shows the use of outlining cord for every part of this pattern. It certainly gives accent and is typical of Renaissance embroidery. Should there be irregularities in the outlines of the work one may, therefore, quite legitimately conceal them by thus couching on a well chosen cord.

Many charming variations grow out of this manner of working and are used in the old embroidery before mentioned. For instance, different shades of gold may be combined in the same figure; the couching silk may be of contrasting instead of the same color; or a thread of silk and a thread of gold instead of two of gold may be couched together, and the silk may vary in shade with each row, producing a lovely gradation of gleaming color in the finished form.

If the design is to be done in a large size, as, for instance, the piece reproduced, the gold thread for the circles should be heavy; for the flat or straight stitch, which is not padded, rope silk should be used, and the figure when finished outlined with a single thread of gold couched on. The buttonhole stitch should be worked in a slightly twisted floss, used double, the four small circles having been slightly padded with soft knitting cotton couched on with thread,—the larger central one more heavily padded. Always the working materials should suit the size of the pattern and be harmonious. A significant design, such as this one, sympathetically wrought, will richly repay the worker, through a widened interest in life, as well as in an added possession.

THE SPIRIT OF ORIENTAL CRAFTSMANSHIP:
BY J. ZADO NOORIAN

MANY, many times I receive orders of this sort: “Will you make me a pendant exactly like the one you made my friend, Mrs. ——? She is quite willing that you should copy it, only I want topaz instead of lapis lazuli.”

I have to say: “It cannot be done. I cannot do it.” Then it is asked, “Why can you not? Can you not remember the design?”

It is difficult to make people understand that even if I had the very pendant or chain that they wish me to copy before my eyes, there could never be a copy; it would not be just the same. “We do not work that way.” That is all I can say. It is in the nature of the training, it is in the very craftsmanship itself that we cannot make two things quite alike. Just so, I do not have a regular stock that is carried from month to month, as in most kinds of business. I cannot furnish people who ask for them with catalogues, because unless I had a printer working from day to day and tearing up every day sheets that he had printed, I could not represent the jewelry I have in my store. It is always changing and I do not replace the pieces that are gone with other pieces exactly like them.

Could a man write a book twice and have the second exactly like the first? He
can send his book to the printer and he
will make a thousand copies with his ma-
chine; but a man's mind and soul, with
which he works, is not a machine. He
can create one thing but once.

"But can you not remember the de-
sign?" Yes, possibly; and I can remem-
ber pictures I have seen, but I cannot re-
produce them.

It lies mostly in this, perhaps—

Modern jewelers, for the most part,—I
do not say always,—do their work part
by part. One man makes the design; an-
other works it out in metal; a third puts
in the stone, which a fourth, a stone-
expert, says is a good one. They are paid
so much for what they do, according to the
skill or knowledge that the work re-
quires. Each man can do his part, but he
cannot do the work of any of the others.
It was not so with the old jewelers, espe-
cially not so with the jewelers in the
Orient, who have long been the princes of
their craft. For the handling of precious
stones is the birthright of the East; the
feeling for color is a sixth sense; and
subtlety of design is the natural expression
of the elaborate, infinitely patient and in-
tricate methods of Eastern thought.

You must add to this the laws of caste.
All the members of each occupation inter-
marry only among the members of their
own craft and they live together in sepa-
rate localities almost like separate races.
They talk together about their work and
the knowledge of it is deepened by the
constant exchange of opinion among so
many expert men. Many a man's fore-
bears have been jewelers on both sides of
his family for hundreds of years. Such
a man knows nothing of designs. Per-
haps he cannot draw a straight line, but
he has no need to. Metals and gems are
the materials that he uses for his work;
one does not make jewelry out of pencil
marks. So he looks at his lump of gold or
lengths of silver wire and handles it, and
then, like a sculptor, he works out what
he sees and feels in it. And no one can
see quite the same thing in the same way
twice.

There is always the personality of the
man or woman for whom the jewel is
to be made that influences the craftsman.
There is the change of mood in himself;
there is even the weather to sway his feel-
ings. Then there are the stones to be
used. How could lapis lazuli, rich, heavy,
opaque blue, be set like a transparent
topaz? The latter is light and sunny;
the design of the setting must not be too
heavy and it must take a little in tone
from the color of the stone. The former
is dark and rich; almost no design is too
heavy for the bluish gray mass in which
it can be set. Yet the lady wants a pendant
just like her friend's.

Fourteen years ago when I introduced
Oriental jewelry and Oriental methods of
stone cutting into one of the largest im-
porting houses in New York, few pieces
of Eastern workmanship were to be found
in this country except in museums or pri-
ivate collections. Now there is a riot of
what they call Oriental jewelry,—but what
is more rightly classed as crude and bar-
baric,—and many ignorant men with no
real claim to the title of jeweler are
thrusting a degraded sort of work upon
the market. They call themselves Oriental
jewelers; half the time they have never
touched stones or metals; they have done
nothing but clean rugs. Their sole in-
centive is the money to be got. Gain is
sometimes a spur to a man who is too
lazy to find satisfaction in the use of
knowledge for its own sake; but the spirit
of commercialism alone never produced a
thing of real and lasting beauty.

The true Oriental jeweler worked like
a true craftsman, first for the love of his
work and only secondly for his livelihood.
He knew and loved the smallest detail,
the most unimportant branches of his
craft. My father made many of his own
tools and my great-grandfather is said to
have been very sure that no European-
made tool was fit to handle. I have in my
possession some that he made and I have
never seen their equals. He could make a
horseshoe as well as the most elaborate
piece of filigree and he found a kindred
pleasure in doing it. Not many modern jewelers are as familiar with the materials with which they work as that. Whatever was made of metal, he knew how to make, and he was not too proud to beat out a cooking vessel if there was no one else around to do it.

It was that deep knowledge and deeper respect and love of his work that made the old Oriental jeweler famous in history and in story, and some of his workmanship today valued as priceless samples of art. No part was a means only to an end or to be slighted as such, and the end was never merely to make a thing good enough to sell. His aim was to create a thing of as nearly perfect beauty as he was able. And he approached it by a series of lesser aims, to his mind of equal importance; perfect material, perfect tools and perfect knowledge of them were all necessary.

This is the spirit behind the craftsmanship that produced the beautiful repoussé and filigree of the old Oriental jewelers. The pieces we cherish in our museums are the results of generations of training and laborious love. One might make a proverb that a work endures in proportion to the time it took to produce it. It is like the New York buildings; they could not stand so high in the air if they did not run so deep under the ground.

THE VALUE OF A RIGHT APPRECIATION OF WOOD

A well-known writer on Japanese architecture and interior decoration says: “To the Japanese, wood, like anything that possesses beauty, is almost sacred, and he handles it with a fineness of feeling that at best we only reveal when we are dealing with precious marbles. From all wood that may be seen close at hand, except such as is used as a basis for the rare and precious lacquer, paint, stain, varnish, anything that may obscure the beauty of texture and grain, is rigidly kept away. The original cost of the material is a matter of no consequence; if it has a subtle tone of color, a delicate swirl in the veining, a peculiarly soft and velvety texture, it is carefully treasured and used in the place of honor.”

We of the Western world are as yet only beginning to appreciate what this may mean. With us, the original cost of the material is a matter of the greatest possible consequence, and we are too apt, when we are choosing wood for the interior of our houses or for the making of our furniture, to put a money value upon it rather than to allow ourselves to appreciate its natural beauty. For it is a fact that the greatest beauty often lies in wood that is faulty and comparatively valueless from a commercial point of view, and that by throwing this aside we sacrifice the most interesting characteristic of the woodwork. When we do strive for the effects produced by crooked growth and irregular grain, we go to the other extreme and instead of studying each particular piece of wood and using it exactly where it belongs with relation to the rest, we hunt out deliberately the most gnarled and knotted pieces, so that the result instead of being interesting in a natural and inevitable way, is eccentric and artificial.

This is the greater pity because, after all, it requires only a little interest, care and discrimination to give to the woodwork of a room just the kind of interest and beauty that belong to it. Instead of that we are apt either to imitate the wealthy man who built a cottage in the Adirondacks and paneled it throughout with spruce so carefully selected that not a single knot appeared throughout the entire house, or else we go to the opposite extreme and deliberately select the wood of irregular and faulty grain for the entire house, instead of letting it appear here and there as is natural.