



*J. Madho Singh.*

MEMORIALS

OF THE

Jeypore Exhibition

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VOL. I.

INDUSTRIAL ART

# INDUSTRIAL ART AT THE JEYPORE EXHIBITION.

## CHAPTER I. ARMOUR.



R. KIPLING, Principal of the Government School of Art at Lahore, who wrote the report on the Indian arms and armour displayed at Jeypore, remarked that 'it was doubtful whether a more choice or interesting collection of Indian arms had ever been assembled in India than that shown at the Jeypore Exhibition.' He added that he hoped 'that some memento of the collection might be preserved by photographs showing the elaborate chiselling, enamelling, damascening, &c., which have been lavished

on these beautiful objects'

The present work contains illustrations of all the most valuable weapons and armour shown at the Exhibition.

For a history and full account of the important subject under consideration reference should be made to the valuable handbook of the Hon. W. Egerton, which includes a classified and descriptive catalogue of the arms preserved in the Indian section of the South Kensington Museum, in London.

In the present work as complete a description as possible will be given of the illustrations, with the addition of such general remarks as may appear necessary.

Rājputānā, Rājasthān, or the land of the Rājputs, the sons of kings, should produce, and does produce, everything necessary for carrying on the art of war. Sirohī, the small State in which is situated Mount Abu, the Mons Capitalium of Pliny, has been famed since the days of Herodotus for its sword blades, and at the Jeypore Exhibition it retained its ancient reputation by carrying off the first prize for arms. This small State of the Deora Rājputs supplies blades and spear points to all Rājputānā, but every court employs its own armourers, some of whom have attained fame beyond their homes. In Rājputānā are found weapons of every age and country, from those which the aboriginal tribes of Bhils and Meenas have used since the earliest days down to the newest breech-loading rifle.

There is nothing the warlike Rājput more desires than a trusty or valuable weapon, hence nothing for which he will pay a higher price. With so keen a demand it is therefore natural that the best arms of all countries should find their way into the collections of the native princes and nobles. We shall see that at Jeypore were shown Persian, Afghan, and even European swords and daggers mounted in Indian damascened hilts; examples of most of the weapons in the list given in the Ain-i-Akbari, or Institutes of the Emperor Akbar, obtained in the days of the Moghul ascendancy, when Delhi set the fashions; Maharatta arms, introduced when that warlike people overran Rājputānā; English guns and pistols, presented by the East India Company, and curious specimens made by the native armourers to surprise and please their patrons on their birthday festivals or on other great occasions.

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Some arms have been acquired by purchase, others by gift from inferiors (*mazariṭua*), presents from superiors (*bhillats*), or by conquest. Every endeavour has been made to obtain the history of the different weapons, but the results of the inquiry have not been very successful. The records of the different armouries at the most show when an arm came under the charge of the custodian, but the maker's name is rarely recorded.

The most complete collections at the Exhibition came from the Mahārājās of Jeypore, Oodeypore, Ulwar, and Dholpore, and the Nawāb of Tonk. The Jeypore armoury contains a wonderful assortment of swords, guns, and daggers, which are beautifully kept. The collection at Ulwar is well known, and is remarkable for the beauty and richness of decoration of the weapons. The same remarks apply to Oodeypore and to Jodhpore. At the latter capital much pride is taken in the armoury, which is very extensive. The Dholpore arms sent to Jeypore were interesting from their great variety and quaintness of form. The Tonk armoury is very complete; every weapon has a label giving its name and history, and all are in splendid order.

As far as possible the descriptions will follow the order of the photographs,<sup>1</sup> in which in many cases the size is indicated by a six-inch rule placed in the foreground. A beginning will be made with the shields.

### SHIELDS.

PLATE I. 1. Parrying shield, *Madrā*, consisting of a pair of black buck or antelope horns united at the butt ends, where they are protected by a steel guard in the form of a shield, which is studded with four raised bosses—five rosettes and eight crescents—all gilt. The end of each horn is armed with a steel bayonet point. The horns are arranged as if on an animal's head, and measure nineteen inches from the tip of each horn to the centre of the guard.

2. Parrying shield similar to Plate I. 1, but with the points opposite to each other. Both weapons were made by Panī Khān, at Jeypore, and were valued at 4 rs. each.

PLATE II. Shield, *Dhadl*. Steel, with ornament inlaid with gold wire (true damascening). The four bosses are raised from cup-shaped depressions. (H.H. the Mahārāj Rāna of Dholpore.)

PLATE III. Shield, *Dhadl*. Brown varnished leather, with painted floral pattern in gold. There are four white metal bosses with perforated margins. Border recurved. Made at Jeypore by Panī Khān. Value 2 rs. 8 as.

PLATE IV. 1. Shield, *Dhadl*. Black leather, with five raised gilt bosses. To the central one a lance can be screwed. (Lent by H.H. the Nawāb of Tonk.)

2. Shield (*Sylhet jupānī*). Japanned leather. Circular and convex. Ground black adorned with yellow scrolls of flowers and four hemispherical bosses of silver. Parcel gilt and bevelled. Made of raw elk or bison hide at Sylhet, in Assam. (Lent by H.H. the Mahārāna of Oodeypore.)

3. Shield (*Sylhet*). Black polished leather, with four gold-enamelled bosses and a crescent, all studded with diamonds. On the right side there is also a gold-enamelled side guard. (Lent by H.H. the Mahārāna of Oodeypore.)

PLATE V. Shield, *Dhadl*. Nine inches in diameter. Steel, with raised indented border and four bosses. Damascened in gold with a rich arabesque pattern. (Lent by H.H. the Mahārājā of Jhānd.)

PLATE XXIII. Parrying shield, *Madrā*. Steel, with two bayonet points. All damascened. (Dholpore Armoury.)

The shield, or *dhadl*, is used by every Rājput not only in war but in peace. Presents from a superior to his vassal or from the latter to his lord should be laid out upon it, though too often the tray, or '*bhitti*,' of lacquered wood is substituted in the present day. It is borne by peons or by *dhadlats*, the messengers of princes, as a symbol of office; in such cases the shield is small, and in Jeypore square pieces of red cloth are placed beneath the bosses.

The shield in general use is of buffalo leather or rhinoceros hide, but there is a large manufacture of cheap papier-mâché shields, especially at Unīāra, where the surfaces are gaily painted with figures and sporting scenes. The Persian and Sikh shields were frequently made of steel, beautifully damascened with gold wire. One of the shields of the Mahārāna of Oodeypore, lent to the Exhibition, was formed of a piece of almost transparent rhinoceros hide and was adorned with bosses set with diamonds.

<sup>1</sup> A separate list will be given of the Contents of Volume I. Unless otherwise stated, the numbers of the plates refer to Volumes II. and III.



Thick padded Coat, with four body pieces of plate Armour (termed "*Chār aīnā*," or the four mirrors). The coat is studded with gilt pins and bosses; Helmet, steel inlaid with gold; Collar, fine chain steel, with pattern in dark links. Armoury of H.H. The Nāwāb of Tonk, Central India. From a photograph and drawings by Piāri Lal.



Bedstead Legs; wood, painted and lacquered. 1. From Srinagar, Kashmir. 2. From Bikanir; inlaid with ivory. 3. From Bikanir; raised ornament. 1. Drawn by Kana, Potter. 2 and 3. Drawn by Chandra, Sarangi or Jain.