdinand the Second.

There is, however, no reason to doubt the helmet's authenticity. It is known to have remained for centuries at Palma, in the Balearics, where it was worn upon the day of Saint Sylvester



PARADE HARNESS OF PHILIP THE THIRD  
*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



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in each year, by a person who walked in the procession of the *Standart* to celebrate the capture of the city by Don Jayme. This would explain the lower piece contrived and added to the crest itself, in order to adjust the incomplete and upper portion to the subsequent wearer's head. The helmet as originally made was meant for tourneying only, and is therefore fashioned, not of metal, but of the frail theatrical materials I have stated. Copper and wood, says Viollet-le-Duc, were also used in making these objects. The earliest wearer of the helm cannot have been Don Jayme. Baron de las Cuatro Torres remarks that on an Aragonese coin of the reign of Pedro the Fourth, the monarch is wearing on his head something which looks identical with this *cimera*.<sup>1</sup> Demay has further told us that the vogue of such *cimeras*, whose principal purpose was to distinguish seigniories, lasted from 1289 till the introduction of movable visors at the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. The present helmet, therefore, probably belonged to Don Pedro the Fourth of Aragon ("the Ceremonious"), and was made at

<sup>1</sup> *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*; Nos. 16 and 17.

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some time in his reign—that is, between 1335 and 1387. A document has been discovered in which this monarch's son, Don Martin of Aragon, commands that year by year his own helmet, "*nostram emprissiam sive cimbram*," together with the banner of Jayme the Conqueror, is to be publicly exhibited in commemoration of the capture of Majorca. Therefore we may conclude from these important facts that here is the crest of a tourneying helmet which belonged either to Don Pedro the Fourth of Aragon, or else to either of, or possibly both, his sons, Don Juan and Don Martin.

The changes which occur in Spanish arms and armour between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries keep pace, upon the whole, with those in other parts of Europe. It is, however, opportune to notice how the Spanish armies of this time were organized. Their regular cavalry consisted of: (1) the force directly mustered by the king and under his immediate leadership; (2) the mounted burghers who defrayed the whole or part of their expenses, being in certain instances assisted by a stipend which had been created by municipal and local *fueros*; (3) the knights belonging to the military orders; and (4) the barons, together with

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the men these last were called upon, obedient to the summons of the royal *mandadero* (messenger), to mount, equip, provision, and bring to war with them. Such was the heavy cavalry of later mediæval Spain. A lighter class, said by the Count of Clonard to have been recruited from the southern regions of the land, was known as *alfaraces*, *almogávares*, or *omes de la gineta*.

These latter lived in frugal fashion. Water was their only drink; bread and the roots of plants their only food. Their clothing, too, was of the slightest, consisting merely of a shirt, high boots, and a kind of net upon the head. They wore no armour, and carried as their only weapons an *azagaya* and a lance. Their principal value was in skirmishing.

The infantry were also of two kinds. The first, collective or stipendiary, was levied by the towns and cities, and from them received its maintenance. The second was the *almogávares*, who served for scouting, like their mounted comrades of the same denomination. The stipendiary or regular troops proceeded chiefly from the northern provinces—Alava, Guipúzcoa, the Asturias, and the mountains of León, and carried commonly the lance, sword, sling, crossbow, and the *azagaya*—

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this last a dart-shaped missile borrowed from the Berber tribesmen,—the ancient Moorish *azgaya*, the modern *assagai* or *assegai* of Zululand.<sup>1</sup>

In a country which was plunged in ruinous and almost unremitting internecine strife; which was (and is) inherently averse to commerce or to agriculture; and where the bulk of all the national wealth was either locked away in churches and in convents, or in the coffers of great nobles who were frequently as wealthy as, or even wealthier than, the Crown, the armour of the common mediæval Spanish soldier consisted of the plain and necessary parts and nothing more. The aristocracy, upon the other hand, often adorned their battle-harness with the finest gold and silver work, and studded it with precious stones. Even the esquires would sometimes imitate their masters in this costly mode. “We command,” said Juan the First in one of his pragmatics dating from the end of the fourteenth century, “that no shield-bearer shall carry cloth of gold or any manner of gold ornament upon his trappings, scarf, or saddle; or on

<sup>1</sup> One of these weapons may be seen in the Royal Armoury (No. I. 95). It is made of iron covered with leather, and has a laurel-shaped blade with sharpened edges. The other end consists of two projecting pieces of the metal, shaped to resemble the plumes of an arrow. The length of this arm is 5 feet 8 inches.





MOORISH CROSSBOW AND STIRRUP

*Museum of Granada*



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his badge or arms, excepting only on the edges of his bassinet and his cuisses, together with the bit and poitral of his horse, which may be gilded."

It is also evident from Royal Letters of this time, that the kings of Spain depended very largely for the flower of their forces on the private fortune or resources of the Spanish noblemen or even commoners; nor did they ever hesitate to turn these means of other people to their own particular good. The Ordinance of Juan the First, dated Segovia, 1390, commands that, "Every man who possesses 20,000 *maravedis* and upward shall have his proper set of harness, habergeons and scale-pieces, and lappet-piece, cuisses and vantbrasses, bassinet, camail, and war-cap<sup>1</sup> with its gorget; or else a helmet, together with sword and dagger, glaive and battle-axe. And whoso possesses 3000 *maravedis* and upward shall have his lance and javelin and shield, his lappet-piece and coat of mail, and iron bassinet without a camail, and a *capellina*, together with his sword, *cestoque*, and knife. And whoso has between 2000 and 3000 *maravedis* shall have his lance and sword or *cestoque* and knife, or a bassinet

<sup>1</sup> *Capellina*. The Count of Clonard says that this was in the shape of half a lemon, and fitted with a visor with a cutting edge.

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or *capellina*, together with a shield. And whoso has from 600 to 2000 *maravedis* shall have a crossbow with its nut and cord and stirrup, quiver and strap, and three dozen shafts. And whoso has from 400 to 600 *maravedis* shall have a lance, a javelin, and a shield. And whoso has 400 *maravedis* shall have a javelin and a lance."

The wealthier classes responded lavishly to this command. Describing the battle of Olmedo and the forces of Don Alvaro de Luna sent against the Navarrese, the chronicle of the Constable declares that among his entire host could hardly have been found a single cavalier whose horse was not covered with trappings, and its neck with mail. "For some there were that carried divers figures painted on the aforesaid trappings, and others that bore upon their helmets jewels that were a token from their mistresses. And others carried gold or silver bells suspended from their horses' necks by thick chains; or plates upon their helmets studded with precious stones, or small targes richly garnished with strange figures and devices. Nor was there less variety in the crests upon their helmets; for some bore likenesses of savage beasts, and others plumes of various colours; while others carried

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but a plume or two upon their helmet crest, like unto those upon the forehead of their horses.”

The fifteenth century is often called in Spain her golden age of arms—not in the sense that she invented anything new relating to this craft, but that her warriors were more fully and more frequently equipped with what had been imported from elsewhere. As in the case of crested helmets, foreign initiative brought about the substitution of plate or German armour—developed from the chain armour and the coat of mail—for the earlier sets of disconnected pieces. Possibly, as a chronicle which describes the Englishmen and Gascons who were present at the siege of Lerma in 1334 would seem to indicate, it was in consequence of this direct association with the foreigner that the older form of Spanish harness yielded to the new. However this may be, plate armour certainly appeared in Spain at some time in the fourteenth century, and grew in vogue throughout the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. Suits of armour worn by Spanish pikemen and crossbowmen of this period may be profitably studied in the Royal Armoury (Plate xl.); and the same harness is reproduced in the choir-stalls of Toledo cathedral, carved by Maestre Rodrigo in

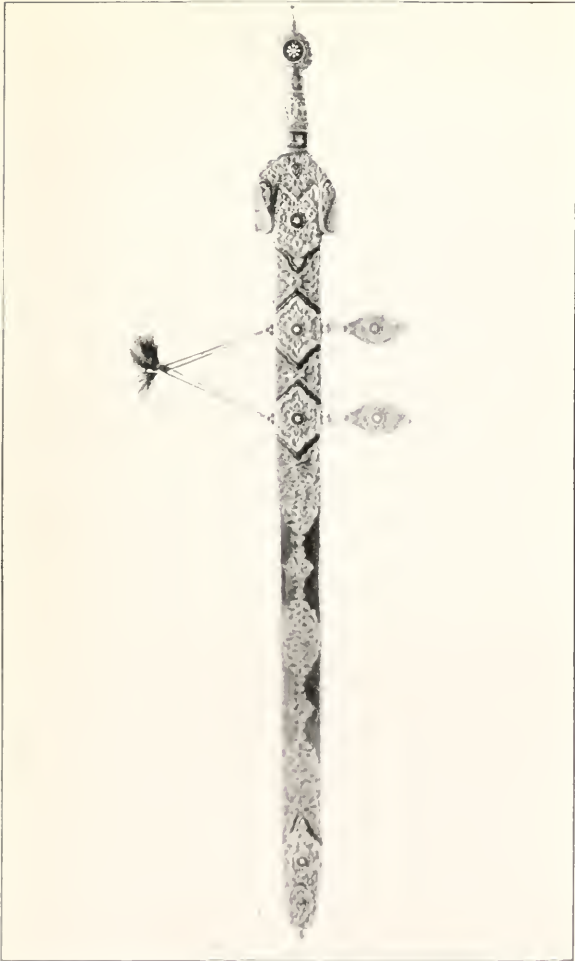
## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

1495. It is also useful to consult the prolix description of the *Passo Honroso* (1433) of Suero de Quiñones, held at the bridge of Orbigo, as well as the painting of the battle of La Higuera (Plate xli.) in the Sala de las Batallas of the Escorial. We find from these authoritative sources that Spanish harness then consisted of the war-hat or *capacete*, with its *barbote* or piece to cover the mouth and cheeks, and fringe of mail (*mantillos*) to protect the neck; the *coracina* or korazin of tinned steel plates;<sup>1</sup> the coat of mail; armlets and gauntlets; leg-pieces with closed greaves; and steel-pointed mail shoes.

The Spanish man-at-arms of the sixteenth century is well described by Martin de Eguiluz, in his book, *Milicia, Discursos, y Regla Militar*. "The man is mounted and bears a lance. His head is covered with a visored helmet. He wears a double breastplate, of which the outer piece is called *volante*. His thighs are guarded

<sup>1</sup> The following armourers' marks are stamped on various korazins in the Royal Armoury, made in Aragon and dating from the fifteenth century :—





MOORISH SWORD  
*Casa de los Tiros, Granada*





## ARMS

by cuisses, his legs by greaves, and his feet by shoes of mail or iron. His horse's face, neck, breast, and haunches are covered with iron or with doubled leather. These coverings are called *bardas*, and the horses protected by them *bardados*, of which each man-at-arms is called upon to possess two."

These plainer sets of war-harness for horses were made in Spain. The costlier bards, whether for war or tournament, were made in Italy and Germany, and often match the outfit of the rider in the splendour and luxuriance of their decoration. Striking examples of these bards are in the Royal Armoury, including one (Plate xlii.) which formerly belonged to Philip the Third. Probably it is the same referred to in the manuscript account of Valladolid from which I have already quoted curious notices of other crafts. Speaking of the Duke of Lerma in 1605, this narrative says; "He rode a beautiful horse with richly decorated arms and gold-embroidered bard, fringed, and with medallions in relief. The trappings, reaching to the ground, were of black velvet covered with silver plates as large as dinner-plates, and others of a smaller size that represented arms and war-trophies, all of them

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

gilt, and studded with precious stones. I heard say that this armour which the Duke now wore, had once belonged to the Emperor, and is now the King's."<sup>1</sup>

The crossbow was an arm of great importance from about the eleventh century until the seventeenth, and Spain, throughout the latter of these centuries, was celebrated for their manufacture. Roquetas, a Catalan, "master-maker of crossbows," constructed them of steel, so skilfully and finely that they could be carried concealed inside the sleeve of a coat, and discharged without awaking the suspicion of the victim. A letter of René of Anjou, quoted by the Count of Valencia de Don Juan, also refers to the skill of the Catalans in making crossbows, and mentions one of these weapons constructed by "Saracen," of Barcelona, "who refuses to teach his craft to Christians." The letter further states that this

<sup>1</sup> My theory that this harness and the one in the Royal Armoury are the same is strengthened by the official inventory, which specifies "a bard of gold and silver, striped, and with devices in relief, studded with lapis lazuli, and yellow gems and luminous crystals." The Count of Valencia de Don Juan says that this fine outfit, except the portions which are represented in the plate, was mutilated and dispersed in later years, and that he has discovered fragments in the museums of Paris and Vienna, and in the collection of Baron Nathaniel de Rothschild.

## ARMS

arm was of a curious shape, and that, "despite its small dimensions, it carries to a greater distance than any other I have yet possessed."

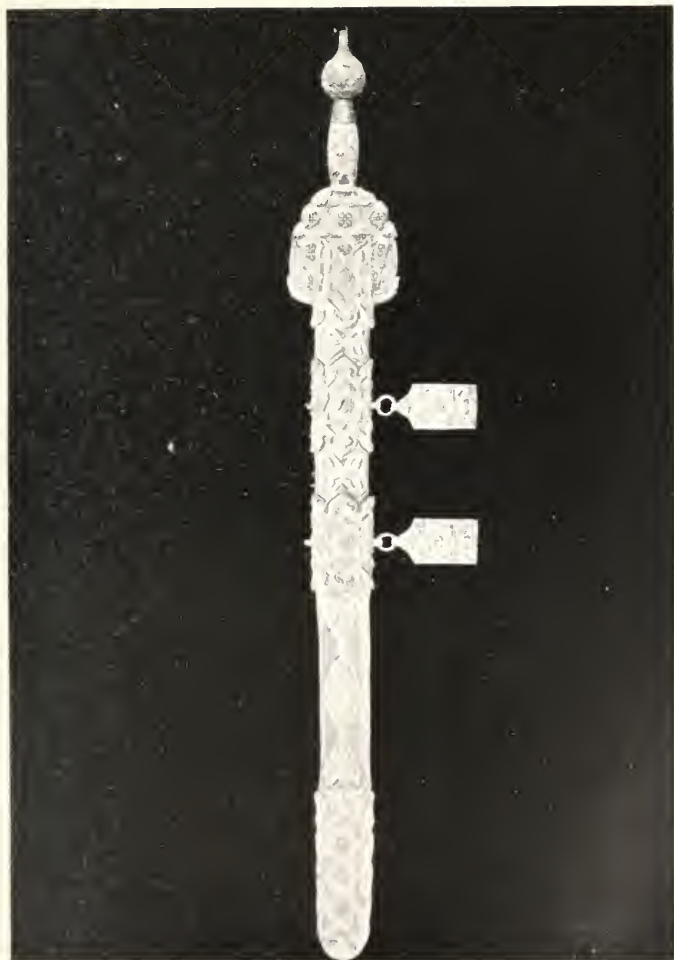
A handsome Moorish crossbow, inlaid with bronze (Plate xliii.), exists in the provincial museum of Granada. The Royal Armoury has no example of the rare form of crossbow fitted with wheeled gear, but all the commoner kinds employed for hunting or for war are represented here, including those with the *armatoste* or goat's-foot lever, stirruped crossbows, and those which have the *torno* or windlass (French *cranequin*). Demmin appends the following note to an illustration in his handbook of a crossbow with a goat's-foot lever fixed to the stock:—"A similar weapon in ironwood, sixteenth century, belonged to Ferdinand the First, proved by the inscription on the bow: DOM FERNANDO REI DE ROMANO, followed by four Golden Fleeces. It bears the name of the Spanish armourer Juan Dencinas. This valuable crossbow once belonged to M. Spengel, at Munich, but it is at present in the collection of the Count of Nieuwerkerke."

There is also in the Royal Armoury a crossbow of the scarcer kind known in Spanish as *ballestas de palo*, in which the gaffle is not of

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

steel, but put together from slips of springy woods, including yew. The wings are tipped with horn, and traces of heraldic and Renaissance decoration, painted on parchment, yet remain upon the weapon. Other portions are inlaid. Except for the erasure of the painting, this arm is splendidly preserved, and still retains its double cord, nut, and pins, together with the separate lever.

Another interesting crossbow in this armoury belonged to Charles the Fifth, who used it for the chase. It has a *verga* or yard of steel engraved with the letter C four times repeated and surmounted by a crown, and bears the inscription, PRO • IMPERATORE • SEMPER • AVGVSTO • PLVS • VLTRA • , together with • I<sup>o</sup> DE LA F<sup>o</sup>VETE • , for Juan de la Fuente, the name of a celebrated maker of these parts of a crossbow. The shaft (*tablero*), ornamented in bone and iron, is from the hand of another master, Juan Hernandez, whose signature is IO: HRZ. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan supposed that this was the one crossbow which Charles took with him to the rustic solitude of Yuste, and which is mentioned in a document at Simancas as “a crossbow with its gear and gaffles (it is in



SWORD OF BOABDIL EL CHICO

*Museo de Armería, Madrid*



## ARMS

His Majesty's possession, but he has not paid for it)."

Hitherto I have traced the war-equipment of the Spanish Christians only. In the early period of Mohammedan rule, the conquerors used a simple dress for war, consisting of the *capacete* or *almofar* for the head, secured by a chain beneath the chin and covered by a piece of cloth called *schasch*, hanging to just below the shoulders; a wide sleeveless tunic; a shirt of mail; tight breeches, and leather shoes. Their weapons were the lance and sword. The foot-soldiery wore the *djobba*, a tight-sleeved tunic of white wool, bound to the body by a scarf, and leather shoes, and carried as their arms a *capacete* of beaten iron, without a crest or cheek-pieces; a large round shield with its projecting umbo; and either a lance, or a double-edged and double-handed sword. Such are the details represented in the *Codex of the Apocalypse*, preserved in the cathedral of Gerona. As time progressed, the weapons and defensive armour of these Spanish Moors grew more luxurious and ornate, being often decorated with enamels, precious stones, or inlaid metals such as silver, gold, and bronze. Prominent centres of this industry were

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Murcia, Zaragoza, and Toledo, which are even said to have surpassed Damascus. Andalusia, too, was celebrated for her gold-inlaid cuirasses and coats of mail; while, according to El Idrisi, the town of Jativa enjoyed a widespread fame for every kind of decorative armour.<sup>1</sup>

The military outfit of the Spanish Moors was, therefore, much the same as that of Christian Spain. Toledo under Muslim rule continued to be famous for her swords. Moorish Seville, Ronda, and Valencia were also favourably known for weapons, household knives, and scissors. Cutlery in the Moorish style is still produced in certain parts of eastern Spain, and in his *History of the Mohammedan Dynasties* of this country, Gayangos tells us of a knife which bore upon one side of the blade the inscription in Arabic characters, "*With the help of God I will inflict death upon thy adversary,*" and upon the other side, in Castilian, the words, "*Knife-factory of Antonio Gonzalez. Albacete, 1705.*"

The primitive Spanish-Moorish sword was an arm of moderate breadth used both for cutting and for thrusting. As time went on, this people

<sup>1</sup> *Historia General del Arte*: García Llansó; *Armas*; pp. 440, 441.



## ARMS

gradually adopted swords of Spanish make or pattern, such as the ponderous *brandimartes* and *montantes* made for wielding with both hands. The Granadino writer Aben Said complains that the adoption of the arms, and even of the costume of the Spanish Christians, was prevalent at Granada in the thirteenth century. "Sultans and soldiers alike," he said, "dress in the manner of the Christians, even to their arms and armour, crimson cloaks, standards, and saddlery. They wield in battle a shield and a long lance,<sup>1</sup> which serves them to attack with; nor do they seem to care for Arab bows or maces, but prefer to use the Frankish ones."

Nevertheless, the warriors of Granada carried several weapons which were not of Christian origin. The tribe of the Beni-Merines brought across from Africa a kind of sword called often in the Christian chronicles the *espada gineta*, used principally, as we gather from its name, by those addicted to the Moorish mode of horsemanship, or riding with short stirrups. The use of it extended later to the Christian Spaniards, and it is said to have contributed in later times to the

<sup>1</sup> This weapon can have been no other than the typical Iberian lance.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

victory of the Spanish army at Pavia. Other swords in use among the Granadinos were the *alfange*, the *chifarra*, the *chifarote*, and the *nammexi*. The last of these is described in an old dictionary of the Valencian and Castilian languages as a kind of scimitar, although Quatremère and Fleischer believe it to have been a dagger.

Another author who describes the arms and armour of the Granadinos is Al-Jattib, who says in his *Splendour of the New Moon*; "There are in Granada two kinds of soldiery—those of Al-Andalus and those of Africa. Their leader is a prince of royal blood, or some exalted personage at court. Formerly they used the Christian arms; that is, ample coats of mail, heavy shields, thick iron helmets, lances with broad points, and insecure saddles. . . . Now they have discarded that equipment, and are beginning to use short cuirasses, light helmets, Arab saddles, leather shields, and thin lances." Of the African troops the same historian adds; "Their weapons for attacking are spears, either short or long, which they propel by pressing with the finger. These arms they call *marasas*; but for daily exercise they use the European bow."



DAGGER OF BOABDIL EL CHICO

*(Museum of Artillery, Madrid)*



## ARMS

Descriptions of the Spanish-Moorish swords inserted in the chronicles and poems of the Middle Ages, together with the few examples that have been preserved until our time, enable us to form an accurate idea of the shape and decoration of these weapons generally. Those of the sultans and the Muslim aristocracy were, as a rule, profusely ornamented, either with precious stones or with enamels, or else with delicate and lavish damascening, or with the characteristic Oriental *ataujía*-work of gold and silver inlay. Inscriptions, too, were freely used upon the hilt or scabbard. Thus we are told that the great Almanzor kept for daily use a sword which bore the legend; "*Strive in warfare till ye win great victories. Battle with the infidels till ye win them over to Islam*"; and similar inscriptions may be quoted in great number. But four or five of these magnificent arms have proved superior to the ravages of time, and naturally tell us more than any weapons whose renown survives in written records merely. Among such extant Spanish-Moorish swords are two attributed respectively to Aliatar and Abindarraez; two others which are known to have belonged to the last ill-fated monarch of the Moors of Spain, Boabdil el Chico; and another, considered to have

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

also been Boabdil's property, now in possession of the Marquises of Campotejar, owners of the Generalife and of the Casa de los Tiros at Granada.

The "sword of Aliatar," preserved in the Museum of Artillery at Madrid, is said to have been wrested from the clenched hand of that warrior, father-in-law of Boabdil and governor of Loja, as his corpse was swept away down stream after the rout of the Moorish expedition at Lucena. This arm is richly damascened as well as decorated with the characteristic *ataujía*. The centre of the hilt is made of ivory, and the pommel and crossbars—which latter terminate in elephants' heads with slightly upturned trunks—of damascened and inlaid iron, ornamented here and there with *ataujía*. Part of the blade—probably about an eighth—is broken off. The sheath has disappeared.

An idle superstition has attributed the so-called "sword of Abindarraez" to the hero of the well-known sixteenth-century romance entitled *The Abencerraje and the Beautiful Jarifa*. This weapon, which for many years was in possession of the Narvaez family, belongs at present to the Marquis of La Vega de Armijo. The decoration is not particularly rich, and part of it is worn away ;

## ARMS

but the narrow blade is still engraved with figures or portraits from the story which has given the sword its name.

The sword (Pl. xlv.) belonging to the Marquises of Campotejar, and which is preserved in the Casa de los Tiros at Granada, bears some resemblance to the "sword of Aliatar," and has about the same dimensions. Although it is commonly believed that Boabdil was the original owner of this sword, Gómez Moreno considers that more probably it belonged to one of the Moorish princes of Almería. The handle and crossbars, as well as the chape of the sheath, are silver-gilt, covered with minute arabesque ornamentation forming leaves and stems, and further decorated with enamel. The sheath is of Morocco leather worked with silver thread. The crossbars, curving abruptly down,<sup>1</sup> terminate in elephants' trunks boldly upturned towards the pommel. The blade is stamped with a Toledo mark consisting of Castilian letters and a pomegranate.

But the most important, interesting, and beauti-

<sup>1</sup> In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, this characteristically eastern downward curve of the crossbars grew to be popular even with the Christian Spaniards, as we observe from the swords of Ferdinand himself, preserved in the Royal Armoury at Madrid, and the Chapel Royal of the cathedral of Granada.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

ful specimens of Spanish-Moorish arms preserved to-day are those which were captured from Boabdil at the battle of Lucena (1482), when the monarch was made prisoner by the young Alcaide de los Donceles, Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova. A manuscript *History of the House of Cordova*, quoted by Eguilaz Yanguas,<sup>1</sup> says that upon the day in question, irretrievably disastrous to the Moorish cause in Spain, Boabdil carried "a short, silver-handled sword, a damascened dagger, and a lance and buckler of great strength" (Plates xlv. and xlvi.). These arms, together with another and a larger sword (*montante* or *estoque real*) for wielding with both hands, and certain articles of Boabdil's clothing, continued in the captor's family for centuries, and were, some years ago, presented by the Marquises of Villaseca, his direct descendants, to the National Museum of Artillery.

The smaller or *gineta* sword <sup>2</sup> is handsomer and

<sup>1</sup> *Las Pinturas de la Alhambra*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> The Count of Valencia de Don Juan states that seven Hispano-Moresque *gineta* swords are known to exist to-day: the one which is here described, and those belonging to the Marquises of Viana and Pallavicino, Baron de Sangarrén, the Duke of Dino, Señor Sánchez Toscano, the archæological museum at Madrid, the museum of Cassel in Germany, and the national library at Paris.





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## MOORISH SWORD

*(Hilt and upper part of sheath)*



## ARMS

more important than the large *estoque*. The crossbars, as we find so often in weapons of this character and date, are bent abruptly down, and then curve up in a design of dragons' heads—the well-known emblem of the Nasrite sultans of Granada. Part of the handle is of solid gold adorned with crimson, white, and blue enamel distributed about the top and bottom of the hilt, the pommel, and the *arriaces* or crossbars. The centre of the hilt consists of ivory, richly carved. On either side of it are two octagonal intersecting figures, bearing upon one side, in semi-Cufic characters, the words, "*Achieve thy aim,*" and on the other, "*in preserving his (i.e. the owner's) life.*" Round the upper border of the ivory is carved the sentence; "*In the name of God; the power belongs to Him, and there is no Divinity but He. Happiness proceeds from God alone*"; and round the lower border, "*The marvellous belongs to God. Assuredly at the outset the ignorant do not know their God; seeing that error is their custom.*"

Other inscriptions of a sacred character, com-

A *gineta* sword in the Madrid Armoury popularly attributed to Boabdil can never have belonged to him. The hilt is modern, and the blade proceeds from Barbary.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

bined with delicate *ataujía*-work, are on the pommel and the upper portion of the hilt; but it has been remarked that, although the entire decoration is amazingly elaborate and rich, these inscriptions nowhere indicate that the weapon belonged to a personage of royal blood.

The sheath of this most sumptuous arm is also lavishly adorned with silver and enamel on a purple leather ground. The blade is of a later date than either sheath or hilt, and bears the letter S, believed to be the mark of Alonso Sahagun the elder, of Toledo. The total length of this weapon is thirty-nine inches; and Gayangos declares that it was worn suspended by a belt between the shoulders.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A number of Moorish swords are mentioned in the inventory, compiled in 1560, of the Dukes of Alburquerque. One is particularly interesting. It is described as "a Moorish *gineta* sword which belongs to the Count of Monteagudo, and is pawned for six thousand *maravedis*. The sheath is of bay leather, worked in gold thread. The chape and fittings are of silver, decorated with green, blue, purple, and white enamel. There are two serpents' heads upon the fitting, together with the figure of a monster worked in gold thread on a little plate, and two large scarlet tassels: the little plate has three ends of the same enamel and a silver-gilt buckle." A note at the margin adds; "The chape is wanting, and is owed us by the Marquis of Comares, who lost it at the cane-play at Madrid."

The two serpents' heads formed part of the arms of the Alahmar

## ARMS

The large *montante* which belonged to the same ill-fated monarch has a cylindrical hilt, narrower in the centre of the handle than at either end. This hilt is made of steel inlaid with *lacería* or network ornament in ivory. In a small shield within the decoration of the pommel, appear the words "To God"; and in the centre of the handle, the familiar motto of the Nasrite sultans of Granada; "*The only Conqueror is God.*"

Part of the blade is broken off. That which is left is broad and straight, with two grooves (one of which extends about three inches only) on each side, and bears an oriental mark consisting of five half-moons. The sheath is of brown Morocco decorated with a small gilt pattern forming shells and flowers. The mouth and chape are silver-gilt.

In beautiful and skilful craftsmanship Boabdil's dagger or *gumía* matches with his swords. The handle is of steel inlaid in ivory with floral

sultans of Granada; so that from this and from the richness of this weapon we may infer that it had once belonged to Mussulman royalty. The same inventory describes "a Moorish scimitar with gilded hilt; the cross and pommel, and a great part of the scimitar itself, being of gilded *ataujía* work. The sheath is green inside, and black and gilt upon the face; and hanging from the hilt is a gold and purple cord with a button and a black tassel.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

patterns, and terminates in a large sphere, similarly decorated. The blade has a single edge, and is exquisitely damascened in gold designs which cover more than half of all its surface. Along one side we read the inscription ; “ *Health, permanent glory, lasting felicity, permanent glory, lasting felicity, and lasting and permanent glory belong to God* ” ; and on the other side, “ *It was made by Reduan.* ”

The sheath of this little arm is made of crimson velvet richly embroidered with gold thread, and hanging from it is a large tassel of gold cord and crimson silk. The chape and mouth are silver-gilt, profusely decorated, and the latter of these pieces is embellished with circular devices of a lightish green enamel, in addition to the chasing.

The small, plain knife, also preserved among the spoil, was carried in this sheath, together with the dagger.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To-day the craft of finely decorating arms is not forgotten in Morocco. “ A silversmith advanced to show a half-completed silver-sheathed and hafted dagger, engraved with pious sentences, as, “ God is our sufficiency and our best bulwark here on earth, ” and running in and out between the texts a pattern of a rope with one of the strands left out, which pattern also ran round the cornice of the room we sat in, and round the door, as it runs round the doors in the Alhambra and the Alcazar, and in thousands of houses built by the Moors, and standing still, in Spain. The dagger and the sheath



WAR HARNESS OF CHARLES THE FIFTH  
*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*





## ARMS

The Royal Armoury at Madrid is often thought by foreigners<sup>1</sup> to contain a representative collection of the arms, offensive and defensive, used by the Spanish people through all their mediæval and post-mediæval history. This is not so. Although it is the choicest and the richest gallery in Europe, the Armería Real was formed almost entirely from the *cámaras de armas* or private armouries of Charles the Fifth and of his son, and is, as Mérida describes it, "a splendid gallery of

were handed to me for my inspection, and on my saying that they were beautifully worked, the Caid said keep them, but I declined, not having anything of equal value to give in return."—Cunninghame Graham; *Mogreb-El-Aksa*, p. 234.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, by Townsend, who wrote of it, with ill-informed enthusiasm, as "an epitome of Spanish history." Swinburne's notice of the same armoury is also curious: "At the bottom of the palace-yard is an old building, called the Armería, containing a curious assortment of antique arms and weapons, kept in a manner that would have made poor Cornelius Scriblerus swoon at every step; no notable housemaid in England has her fire-grates half so bright as these coats of mail; they show those of all the heroes that dignify the annals of Spain; those of Saint Ferdinand, Ferdinand the Catholic, his wife Isabella, Charles the Fifth, the great Captain Gonsalo, the king of Granada, and many others. Some suits are embossed with great nicety. The temper of the sword blades is quite wonderful, for you may lap them round your waist like a girdle. The art of tempering steel in Toledo was lost about seventy years ago, and the project of reviving and encouraging it is one of the favourite schemes of Charles the Third, who has erected proper works for it on the banks of the Tagus."

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

royal arms," dating, with very few exceptions, from the sixteenth century.

The greater part of its contents were made within a limited interval, as well as not produced in Spain. Such are the glittering and gorgeous harnesses constructed for the actual use of Charles the Fifth by celebrated German and Italian armourers, ponderous suits for jousting or parade, or lighter suits for combat in the field, whether on foot or horseback (Plate xlvi.), fashioned, chiselled, and inlaid by craftsmen such as the Negroli and Piccini of Milan, Bartolommeo Campi of Pesaro, or Kollman of Augsburg, bombastically called, by a Spanish poet in the mode of Gongora, "the direct descendant of Vulcanus."

This German and Italian armour, with its multitude of accessorial pieces,<sup>1</sup> falls outside the

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this time, the full equipment of the knight consisted of no less than four complete suits, for tournament or battle, or for foot or mounted fighting, together with their lances, swords, and targes. The Albuquerque inventory describes in detail a complete set ("all of it kept in a box") of war and tourneying harness belonging to the duke. Although the warriors of that day were short of stature, their muscular strength is undeniable, for one of their lances has to be lifted nowadays by several men. When the author of *Mogreb-El-Acksa* wrote contemptuously of the "scrofulous champions tapping on each other's shields," he was perhaps, forgetful for a moment of this fact.

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province of a book on Spanish arts and crafts. Nevertheless, I reproduce, as being too little known outside Madrid, the sumptuous jousting harness (Plate xlix.), of Charles the Fifth, made for the emperor when he was a lad of only eighteen years by Kollman Helmschmied of Augsburg.<sup>1</sup> Laurent Vital, describing the royal jousts at Valladolid in 1518, relates that “après marchait le Roy bien gorgiasement monté et armé d'un fin harnais d'Alemaigne, plus reluisant que d'argent brunti.” This is the very harness told of by the chronicler. The helmet turns the scale at forty pounds; the entire suit at two hundred and fifty-three pounds; and the length of the lance exceeds eleven feet.

There is, however, also in this armoury a jousting harness (Plate l.) formerly the property of Philip the First of Spain, a part of which, including the cuirass, is known to be of Spanish

<sup>1</sup> The Count of Valencia de Don Juan has found, from documents at Simancas, that in the year 1525 Kollman visited Toledo to measure Charles for armour. It is also certain, adds the Count, that, in order to produce this armour of a perfect fit, Kollman first moulded Charles' limbs in wax, and then transferred the moulds to lead. In a budget of accounts which coincides with Kollman's visit to Toledo appears the following item: “Pour trois livres de cire et de plomb pour faire les patrons que maître Colman, armoyeur, a fait”—followed by details of the cost.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

make. The cuirass in question bears the mark of a Valencia armourer, and the harness generally dates from about the year 1500, at which time Gachard tells us in his *Chroniques Belges* that Philip was learning to joust "à la mode d'Espagne." Besides the enormous helmet and the Spanish-made cuirass, covered with gold brocade, this ornament includes a tourneying lance with a blunt three-pointed head,<sup>1</sup> and a curious form of rest, said by the Count of Valencia de Don Juan to be peculiar to the Spaniards and Italians. This rest is stuffed with cork, on which, just as the fray began, the iron extremity of the lance was firmly driven. Another interesting detail is the *cuja*, fastened to the right side of the cuirass, and also stuffed with cork, made use of to support the lance upon its passage over to the rest. Nor in this instance was the *cuja* a superfluous device, seeing that the lance is over fifteen feet in length.

These are the principal portions of the harness. The seemingly insufficient protection for the arms is explained by the fact that the solid wooden shield completely covered the fighter's left arm,

<sup>1</sup> This, in the later Middle Ages, was a favourite form of tourneying lance.



JOUSTING HARNESS OF CHARLES THE FIFTH

*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



## ARMS

while the right would be defended by the shield-like disc or *arandela* of the lance.

Spanish shields and swords of great antiquity and interest are also in this armoury. The oldest of the shields dates from the twelfth century, and proceeds from the monastery of San Salvador de Oña, Burgos. The material is a wood resembling cedar, although much eaten by moth, and is covered on both sides with parchment bearing traces of primitive painting of a non-heraldic character. Inside the shield, this decoration consisted of a black ground crossed diagonally by a broad red band, and outside, of a red ground covered with rhomboid figures, some in gilt and some in colour. Such figures were a popular pattern at this time and on this class of objects. The general stoutness of this shield shows that it was meant for war. It still retains the strap which slung it from the warrior's neck, as well as fragments of the braces—made of buffalo leather covered with crimson velvet—for the hand.

Another shield, proceeding from the same monastery, dates from the thirteenth century. The material, here again, is wood and parchment; but in this hundred years formal heraldic ornament had superseded fancy or conventional devices.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Accordingly, this shield is painted with a blazon, now much worn, of which, however, enough remains to show that it consisted once upon a time of four black chaperons crowned with gold *fleurs-de-lis* upon a gold ground—said to have been the arms of Don Rodrigo Gomez, Count of Bureba.

The *scut*, or polished metal shield, with painted blazonry or other decoration, was limited to Aragon and Cataluña.<sup>1</sup>

Among the smaller and more modern shields preserved in this collection are two wooden bucklers dating from the sixteenth century. One is in the Spanish-Moorish style and of a convex shape, with iron bordering and umbo, and a lining of yellow brocade. The other, of the Christian Spaniards, is small and lined with painted parchment, and was intended, so the inventory says, "for going about at night."<sup>2</sup>

There is also a richly gilt and silvered buckler of the seventeenth century, made at Eugui in

<sup>1</sup> *Historia General del Arte; Armas*, by García Llansó; p. 445.

<sup>2</sup> "Dès que le soir arrive, on ne va point n'y à Madrid ny ailleurs, sans cotte de maille et sans *broquet* qui est une rondache."—Bertaut de Rouen, *Voyage d'Espagne* (1659 A.D.), p. 294.

The arms of Spaniards promenading after dark were even fixed by law. The *Suma de Leyes* of 1628 ordains that after ten o'clock nobody is to carry arms at all unless he also bears a lighted torch



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Navarre, and covered with a scene—decadent in design and workmanship—which represents the judgment of Paris. Defensive armour, chiefly of a highly decorative kind, was made all through this century at the capital of Navarre, Pamplona. The Royal Armoury contains a Pamplonese parade harness (Plate lii.), offered as a gift to Philip the Third, as well as six diminutive sets of armour made to his order for the youthful princes Don Felipe, Don Fernando, and Don Carlos.

The *adarga* was a kind of targe used by the light cavalry, and had its origin in Africa. Those which were stored in the palace of the Nasrite

or lantern. No arquebus, on pain of a fine of ten thousand *maravedis*, may have a barrel less than a yard long. Nobody may carry a sword or rapier the length of whose blade exceeds a yard and a quarter, or wear a dagger unless a sword accompanies it. Sometimes these prohibitions extended even to seasons of the year. In 1530 an Ordinance of Granada proclaims that from the first of March until the last day of November nobody may carry a hatchet, sickle, or dagger, "except the dagger which is called a *barazano*, of a palm in length, even if the wearer be a shepherd." The penalty for infringement of this law was a fine of ten thousand *maravedis*; but labourers who worked upon a farm were exempted from the prohibition.

Swinburne wrote from Cataluña, in 1775, that "amongst other restrictions, the use of slouched hats, white shoes, and large brown cloaks is forbidden. Until of late they durst not carry any kind of knife; but in each public house there was one chained to the table for the use of all comers."

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

sultans of Granada are described by Al-Makkari as "solid, without pores, soft to the touch, and famed for their imperviousness." The material was strong leather, such as cowhide, often embroidered with a scutcheon or with arabesques. Two Spanish-made *adargas* in this armoury are particularly handsome. One is of Moorish craftsmanship, and dates from the end of the fifteenth century. The other (Plate liii.), apparently the work of a Spanish Christian and dating from a century later, is embroidered in silver thread and coloured silk with arabesque devices and also with four coats of arms, one of which belongs to the noble family of Fernández de Cordova. The dimensions of this shield are a yard in height by thirty inches in breadth.

There also are preserved in this collection a shield (late sixteenth century) adorned by Mexican Indians with a most elaborate "mosaic of feather-work," and a number of Spanish *adargas* of the same period, for playing the *juego de cañas* or "game of canes." The armoury contained in former days as many as forty-two *adargas*; but the fire of 1884 completely destroyed sixteen and badly damaged twenty-three, obliterating their heraldic and other decoration. A yet more



JOUSTING HARNESS OF PHILIP THE HANDSOME

*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



## ARMS

sinister event befell on December 1st, 1808, when the Spanish mob, exasperated by the French, broke in and seized three hundred swords, not one of which was afterwards recovered. Mention of these disasters leads me to recall the quantity of beautiful or historic military gear that Spain has lost through many tribulations and vicissitudes. Formerly her noble families had excellent collections in their palaces or castles. Such were the private armouries of the Dukes of Pastrana at Guadalajara, and of the Dukes of Alburquerque at Cuéllar Castle, near Segovia. Bertaut de Rouen describes the first as "une des plus belles qui se voyent pour un seigneur particulier. Il y a quantité d'armes anciennes, et l'on y void une épée qui s'allonge et s'accourcit quand on veut, de deux pieds et demy."<sup>1</sup> The Cuéllar armoury was pulled to pieces by Philip the Fourth to arm his troops against the French. "Send me," he wrote to the Duke from Madrid, in a letter dated April 16th, 1637, "all your pistols, carbines, harness for horses, breast-plates and other arms for mounted fighting"; and the loyal nobleman complied upon the spot, despatching more than five hundred pieces,

<sup>1</sup> *Voyage d'Espagne*, p. 199.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

many of which were doubtless of the greatest interest.<sup>1</sup>

Had I the erudition and the time, I would attempt to write, as it deserves to be written, an introduction to the history of Spanish swords. Of all the objects mentioned in these volumes, here is the most inherently symbolic of the Spanish character and history. The Spanish Moors and Spanish Christians spoke of it as something superhuman. "Once the sword is in the hand of man," observed, in solemn tones, the Wise Alfonso, "he hath it in his power to raise or lower it, to strike with it, or to abandon it." The Spanish Mussulmans talked of putting "clothes and breeches" on a sword that had a sheath, as though it were a breathing person; while a Spaniard of the time of Gongora would often use such language as the following: "Truly in point of look there is as great a difference between a costly sword and a *Toledan Loyalty* or *Soldier's Dream*, as between a marquis and a muleteer, or a washerwoman and the Infanta. Yet every sword is virtually an hidalgo. Does not the basest of our Toledanas, even to the

<sup>1</sup> Gonzalo de la Torre de Trassierra; Articles on Cuéllar published in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones*.

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*perrillos* and *morillos*, which have no core, and cost a dozen *reales* merely, afford a chivalrous lesson to its wearer, as it bids him *no me saques sin razon, ni me envaines sin honor?*<sup>1</sup> The horse and the sword," he continued, taking a magnificently damascened rapier, and stroking it caressingly, "are the noblest friends of man, albeit the nobler is the sword; for the horse at times is obstinate or faint-hearted, but the sword is ready continually. The sword, moreover, possesses the chiefest of all virtues—justice, or the power of dividing right and wrong; a soul of iron, which is strength; and, last and greatest, the Cross, which is the symbol of the blessed Catholic Faith."<sup>2</sup>

Notices of early Spanish sword-makers are far from common. Don Manuel G. Simancas quotes the following, dated in the thirteenth century:—

"*Master Almerique.* By letters of the King and Queen, to Master Almerique, for making the (sword) blades for the King; out of the MCC

<sup>1</sup> "Draw me not without a cause, nor sheathe me without honour." A sword with this inscription is in the Royal Armoury--(G. 71 of the official catalogue).

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Williams; *Toledo and Madrid: their Records and Romances*; p. 102.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

*maravedis* of his salary he received CCCC *maravedis*.”

“*Master Enrique*. By letters of the King and Queen, to Master Enrique, for making the swords, MCCCC, (of which) he received CCCCXII *maravedis*.”

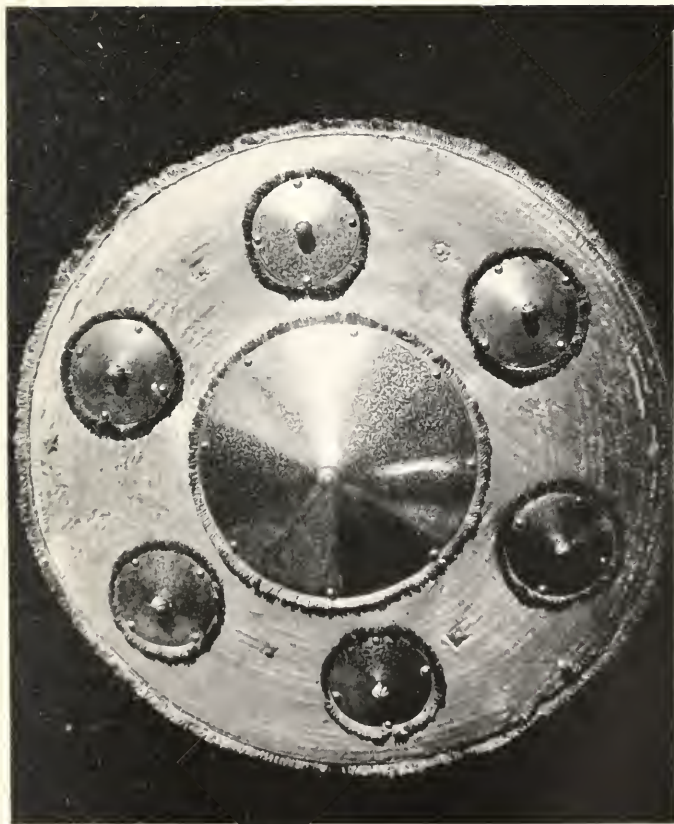
Other entries of the same period relate to Juan Ferrández, armourer, who received a sum for making coverings for arms and saddles; and to Master Jacomin, who was paid three gold *doblas*, or sixty-three *maravedis*, for making a breastplate.

In the inventory (1560) of the Dukes of Albuquerque occurs a very curious notice which seems to show that mediæval Spanish swords were manufactured even in the rural districts. The entry runs; “an old grooved sword of a broad shape, bearing the words *Juanes me fezió* (“John made me”). In the middle of the same a P within a parted wave, with Portuguese fittings, varnished, black silk hilt and fringes, and double straps of black leather, with varnished ends and buckles and black leather sheath. *Juan de Lobinguez made this sword at Cuéllar*.”

The Spanish guilds of armourers enjoyed high favour,<sup>1</sup> since the examination for admission to

<sup>1</sup> In the Corpus Christi festival at Granada the banner which





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## MOORISH BUCKLER

*(Osier and metal. Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



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this craft was very strict, as well as fenced about with curious prohibitions. Thus at Seville, "no Moor, Jew, black man, or other person such as the law debars, shall set up a shop for making and selling defensive arms, or undergo examination in this craft."<sup>1</sup> The penalty for infringement of this law was confiscation of the arms, together with a fine of twenty thousand *maravedis*.

Throughout these times the armourer's and the gilder's crafts are found in closest union; just as the armourer's craft would often alternate with that of the goldsmith or the silversmith. At Seville, the Ordinance of 1512 prescribed that every candidate who came to be examined must make "a set of horse harness, complete with stirrups, headstalls, spurs, poitral, and the fittings of a sword; and he must silver several of these pieces and blue them with fine blue; and make of iron, and gild the spurs and fittings of the sword. Thus shall he make, and gild, and silver the aforesaid pieces."

preceded all the rest was that of the armourers and knife-makers, followed by that of the silk-mercers. *Ordenanzas de Granada*; tit. 126.

<sup>1</sup> *Armourers' Ordinances of Seville*, extant in ms. (quoted by Gestoso; *Diccionario de Artífices Sevillanos*; vol. I., p. xxxvi).

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Equally severe and comprehensive are the swordsmiths' Ordinances (1527 to 1531) of Granada. The aspirant to the title of *oficial* "shall mount a sword for wear with ordinary clothes, fitted in black, together with its straps, and fringed and corded hilt; besides a sword gilded a low gold, together with its straps and other parts, all of a single colour. Also he shall fit a velvet-scabbarded, silver-hilted sword, and a two-handed sword, fully decorated, with the knife attaching to the same, one-edged and with a smooth hilt; also a sword whose scabbard shall be fitted with knives numbering not less than three; and a hilt of *lacería* (network ornament); and another sword in a white sheath, with woven hilt; and another of a hand and a half."<sup>1</sup>

The Royal Armoury at Madrid contains an excellent collection of these weapons. Among the earliest known to be of Spanish make are two which date from the thirteenth century. One of them (Plate liv., No. 1), with fittings of a later time, is frequently miscalled the "Cid's Colada," and seems to have been confounded

<sup>1</sup> "*De mano y media*"; i.e. for wielding either with one hand or both. Specimens of this kind of sword existing at Madrid will be described immediately.

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with the genuine weapon of that hero which was acquired in the thirteenth century by one of the sovereigns of Castile, and which has probably disappeared.

The blade of this remarkable sword has two edges and tapers gradually to the point. Part of the blade is slightly hollowed, and bears, extending through about a quarter of the hollow or *canal*, the following inscription or device:—



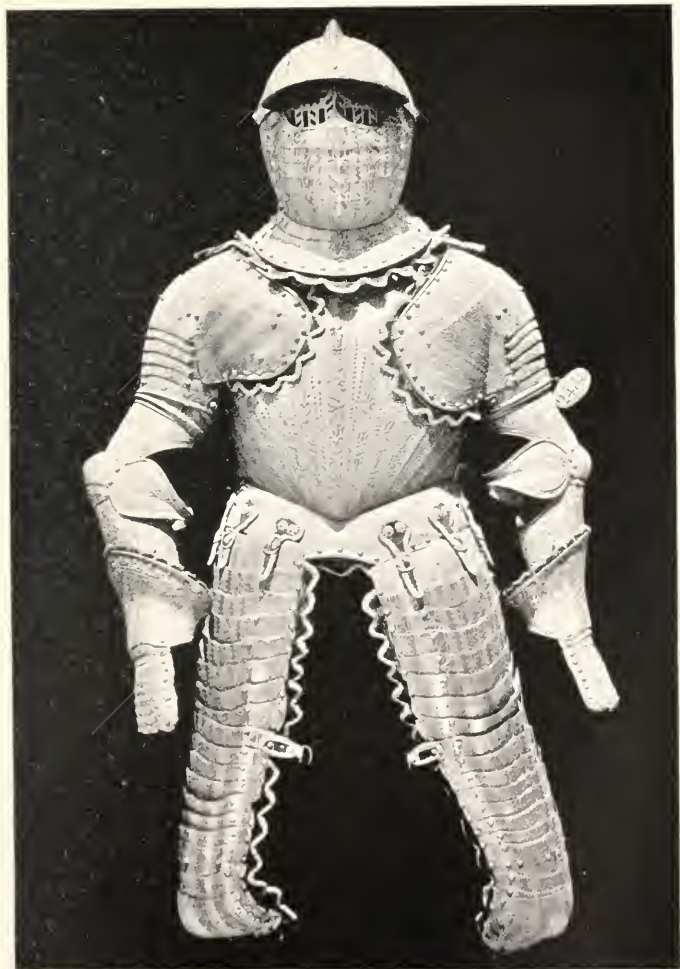
This is believed by some authorities to represent the words *SI, SI, NO, NON* ("Yes, yes, no, no"); and by others to be a purely meaningless and decorative pattern. The weapon, in any case, is in the best of preservation, and is especially interesting from the fact that engraved blades dating from this early period are very seldom met with. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan believes this weapon to be the same

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

*Lobera* which belonged to Ferdinand the Third, and aptly quotes the following passage from the chronicle. When Ferdinand, conqueror of Seville, was lying on his death-bed in that capital, surrounded by his children, he gave his blessing to his younger son, the Infante Don Manuel, and addressed him in these words. "I can bequeath no heritage to you; but I bestow upon you my sword *Lobera*, that is of passing worth, and wherewith God has wrought much good to me." If the Count's surmise be accurate, another passage which he quotes from the work *Nobleza y Lealtad*, written by the twelve councillors of Ferdinand, fully explains the legend on the blade. "*Sennor, el tu si sea asi, e el tu non, sea non; que muy gran virtud es al Príncipe, ó á otro qualquier ome ser verdadero, e grand seguranza de sus vasallos, e de sus cosas.*"<sup>1</sup>

I said that the chiselled and gilded iron fittings to the blade are of a later period. They date from the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and are the work of Salvador de Avila, of Toledo.

<sup>1</sup> "Señor, let thy yea be yea, and thy nay be nay; for of great virtue is it in the prince, or any man, to be a speaker of the truth, and of great security to his vassals and to his property."



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ARMOUR MADE AT PAMPLONA  
(17th Century. Royal Armoury, Madrid)





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The other sword in this collection, and which also belongs to the thirteenth century, has a long, broad blade with two edges and a central groove, thinly engraved with circles (Pl. liv., No. 3, and Pl. lv.). The crossbars are of silver-gilt, engraved with *ataurique*, curving towards the blade and terminating in trefoils. A shield midway between them bears the arms of Castile upon one side, and those of León upon the other. The grip is of wood, covered with silver plates with decorated borders, and the pommel is of iron, also covered with ornamental plates of silver-gilt. Formerly this arm was studded with precious stones, but all of these excepting one have disappeared.

The scabbard is of wood lined with sheepskin, and is covered with a series of five silver-gilt plates, profusely decorated with Hispano-Moresque *lacería*, studded with various kinds of gems. These gems upon the scabbard amounted once upon a time to seventy-six, which sum, through pilfering or accident (probably the former, since the finest stones are gone), has been diminished by one-half. An inventory, made in the reign of Philip the Second, states that the inner side of the sheath, now wholly worn away, was covered with lions and castles, and that the belt

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was of broad orange-coloured cloth, with silver fittings.

This sword has been absurdly attributed to the nephew of Charlemagne, who lived not less than half a thousand years before its date of manufacture. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan thought that it may have been the property of a Spanish monarch of the thirteenth century,—perhaps Alfonso the Learned, or Ferdinand the Third, Alfonso's father. Ferdinand, we know, possessed a sword which he delivered with due ceremony to his elder son, the Infante Don Fernando, upon his leading out a force against the town of Antequera. This sword the chronicler Alvar García de Santa María described as having "a sheath in pieces, with many precious stones."

Of even greater interest than the foregoing weapon is the great two-handed and two-edged *estoque* or ceremonial sword of Ferdinand and Isabella, which measures forty-two inches in length. The fittings are of iron, gilded and engraved. The crossbars, terminating in small half-moons, with the concave side directed outward, are inscribed with the well-known motto of the Catholic sovereigns, TANTO MONTA, and

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with a supplication to the Virgin, MEMENTO MEI O MATER DEI MEI. The pommel is a flat disc, suggestive in its outline of a Gothic cross, and bears upon one side the figure of Saint John together with the yoke, emblem of Ferdinand the Catholic, and upon the other the sheaf of arrows, emblem of his consort Isabella. The hilt is covered with red velvet bound with wire.

The sheath of this most interesting sword—affirmed by the Count of Valencia de Don Juan to have been used by Ferdinand and Isabella, and subsequently by Charles the Fifth, in the ceremony of conferring knighthood, and also, during the Hapsburg monarchy, to have been carried by the master of the horse before the king upon his formal visit to a city of his realm—is made of wood covered with crimson silk, bearing in “superposed” embroidery the arms of Spain posterior to the conquest of Granada, together with a repetition of the emblems of the Catholic sovereigns (Plate liv., No. 2).

In the same collection are two other swords which probably belonged to Ferdinand the Catholic. One of them (Pl. lvii., No. 1), has a discoid pommel and a gilded iron handle. The flat crossbars grow wider and bend down towards

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the blade, and on the hilt we read the words PAZ COMIGO NVNCA VEO, Y SIEMPRE GVERA DESEO (“Never does peace attend me, and always do I yearn for war”).

This sword has been attributed to Isabella. The evidence for this belief is slight, although the Count of Valencia de Don Juan discovered that in the year 1500 Isabella was undoubtedly the possessor of certain weapons and armour which she sometimes actually wore. Among these objects were several Milanese breastplates, a small dagger with a gold enamelled hilt in the shape of her emblem of the sheaf of arrows, and two swords, one fitted with silver and enamel, and the other with iron.

The other sword, which probably belonged to Ferdinand the Catholic, is of the kind known as “of a hand and a half” (*de mano y media*; see p. 248, *note*), and also of the class denominated *estoques de arzón*, or “saddle-bow swords,” being commonly slung from the forepart of the saddle upon the left side of the rider. Ferdinand, however, had reason to be chary of this usage, for Lucio Marineo Sículo affirms that at the siege of Velez-Málaga the sword which he was wearing thus suspended, jammed at a critical moment of





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the fray, and very nearly caused his death. Sículo adds that after this experience Ferdinand invariably wore his sword girt round his person, just as he wears it in the carving on the choir-stalls of Toledo.

The Royal Armoury contains another sword improperly attributed both to Ferdinand the Third and Ferdinand the Catholic. It dates from the fifteenth century, and has a blade of unusual strength intended to resist plate armour. This blade, which has a central ridge continued to the very point, is very broad towards the handle, tapers rapidly, and measures thirty-two inches. At the broader end, and on a gilded ground embellished with concentric circles, are graven such legends as:—

“The Lord is my aid. I will not fear what man may do to me, and will despise my enemies. Superior to them, I will destroy them utterly.”

“Make me worthy to praise thee, O sweet and blessed Virgin Mary.”

The handle is of iron, with traces of gilded decoration, and corded with black silk. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan says that no reliable information can be found concerning this fine arm. Its length and general design

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

would allow of its being used with one hand or with both, and either slung from the saddle-bow or round the middle of a warrior on foot.

Another handsome sword, wrongly attributed by the ignorant to Alfonso the Sixth, is kept at Toledo, in the sacristy of the cathedral. The scabbard is adorned with fourteenth-century enamel in the *champlevé* style. Baron de las Cuatro Torres considers that this sword belonged to the archbishop Don Pedro Tenorio (see p. 269), and adduces his proofs in the *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones* for March 1897. The prelate in question, appointed to command an army sent against Granada, was, like so many of the Spanish mediæval clerics, of a warlike temper, and "exchanged with great alacrity his rochet for his harness, and his mitre for his helm."

One of the most ridiculous and barefaced forgeries in the Royal Armoury is a sixteenth-century sword which has inscribed upon its blade the name of the redoubtable Bernardo del Carpio. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan says he remembers to have met with other blades of later mediæval make, engraved with such legends as "belonging to Count Fernán-Gonzalez," or



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even "Recaredus Rex Gothorum," while others in this armoury are ascribed, without the least authority of fact or common sense, to García de Paredes, Alvaro de Sande, and Hernando de Alarcón. Others, again, with less extravagance, though not on solid proof, are said to have belonged to Hernán Cortés, the Count of Lemos, and Diego Hurtado de Mendoza.

Some, upon the other hand, belonged undoubtedly to celebrated Spanish warriors of the olden time. Such are the swords of the Count of Coruña, of Gonzalo de Córdoba, and of the conqueror of Peru, Francisco Pizarro. The first of these weapons (Pl. lvii., No. 4) has a superb hilt carved in the style of the Spanish Renaissance, with crossbars curving down, a *pas d'âne*, and a Toledo blade of six *mesas* ("tables") or surfaces, grooved on both sides, and ending in a blunt point. The armourer's mark, which seems to represent a *fleur-de-lis* four times repeated, is that of the swordsmith Juan Martinez, whose name we read upon the blade, together with the words IN TE DOMINE SPERAVI, and on the other side, in Spanish, PARA DON BERNARDINO XVAEZ DE MENDOZA, CONDE DE CORVÑA.

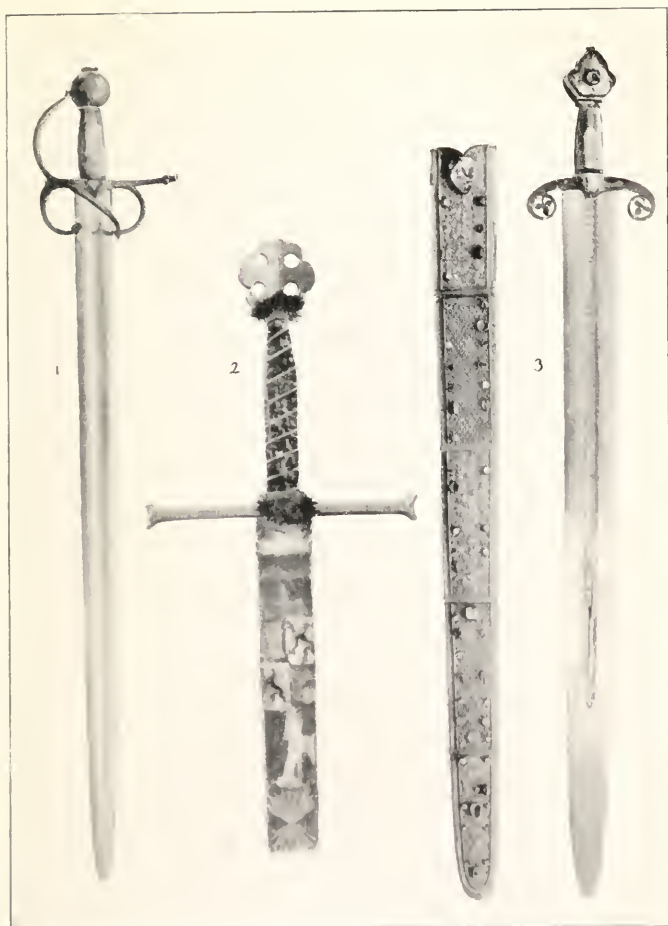
The sword of "the great captain," Gonzalo de

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

Córdoba (1453-1515), is not of Spanish make (Plate lvii., No. 3). It has a straight blade with bevelled edges. The pommel and *quillons* are decorated with Renaissance carving, and the bars, which are of gilded iron, grow wider at their end and curve towards the blade. The pommel, of gilded copper, is spherical, and bears, upon one side, a scene which represents a battle, together with the words GONSALVI AGIDARI VICTORIA DE GALLIS AD CANNAS. Upon the other side are carved his arms. Other inscriptions in Latin are also on the pommel and the blade.

The Count of Valencia de Don Juan believed that this sword was a present to Gonzalo from the corporation of some Italian town, and that it replaced, as an *estoque real*, or sword of ceremony, the state sword (see p. 252) of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Pizarro's sword remained in possession of his descendants, the Marquises of La Conquista, until as recently as 1809, in which year this family presented it to a Scotch officer named John Downie, who had fought in the Peninsular War against the French. Downie, in turn, bequeathed it to his brother Charles, lieutenant-colonel in the



2710

SPANISH SWORDS  
(Royal Armoury, Madrid)



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Spanish army, from whom it passed into the hands of Ferdinand the Seventh. The appearance of this sword is not remarkable. It has a stout, four-surfaced blade, with a powerful *recazo* or central ridge, engraved with the Christian name of Mateo Duarte, a swordsmith who was living at Valencia in the middle of the sixteenth century. The hilt is of blued (*pavonado*) steel, inlaid with leaves and other ornament in gold. The pommel is a disc; the *quillons* are straight, or very nearly so, and there is a *pas d'âne* (Plate lvii., No. 2).

The sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries are famous as the epoch of the Spanish rapier. Toledo, as the world is well aware, enjoyed an undisputed name for the production of these weapons. Within this ancient and historic capital generations of artists bequeathed, from father to son, and son to grandson, the secret (if there were a secret) of the tempering of these matchless arms; nor have Toledo blades deteriorated to this day. Many an idle superstition seeks to justify the talent and dexterity of these swordsmiths; though probably the key to all their skill was merely in the manual cunning, based on constant practice, of the craftsman, as well as in the native virtues of the water of the Tagus.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

In one of my books I have described the workshop of an armourer of Toledo in the sixteenth century. "After a few moments we entered the Calle de las Armas, which struck me as having grown a good deal narrower ; and my companion, pausing beside an open doorway topped with a sign depicting a halberd and a sword, invited me to enter. Two or three steps led downwards to a dark, damp passage, and at the end of this was a low but very large room, blackened by the smoke from half a dozen forges. The walls were hung with a bewildering variety of arms and parts of armour—gauntlets and cuirasses ; morions, palettes, and lobster-tails ; partisans and ranseurs ; halberds, bayonets, and spontoons ; as well as swords and daggers without number. Several anvils, with tall, narrow buckets filled with water standing beside them, were arranged about the stone-paved floor ; and beside each forge was a large heap of fine, white sand.

"The showers of sparks, together with a couple of ancient-looking lamps whose flames shook fitfully to and fro in the vibration, showed thirty or forty workmen busily engaged ; and what with the clanging of the hammers, the roaring of the bellows, and the strident hissing of the hot metal

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as it plunged into the cold water, the racket was incessant.

“My cicerone surveyed the discordant scene with all the nonchalance of lifelong custom, daintily eluding the columns of scalding steam, or screening his *chambergo* from the sparks. Finding, however, that I was powerless to understand the remarks he kept addressing to me, he finally held up his finger and gave the signal to cease work ; upon which the *oficial* handed him a bundle of papers which I took to be accounts, and the men, doffing their leathern aprons, and hanging them in a corner, filed eagerly away.

“‘It is quite simple,’ said my companion, as though divining the query I was about to put to him ; ‘and indeed, I often wonder why we are so famous. They say it is the water ; but any water will do. Or else they say it is the sand ; and yet this sand, though clean and pure, is just the same as any other. Look ! The blade of nearly all our swords is composed of three pieces—two strips of steel, from Mondragón in Guipúzcoa, and an iron core. This latter is the *alma*, or soul. The three pieces are heated and beaten together ; and when they grow red-hot and begin to throw out sparks, they are withdrawn from the fire, and a

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

few handfuls of sand are thrown over them. The welding of the pieces is then continued on the anvil; and, finally, the file is brought to bear on all unevennesses, and the weapon passes on to the temperer, the grinder, and the burnisher.

“‘It is in the tempering that we have earned our principal renown, although this process is quite as simple as the rest. Upon the forge—see, here is one still burning—a fire is made in the form of a narrow trench, long enough to receive four-fifths of the length of the weapon. As soon as the metal reaches a certain colour’ (I thought I noted a mischievous twinkle in the armourer’s eyes, as though this *certain colour* were the key to all our conversation), ‘I take these pincers, and, grasping the portion which had remained outside the fire, drop the weapon so, point downwards, into the bucket of water. Any curve is then made straight by beating upon the concave side, and the part which had been previously kept outside the trench of fire returns to the forge and is duly heated. The entire blade is next smeared with mutton fat, and rested against the wall to cool, point upwards. There is nothing more except the finishing. Your sword is made.’”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Toledo and Madrid: their Records and Romances*; pp. 99–101.





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## SWORD

*XV<sup>th</sup> Century - Royal Armory, Madrid*



## ARMS

The following passage from Bowles' *Natural History of Spain*, written in 1752, is also of especial interest here:—"At a league's distance from Mondragón is a mine of varnished, or, as miners term it, frozen iron. It lies in the midst of soft red earth, and produces natural steel—a very curious circumstance, seeing that, as I am assured, there is no other mine of this description in the kingdom. A tradition exists that the iron from this mine was used for making the swords, so celebrated for their tempering, presented by Doña Catalina, daughter of the Catholic Sovereigns, to her husband, Henry the Eighth of England. A few of these swords are yet extant in Scotland, where the natives call them *André Ferrara*,<sup>1</sup> and esteem them greatly. The famous sword-blades of Toledo, and the Perrillo blades of Zaragoza, which are still so highly valued, as well as others made elsewhere, are said to have been forged from the iron of this mine, which yields forty per cent. of metal. It is, however, somewhat hard to melt. With a little trouble it is possible to secure excellent steel, because this mine, like many another, possesses in itself the quality of readily taking from the coal of the

<sup>1</sup> Andrés Ferrara was a well-known armourer of Zaragoza.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

forge the spirit which is indispensable for making first-rate swords; but without cementation I do not think it would serve for making good files or razors.

“The swords of which I spoke as being so famed were generally either of a long shape, for wearing with a ruff; or broad, and known as the *arazón*, for use on horseback. It is probable that when the ruff was suddenly abandoned at the beginning of this century, large quantities of ready-fitted swords began to be imported from abroad, of such a kind as was demanded by the novel clothing. This would account for the decline and the eventual collapse of our factories, and the loss of our art of tempering swords. Concerning the mode of executing this, opinions differ. It is said by some that the blades were tempered in winter only, and that when they were withdrawn for the last time from the furnace, the smiths would shake them in the air at great speed three times on a very cold day. Others say that the blades were heated to a cherry-colour, then plunged for a couple of seconds into a deep jar filled with oil or grease, and changed forthwith to another vessel of lukewarm water, after which they were set to cool in cold water; all

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these operations being performed at midwinter. Others, again, declare that the blades were forged from the natural iron of Mondragón by placing a strip of ordinary iron along their core so as to give them greater elasticity; and that they were then tempered in the ordinary manner, though always in the winter. Such are the prevailing theories about the iron swords of Mondragón, which are, in truth, of admirable quality."

Magnificent examples of Toledo sword-blades, produced while her craft was at the zenith of its fame—that is, throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries—are in the Royal Armoury (Pl. lvii., Nos. 5, 6, 7). Among them are a series of *montantes* made for tournament or war, and a superb blade, dated 1564, forged for Philip the Second by Miguel Cantero. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan considered this to be one of the finest weapons ever tempered; adding that the sword-blades of the city of the Tagus were held in such esteem all over Europe that he had seen, in numerous museums of the Continent, weapons professing to be Toledo-made, in which the blade and mark are evidently forged; bearing, for instance, *Ernantz* for Hernandez, *Johanos*

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

for Juanes, and *Tomas Dailae* for Tomás de Ayala.

It is generally agreed that the changes in the national costume, together with the importation of a lighter make of sword from France, were directly responsible for the decline of the Toledo sword-blades early in the eighteenth century. However, this decline was only temporary. Townsend wrote in 1786: "From the Alcazar we went to visit the royal manufactory of arms, with which I was much pleased. The steel is excellent, and so perfectly tempered, that in thrusting at a target, the swords will bend like whalebone, and yet cut through a helmet without turning their edge. This once famous manufacture had been neglected, and in a manner lost, but it is now reviving."

Laborde endorsed these praises subsequently: "Within a few years the fabrication of swords has been resumed at Toledo; the place allotted to this object is a handsome edifice, a quarter of a league distant from the city, which commands the banks of the Tagus. This undertaking has hitherto been prosperous; the swords are celebrated for the excellence of their blades, which are of finely tempered steel."



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## OLD SWORD

*(Erroneously attributed to the Cid. Collection  
of the Marquis of Faïces)*





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The modern small-arms factory of Toledo, situated on the right bank of the Tagus, a mile from the city walls, had, in fact, been opened in 1783, when the same industry was also reviving at Vitoria, Barcelona, and elsewhere. Toledo worthily maintains to-day her ancient and illustrious reputation for this craft. The Tagus still supplies its magic water for the tempering, while part of the prime material of the steel itself proceeds from Solingen and Styria, and the rest from Trubia and Malaga.

Cutlery continued to be made in Spain all through the eighteenth century. Colmenar says that the knives of Barcelona were considered excellent. According to Laborde, cutlery was made at Solsona and Cardona in Cataluña, at Mora in New Castile, and at Albacete in Murcia. "The cutlery of Solsona is in great repute; but the largest quantity is made at Albacete. In the latter place are about twenty-eight working cutlers, each of whom employs five or six journeymen, who respectively manufacture annually six or seven thousand pieces, amounting in the whole to about one hundred and eighty thousand pieces."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv. p. 358.

# ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

## FIREARMS

Cannon of a primitive kind were used in Spain comparatively early. A large variety of names was given to these pieces, such as *cerbatanas*, *ribadoquinas*, *culebrinas*, *falconetes*, *pasavolantes*, *lombardas* or *bombardas*, and many more ; but the oldest, commonest, and most comprehensive name of all was *trueno*, "thunder," from the terrifying noise of the discharge. This word was used for both the piece and the projectile. The Count of Clonard quotes Pedro Megía's *Silva de Varias Lecciones* to show that gunpowder was known in Spain as early as the eleventh century. "Thunders" of some description seem to have been used at the siege of Zaragoza in 1118 ; and a Moorish author, writing in 1249, describes in fearsome terms "the horrid noise like thunder, vomiting fire in all directions, destroying everything, reducing everything to ashes." Al-Jattib, the historian of Granada, wrote at the beginning of the fourteenth century that the sultan of that kingdom used at the siege of Baza "a mighty engine, applying fire thereto, prepared with naphtha and , with balls." The Chronicle of

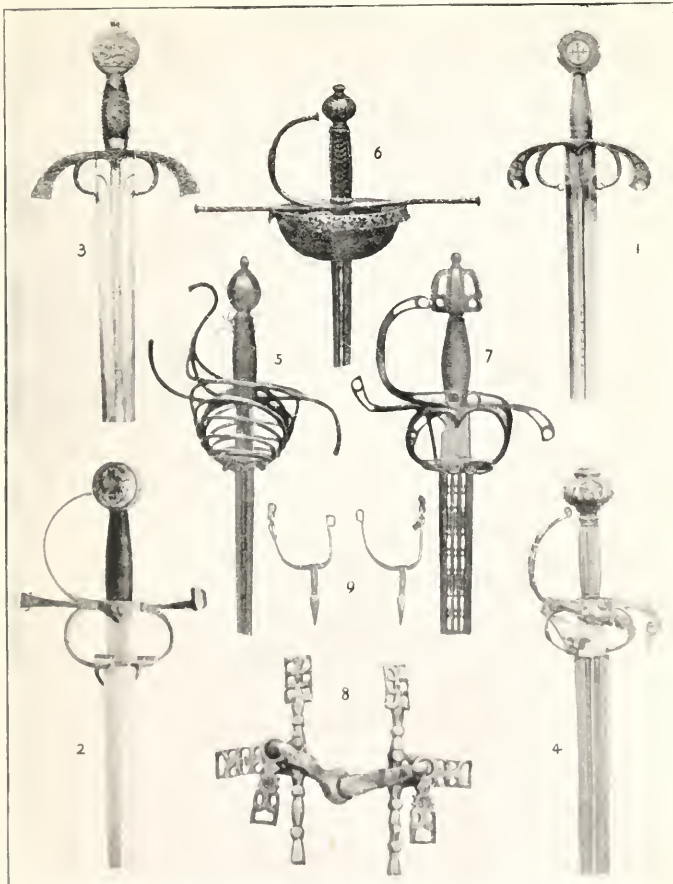
## ARMS

Alfonso the Eleventh describes in a quaint and graphic passage the crude artillery of that period, and the panic it occasioned. At the siege of Algeciras in 1342, "the Moors that were within the city threw many 'thunders' at the (Christian) host, together with mighty balls of iron, to such a distance that several overpassed the army, and some did damage to our host. Also, by means of 'thunders' they threw arrows exceeding great and thick, so that it was as much as a man could do to lift them from the ground. And as for the iron balls these 'thunders' hurled, men were exceedingly afraid thereof; for if they chanced to strike a limb they cut it off as clean as with a knife, and though the wound were but a slight one, yet was the man as good as dead; nor was any chirurgery that might avail him, both because the balls came burning hot, like flame, and because the powder which discharged them was of such a kind that any wound it made was surely mortal; and such was the violence of these balls, that they went through a man, together with all his armour."

Towards the close of the same century the testament of Don Pedro Tenorio (see p. 256), the bellicose archbishop of Alcalá de Henares, who

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

ruled that diocese from 1376 to 1399, contains the following passage:—" *Item.* We bought crossbows and bassinets both for foot and horse, together with shields, pikes, javelins, darts, lombards, hemp, powder, and other munitions for the castles of our Church ; of which munitions we stored the greater quantity at Talavera and at Alcalá de Henares, purposing to deposit them at Cazorla and in the castles of Canales and of Alhamin, which we are now repairing after they were thrown down by the King Don Pedro, and for the tower of Cazorla, which we are now erecting. And it is our will that all of these munitions be for the said castles and tower ; and that no one lay his hand on them, on pain of excommunication, excepting only the bishop elected and confirmed who shall succeed us ; and he shall distribute them as he holds best among the aforesaid castles. And all the best of these munitions shall be for the governorship of Cazorla, as being most needed there to overthrow the enemies of our faith ; and we have duly lodged the shields and crossbows, parted from the rest, upon the champaign of Toledo ; whither should arrive more shields from Valladolid, that all together may be carried to Cazorla."



SPANISH SWORDS  
*(Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



## ARMS

The article from which I quote this passage adds that the palace of the archbishop at Alcalá de Henares was fortified with cannon until the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Cannon are mentioned with increasing frequency throughout the fifteenth century; and in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella we read of lombards of enormous size, which had to be dragged across the Andalusian hills and plains by many scores of men and beasts; which frequently stuck fast and had to be abandoned on the march; and which, even in the best of circumstances, could only be discharged some twice or thrice a day.

In reading documents and chronicles of older Spain, it is easy to confound the early forms of cannon with the engines similar to those employed by the Crusaders in the Holy Land, and built for hurling stones or arrows of large size. Such engines were the *trabuco*, the *almajanech* or *almojanecque*, the *algarrada*, and the *fundíbalo* or Catalan *fonevol*. Beuter, in his *Chronicle of Spain and of Valencia*, describes the latter as "a

<sup>1</sup> Escudero de la Peña; *Claustros, Escalera, y Artesonados del Palacio Arzobispal de Alcalá de Henares*; published in the *Museo Español de Antigüedades*.

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certain instrument which has a sling made fast to an extremity of wood . . . . . made to revolve so rapidly that the arm, on being released, projects the stone with such a force as to inflict much harm, even in distant places, whither could reach no missile slung by the hand of man."

Turning to portable Spanish firearms, we find that the precursor of the arquebus, musket, and rifle seems to have been a weapon which was introduced about the middle of the fifteenth century, and called the *espingarda*. Alfonso de Palencia says it was employed against the rebels of Toledo in 1467; and the Chronicle of Don Alvaro de Luna relates that when this nobleman was standing beside Don Iñigo d'Estúñiga, upon a certain occasion in 1453, "a man came out in his shirt and set fire to an *espingarda*, discharging the shot thereof above the heads of Don Alvaro and of Iñigo d'Estúñiga, but wounding an esquire."

As time advanced, portable firearms of first-rate quality were made throughout the northern Spanish provinces, and also in Navarra, Cataluña, Aragon, and Andalusia. The inventory of the Dukes of Alburquerque mentions, in 1560, "four flint arquebuses of Zaragoza make . . . . . another





MARKS OF TOLEDAN ARMOURERS (15TH-17TH CENTURY) -  
 1500 SWORDS IN THE ROYAL ARMOURY AT MADRID



## ARMS

arquebus of Zaragoza, together with its fuse," and "arquebuses of those that are made within this province" (*i.e.* of Segovia). Cristobal Frisleva, of Ricla in Aragon, and Micerguillo of Seville were celebrated makers of this arm ; but probably these and all the other Spanish masters of this craft derived their skill from foreign teaching, such as that of the brothers Simon and Peter Marckwart (in Spanish the name is spelt *Marcuarte*), who were brought to Spain by Charles the Fifth.<sup>1</sup>

The Royal Armoury contains some finely decorated guns, made for the kings of Spain at the close of the seventeenth century and early in the eighteenth, by Juan Belen, Juan Fernandez, Francisco Baeza y Bis, and Nicolás Bis. The last-named, pupil of Juan Belen, was a German ; but all these gunsmiths lived and worked at Madrid. Nicolás was arquebus-maker to Charles

<sup>1</sup> The brothers Marckwart, or possibly one or other of them, are believed to have stamped their arquebuses with a series of small sickles, thus :



## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

the Second from 1691, and afterwards held the same post from Philip the Fifth. He died in 1726, and the Count of Valencia de Don Juan says that in 1808—that is, before it was plundered by the mob—the Royal Armoury contained no fewer than fifty-three weapons of his manufacture. One of the guns which bear his mark, and still exist, is inscribed with the words, “I belong to the Queen our lady” (Isabel Farnese, first wife of Philip the Fifth), combined with the arms of León and Castile, and of the Bourbon family. This weapon was used, or intended to be used, for hunting.

Diego Esquivel, another gunsmith of Madrid, was also famous early in the eighteenth century, as, later on, were Manuel Sutil, José Cano, Francisco Lopez, Salvador Cénarro, Isidro Soler (author of a *Compendious History of the Arquebus-makers of Madrid*), Juan de Soto, and Sebastián Santos.

Swinburne wrote from Cataluña in 1775; “the gun-barrels of Barcelona are much esteemed, and cost from four to twenty guineas, but about five is the real value; all above is paid for fancy and ornament; they are made out of the old shoes of mules.”



*BRIDONA SADDLE*  
*(15th Century. Royal Armoury, Madrid)*



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Until 1793, the smaller firearms of the Spanish army were made at Plasencia in Guipúzcoa. In that year the government factory, where hand-labour alone continued to be used till 1855, was removed to Oviedo. To-day this factory employs about five hundred workmen. In 1809 Laborde wrote that "firearms, such as fusees, musquets, carbines, and pistols are manufactured at Helgoivar, Eybor, and Plasencia; at Oviedo, Barcelona, Igualada, and at Ripoll; the arms made at the latter city have long had a distinguished reputation. Seven hundred and sixty-five gunsmiths, it is estimated, find employment in the factories of Guipúzcoa."

Both Townsend and the foregoing writer give a good account of Spanish cannon at this time. According to Laborde, "two excellent founderies for brass cannon are royal establishments at Barcelona and Seville; in the latter city copper cannon are cast, following the method recommended by M. Maritz. Iron ordnance are made at Lierganez and Cavada." Townsend wrote of Barcelona, in 1786; "The foundery for brass cannon is magnificent, and worthy of inspection. It is impossible anywhere to see either finer metal, or work executed in a neater

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

and more perfect manner. Their method of boring was, in the present reign, introduced by Maritz, a Swiss. Near two hundred twenty-four pounders are finished every year, besides mortars and field-pieces."

### SADDLERY AND COACHES

Probably no relic of the former of these crafts in Spain is older or more curious than the iron bit (Plate lvii., No. 8), inlaid with silver dragons' heads and crosses, and attributed, from cruciform monograms which also decorate it, to the Visigothic King Witiza (who died in 711), or sometimes to the conqueror of Toledo, Alfonso the Sixth (eleventh century). The spurs or *acicates* (Plate lvii., No. 9) of Ferdinand the Third of Castile, who conquered Seville from the Moors, are also treasured in the Royal Armoury, and bear upon an iron ground remains of gold and silver decoration representing castles. The Count of Valencia de Don Juan believed these spurs to be authentic, because they are identical with the ones which Ferdinand wears in his equestrian seal, preserved among the National Archives of France, and dating from the year 1237.



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Saddles of various kinds were used in Spain throughout the Middle Ages. Among them were the ordinary travelling-saddle or *silla de barda* (Arabic *al-bardá*); saddles *de palafrén*,<sup>1</sup> the *silla de la guisa*, or *de la brida* or *bridona*, for riding with long stirrups, and consequently the antithesis of the *gineta* saddle;<sup>2</sup> or saddles made for use exclusively in war, on which the

<sup>1</sup> An old account copied into a book (see p. 89, *note*) in the National Library at Madrid, and dating from the reign of Sancho the Fourth, states that Pedro Ferrández, saddler, received a certain sum for making various saddles, including two "*de palafrés*, wrought in silk with the devices of the king."

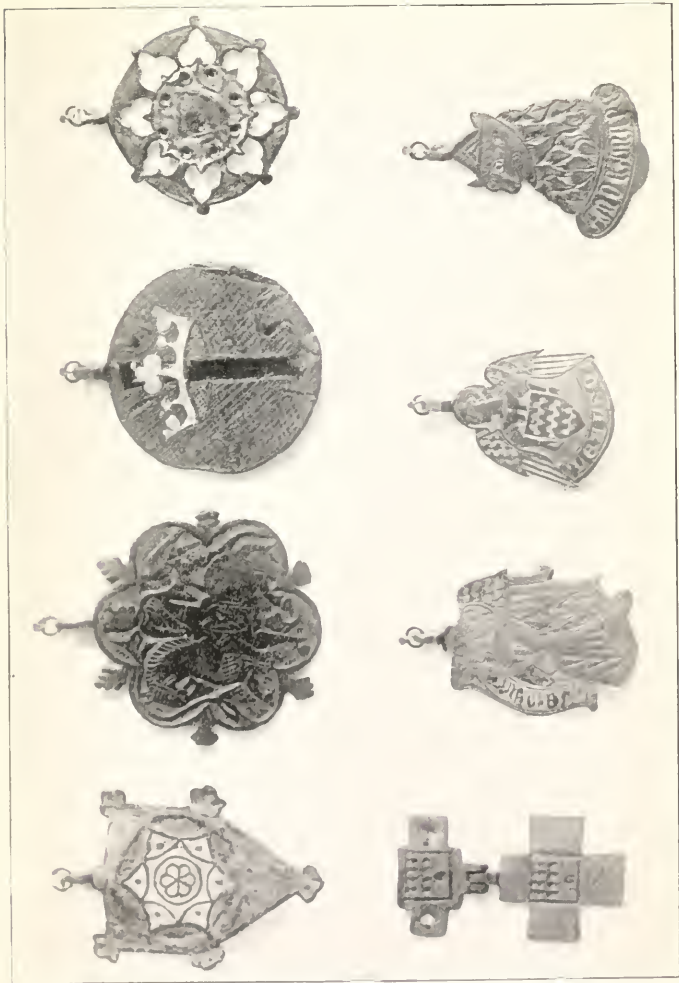
<sup>2</sup> "In mediæval Spain, good riders were often designated as 'Ginete en ambas sillas,' that is, accustomed to either saddle, *i.e.* the Moorish and the Christian, and I now understand why chroniclers have taken the trouble to record the fact. Strangely enough, the high-peaked and short-stirruped saddle does not cross the Nile, the Arabs of Arabia riding rather flat saddles with an ordinary length of leg. The Arab saddle of Morocco, in itself, is perhaps the worst that man has yet designed; but, curiously enough, from it was made the Mexican saddle, perhaps the most useful for all kinds of horses and of countries that the world has seen." Cunninghame Graham: *Mogreb-El-Aksa*, p. 66. The same writer naïvely adds the following footnote to the words *Ginete en ambas sillas*. "This phrase often occurs in Spanish chronicles, after a long description of a man's virtues, his charity, love of the church, and kindness to the poor, and it is apparently inserted as at least as important a statement as any of the others. In point of fact, chronicles being written for posterity, it is the most important."

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rider was accustomed to make the sign of the cross before or after mounting, such as the *lidona*, *gallega* ("siellas gallegas" are mentioned in the *Poem of the Cid*), and *corsera* or *cocera* (Arabic *al-corsi*), or else the *silla de conteras*, "whose hindmost bow," according to the Count of Valencia de Don Juan, "terminated in converging pieces to protect the wearer's thighs."

A saddle known as the *silla de rua*, or "street saddle," was generally used in Spain throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It was intended, not for war, but promenade and show, and therefore richly decorated. The Royal Armoury has nineteen of these saddles, all of which are Spanish-made. In the same collection is a plain *bridona* saddle (Plate lix.), with iron stirrups and two gilt-metal bells, such as were commonly used in tournaments or other festivals. This saddle has been erroneously ascribed to the thirteenth century. It dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century, and proceeds from Majorca.

The old belief that one of the saddles in this armoury, whose bows are chased with a design in black and gilt of leaves and pilgrim's shells, was once upon a time the Cid Campeador's,





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has been exploded recently. The saddle in question is known to be Italian, dates from the sixteenth century, and bears the arms of a town in the duchy of Montferrato.

The inventory (1560) of the dukes of Albuquerque mentions some curious saddles, including one "*de la brida*, of blue velvet, with the bows painted gold, and on the front bow a cannon with its carriage, and on the hind bow another cannon with flames of fire." Among the rest were "a *gineta* saddle of red leather, used by my lord the duke," together with saddles of bay leather, of dark brown leather, of "smooth leather with trappings of blue cloth," of Cordova leather, and "a date-coloured *gineta*-saddle, complete."

The same inventory specifies innumerable smaller articles of harness, such as stirrups, spurs, reins, headstalls, and poitrals or breast-leathers. Many of these pieces were richly ornamented; *e.g.*, "some silver headstalls of small size, enamelled in blue, with gilt supports of iron,"<sup>1</sup> as well as

<sup>1</sup> As I have stated in another chapter, the precious stones and metals were continually employed in arms and harness, both of Spanish Moors and Spanish Christians. In 1062 Pedro Ruderiz bequeathed to the Monastery of Arlanza all his battle harness, together with his silver bit (*frenum argenteum*). Thousands of such bequests have been recorded. The

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“some silver headstalls, gilded and enamelled green and rose, with shields upon the temples.” Others of these headstalls were made of copper, and nearly all were colour-enamelled.

The stirrups included “two Moorish stirrups of gilded tin, for a woman’s use”;<sup>1</sup> “some large Moorish stirrups, gilt, with two silver plates upon their faces, enamelled gold, green, and blue, and

Chronicle of Alfonso the Eleventh says that after the victory of the Rio Salado, this monarch found among his spoil “many swords with gold and silver fittings, and many spurs, all of enamelled gold and silver. . . . And all this spoil was gathered by the king into his palaces of Seville (*i.e.* the Alcázar), the doubloons in one part, and the swords in another part.” The testament (sometimes considered to be a forgery) of Pedro the Cruel mentions “my sword in the Castilian manner, that I caused to be made here in Seville with gems and with *aljofar*.” In 1409 Yusuf, King of Granada, presented Juan the Second and the Infante Don Enrique with silver-fitted swords. Referring to a later age, Davillier discovered at Simancas a detailed list of weapons sumptuously decorated with gold and coloured enamels, made for Philip the Second by Juan de Soto, “*orfebrero de su Alteza*.” *Recherches*, pp. 149-151.

<sup>1</sup> The women of mediæval Spain had few amusements besides riding. Another—though owing to the temperate climate it must have been on few occasions—was skating, since this inventory mentions “two pairs of skates, for a man, for travelling over ice. Two pairs of skates, for the same purpose, for a woman.” This entry almost matches in its quaintness with the “irons for mustaches,” or the “triggers for extracting teeth,” set forth in Spanish documents such as the *Tassa General* of 1627.

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eight nails on either face"; "some other Moorish stirrups, wrought inside with *ataujía*-work in gold, and outside with plates of copper enamelled in green, blue, and white; the handles gilt, with coverings of red leather"; and "some silver stirrups with three bars upon the floor thereof, round-shaped in the manner of an urinal, with open sides consisting of two bars, a flower within a small shield on top, and, over this, the small face of a man."

The many sets of reins included several of Granada make, coloured in white, red, and bay; while one of the most elaborate of the poitrals was of "red leather, embroidered with gold thread, with fringes of rose-coloured silk, buckles, ends, and rounded knobs; the whole of copper enamelled green, and blue, and white."

Small but attractive accessories to these handsome sets of mediæval Spanish harness were the decorative medals (Plate lx.) hung from the horse's breast in tourneying or in war. In France these medals were known as *annelets volants*, *branlants*, or *pendants*; although in Spain, where it is probable that they were used more widely than in other countries, they have no definite name. The term *jaces* is sometimes applied to

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

them ; but *jaez* properly means the entire harness for a horse, and the word is thus employed by classic Spanish authors, such as Tirso de Molina. A recent term, invented by a living writer, is *jaeces colgantes*, or "hanging *jaeces*."

These ornaments, which had their origin among the Romans and Byzantines, are figured in certain of the older Spanish codices such as the *Cántigas de Santa Maria*. In Christian Spain, however, their vogue was greatest in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. They disappeared altogether in the sixteenth century ; and among the Spanish Moors their use, though not unknown, was always quite exceptional.

The mottoes and devices on these little plates are very varied. Sometimes the motto has an amorous, sometimes a religious import. Sometimes the vehicle of the motto is Latin, sometimes Spanish, sometimes French. Sometimes the device contains, or is composed of, a blazon, and commonly there is floral or other ornament. A collection of nearly three hundred of these medals belonged to the late Count of Valencia de Don Juan, all of which were probably made in Spain. The material as a rule is copper, adorned with *champlevé* enamelling, and the





TRAVELLING LITTER

*Attributed to Charles the Fifth. Royal Armoury, Madrid.*



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colours often used to decorate and relieve the interspaces of the gilded metal are red, blue, black, white, and green.

According to Florencio Janer, coaches were not known in Spain until the middle of the sixteenth century. Before that time the usual conveyance was the litter. The Madrid Armoury contains an object which is thought to have been the campaigning-litter of Charles the Fifth (Plate lxi.). The Count of Valencia de Don Juan also inclined to this belief from the circumstance that an engraving exists in the British Museum which represents a German litter of the sixteenth century, identical in all respects with this one. Probably, however, these litters were the same all over Europe. The inventory of the Dukes of Alburquerque includes, in 1560, a "cow-hide litter, black, lined with black serge; also poles stained black, and harness for mules." This, together with other travelling gear, belonged to "my lady the duchess"; and it is worth noting that the litter attributed to Charles, though cased with a protective covering of whitish canvas, is also of black leather and lined with black serge, besides being evidently built for carriage by two mules. The interior contains a

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

small armchair rising some inches only from the floor, and which, requiring him to keep his legs continually outstretched, could hardly fail to prove excruciatingly uncomfortable to the traveller.

Mendez Silva says that the precise date of the introduction of coaches into Spain was 1546, and other writers do not greatly differ from him. The Alburquerque inventory includes "two four-wheeled coaches," as well as "a triumphal car with four wheels, its body painted with red and gold stripes." Vanderhamen, who says that the first coach ever seen in Spain was brought here by a servant of Charles the Fifth in 1554, adds that within a little time their use became "a hellish vice that wrought incalculable havoc to Castile." Certainly this vehicle for many years was far from popular among the Spaniards, and was assailed with special vehemence by all who lacked the income to support one. The Duke of Berganza is said to have remarked that "God had fashioned horses for the use of men, and men had fashioned coaches for the use of women"; while a priest, Tomás Ramón, declared that it was "a vast disgrace to see bearded men, with rapiers at their side, promenading in a coach." Even the governing powers thought fit to interfere. In 1550,

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1563, and 1573 the Cortes demanded the total prohibition of these modish yet detested vehicles, while the Cortes of 1578 decreed four horses as the statutory and invariable number for a private carriage. A further law enacted in 1611 that coaches must be strictly private property, and not, on pain of rigorous chastisement, be lent or hired by their owner;<sup>1</sup> while the owner, to own or use a coach at all, required a special licence from the Crown.

Some curious facts relating to these vehicles in older Spain are instanced by Janer. In the seventeenth century a Spanish provincial town would normally contain a couple of hundred coaches. Among such boroughs was Granada. Here, in 1615, the authorities, backed by nearly all the citizens, protested that the coaches ploughed the highway into muddy pits and channels, and gave occasion, after nightfall, to

<sup>1</sup> This prohibition was not inopportune. Swinburne wrote towards the end of the eighteenth century; "Having occasion one day for a coach to carry us about, the stable-boy of our inn offered his services, and in a quarter of an hour brought to the door a coach and four fine mules, with two postillions and a lacquey, all in flaming liveries; we found they belonged to a countess, who, like the rest of the nobility, allows her coachman to let out her equipage when she has no occasion for it; it cost us about nine shillings, which no doubt was the perquisite of the servants."

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disgraceful and immoral scenes.<sup>1</sup> After a while the protest grew so loud that the use of coaches in this capital was totally suppressed. One of the first persons to employ a coach in Granada had been the Marquis of Mondejar; and yet, in spite of his extensive influence, this nobleman, each time he wished to drive abroad, required to sue for licence from the town authorities, and these, in making out the written permit, took care to specify the streets through which he was allowed to pass.

Assailed by numerous pragmatics,<sup>2</sup> chiefly of a sumptuary tenor and repeated at spasmodic intervals until as late as 1785, the private coach became at last an undisputed adjunct to the national life of Spain. Doubtless the use by royalty of gala-coaches or *carrozas* went far to sanction and extend their vogue. However, I will not describe these lumbering, uncouth, and over-ornamented gala-carriages (some of which

<sup>1</sup> Towns still exist in Spain where vehicles are not allowed to proceed at more than a walking-pace through any of the streets. One of such towns is Argamasilla de Alba (of *Don Quixote* fame), where I remember to have read a notice to this effect, painted, by order of the mayor, on a house-wall of the principal thoroughfare.

<sup>2</sup> A royal degree of 1619 disposed that "every one who sows and tills twenty-five *fanegas* of land each year, may use a coach."

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were made in Spain) belonging to the Spanish Crown, but quote the following pragmatic, dated 1723, as aptly illustrative of the progress of this industry, and other industries akin to it, in the Peninsula :—

“ In order to restrain the immoderate use of coaches, state-coaches, *estufas*, litters, *furlones*,<sup>1</sup> and calashes, we order that from this time forth no one of these be decorated with gold embroidery or any kind of silk containing gold, nor yet with bands or fringes that have gold or silver points ; but only with velvets, damasks, and other simple silken fabrics made within this realm and its dependencies, or else in foreign countries that have friendly commerce with us. Also, the fringes and galloons shall be of silk alone ; and none, of whatsoever dignity and degree, shall cause his coach, state-coach, etc., to be decorated with the fringes that are known as net-work, tassel-pointed, or bell-pointed ; but only with undecorated, simple fringes, or with those of Santa Isabel ; nor shall the breadth of either kind of these exceed four fingers. Also, he shall not cause his coach, state-

<sup>1</sup> The *estufa* (literally *stove*) was a form of family-coach. The *furlon* is described in an old dictionary as “ a coach with four seats and hung with leather curtains.”

## ARTS AND CRAFTS OF OLDER SPAIN

coach, etc., to be overlaid with any gilt or silvered work, or painted with any manner of design—meaning by such, historic scenes, marines, landscapes, flowers, masks, knots of the pattern known as coulicoles, coats of arms, war devices, perspectives, or any other painting, except it imitate marble, or be marbled over of one single colour chosen at the owner's fancy; and further, we allow in every coach, state-coach, etc., only a certain moderate quantity of carving. And this our order and pragmatic shall begin to rule upon the day it is made public; from which day forth no person shall construct, or buy, or bring from other countries, coaches or *estufas* that infringe our law herein expressed; wherefore we order the *alcaldes* of this town, our court and capital, to make a register of all such vehicles that each house contains, without excepting any. Nevertheless, considering that if we should prohibit very shortly those conveyances that now be lawful, the owners would be put to great expense, we grant a period of two years wherein they may consume or rid themselves thereof; upon the expiration of which term our law shall be again made public, and thenceforward all, regardless of their quality and rank, shall be



## ARMS

compelled to pay obedience to the same. Also we order that no person make or go abroad in hand-chairs fitted with brocade, or cloth of gold or silver, or yet with any silk containing gold and silver; nor shall the lining be embroidered or adorned with any of the stuffs aforesaid; but the covering of the chair, inside and out, shall only be of velvet, damask, or other unmixed silk, with a plain fringe of four fingers' breadth and button-holes of the same silk, and not of silver, gold, or thread, or any covering other than those aforesaid; but the columns of such chairs may be adorned with silken trimmings nailed thereto. And we allow, as in the case of coaches, a period of two years for wearing out the hand-chairs now in use. . . . Also, we order that the coverings of coaches, *estufas*, litters, calashes, and *furlones* shall not be made of any kind of silk, or yet the harness of horses or mules for coaches and travelling litters; and that the said coaches, gala-coaches, *estufas*, litters, calashes, and *furlones* shall not be back-stitched (*pespuntados*), even if they should be of cowhide or of cordwain (goatskin); nor shall they contain any fitting of embroidered leather."

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