Jousting Vamplates.

Fig. 1.—From a picture of the Emperor Maximilian, 1497.   Fig. 2.—From the Triumph of Maximilian, pl. 51.   Fig. 3.—From Von Schlichtegroll's Tourney Book, pl. 17.   Fig. 4.—From Dresden Museum, Hefner, pl. 74.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF MEDIÆVAL WEAPONS AND WARLIKE APPLIANCES IN EUROPE.

By JOHN HEWITT.

JOUSTING VAMPLATE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, FROM THE ROYAL ARTILLERY MUSEUM AT WOOLWICH.

THE High Vamplate for the jousting-lance here figured is from the original preserved in the Royal Artillery Museum at Woolwich. The surface is richly engraved, and has been "parcel gilt." Its period appears to be the beginning of the sixteenth century. This form of vamplate (? the German "Gärbeisen") was adopted to supply the place of arm and hand defences, and we find that the champion who employed it did not bear armour either on his arms or legs. He wore only a cuirass, with tasses for body-armour proper, his left side being defended by a large grand'-garde reaching to the eyes, the right side by the high vamplate here seen, the legs to below the knees by shields fixed to the edge of the saddle, while the head was protected by a salade. The lower part of the legs had no defence, being out of the legitimate striking region. The hands are commonly quite bare, and not unfrequently we see the fingers of the knight, when running his course, profusely adorned with rings.

An early example of the Scharfrennen with high vamplate occurs in the picture of the Emperor Maximilian and the Elector of Saxony in 1497, given by Hefner, "Trachten," part ii., plate 109; from which subject we reproduce the vamplate—our figure 1. A similar one is seen in Tewrd-annckh, woodcut 101. The "Triumph" of the Emperor Maximilian furnishes examples closely resembling the Woolwich specimen, being divided into two principal parts by a notched line. Se plates 50, 51, 52, 55, and 56. Our figure 2 is from plate 51. In Von Schlichtegroll's Tourney Book of Duke William of Bavaria we have many examples of knights tilting with the high vamplate. Figure 3 of our series is the

usual form of the defence, and appears in the picture of a
Scharfrennen in 1513, plate 17 of the work. Round vam-
plates, also, occur in the volume, and courses with blunt
lances. In Rüxner's Tourney Book, 1530, the high vamplate
appears on page 71, the knights armed as described above.
Hefner, in plate 74 of his fine work, has engraved a speci-
men preserved in the Dresden Museum, of more elaborate
arrangement; our figure 4.[1]

In all these instances there is a prolongation in front, to
hold the lance; differing in this particular from the Wool-
wich example, where the tube is placed *within* the shield.
Irrespective of this tube, the Woolwich vamplate consists of
three pieces : a plain one extending from shoulder to wrist,
reinforced in the lower half by an ornamented plate; while
at the side a small decorated piece is added, being fastened
to the mainguard by a nut and screw, through a notch similar
to those seen at the upper edge. It is probable, therefore,
that the two empty notches formerly served to attach addi-
tional pieces to the upper plate; and the displacement of any
one of these may, by the rules of the sport, have counted as
a minor triumph to the jouster who effected it. It will be
seen, by reference to the woodcuts, that the lance-point being
driven against the bead at the edge of any one of these plates
would easily cause the attaching screw to slide away through
the open cleft. The inside view shows us the hook for sus-
taining the forepart of the vamplate, and the iron tube through
which the lance passed. This tube is of two parts, the upper
cylinder moving upon the two lower by means of three nuts
and Z-formed slots, by which the whole tube could be made
longer or shorter to the measure of about 3 in. Its full
length is $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.; interior diameter, 3 in.; which, of course,
gives the size of the lance at this part, The height of the
entire vamplate is 2 ft.; its breadth at the middle, $14\frac{1}{2}$ in.;
the weight, 13 lb. 12 oz.

With this kind of vamplate was commonly used a large
iron queue, similar to those seen in figures 3 and 4. The
lances themselves varied, not only in their having pointed
and blunt heads, but in the staff. In some instances this was

[1] See also the figure of Augustus I.,
duke of Saxony, in the Dresden Museum;
reproduced from Hefner's Trachten, in
" Ancient Armour and Weapons in
Europe," by J. Hewitt, vol. iii. pl. 125,
p. 647. This and also the companion
figure at Dresden representing Albert
Duke of Austria are given in the illus-
trations of the Dresden Armoury by
Reibisch.
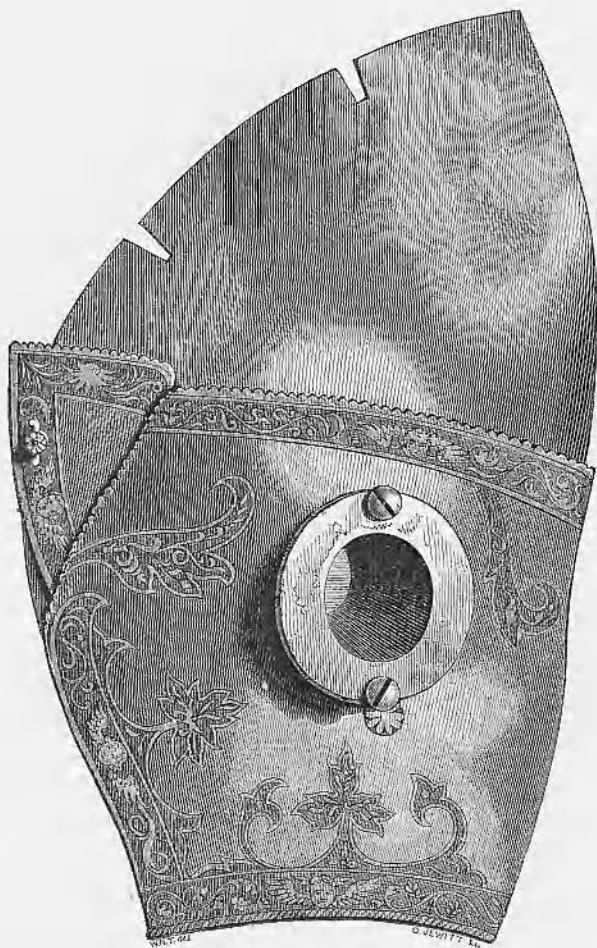
Jousting Vamplate of the Sixteenth Century (exterior view). Royal Artillery
Museum, Woolwich.

From a drawing by Walter H. Tregellas, Esq.
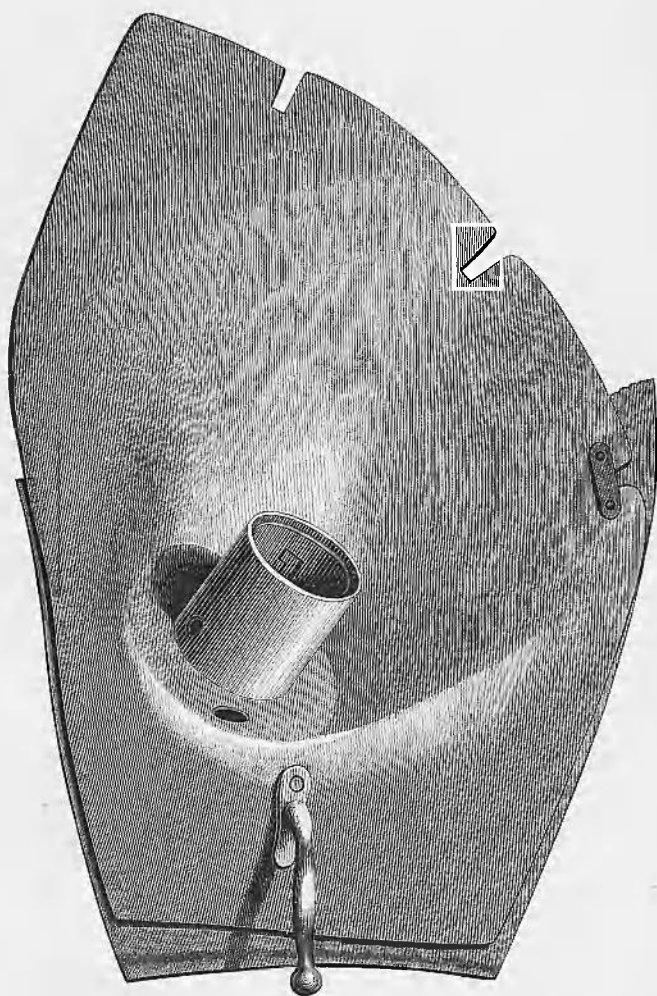
Jousting Vamplate of the Sixteenth Century (interior view). Royal Artillery
Museum, Woolwich.

From a drawing by Walter H. Tregellas, Esq.

quite smooth and plain.   In others it appears as rough from
the forest (Von Schlichtegroll, plate 28 ; Hefner, plate 90).
Frequently it is painted with two colours twining from end
to end.   Again, the whole length is covered with ostrich
feathers of various hues ; some have coloured ropes of a kind
of floss wound round them ; while others are embellished
with a series of gauzy puffs, having rosettes at the gatherings.
All these, and many more, are well represented in the Bavarian
Tourney Book, named above.   The same volume exhibits
two curious modes of hastiluding ; one shows us the cham-
pion encountering a group of *three* tilters, a deed of sufficient
daring, as it appears to our post-mediæval perceptions, but
surpassed by a later example in the same record, where we
have the Duke of Bavaria attacking and attacked by a band
of *five* knights :—" Der Herzog hält ein Gesellenstechen mit
fünf Rittern."

The Fighting-lance of this period is well depicted in
Tewrdannckh, plates 89 and 92.

We have already noted that examples of the High Vam-
plate are to be found in the Tower collection, Nos. $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{7}{48}$, and
$\frac{7}{49}$.   There are also specimens in the Musée d'Artillerie at
Paris.