

NOT IN THE PATTERN.

*Porto Rican Embroideries are
marred by bullet Holes.*

PIERCED AT SAN JUAN

NEEDLEWORK EXECUTED BY WOMEN
OF THE ISLAND IS MOST BEAUTI-
FUL—THEIR SOURCE OF INCOME.

Beside the exquisite beauty of the Porto Rican needlework shown in the court of the Manufactures building at the exposition and in the annex to the same building, there is an additional interest when the fact is known that the work has been done by women of Porto Rico who have been so greatly reduced in circumstances that they are glad to work for 25 cents a day in order to get the means necessary to keep body and soul together.

The effect of the Spanish-American War, and the several cyclones which the island has since suffered, has been to pauperize the Porto Ricans, having, with few exceptions, reduced even the wealthy to penury and want. But as has been so often demonstrated in other countries, women stand ever ready to take their place at the wheel and steer the vessel into safe waters. So did the women of Porto Rico, and while the men are striving to get the soil back into shape for the production of a livelihood for their families, the women are making a brave effort to support themselves and their families by doing needlework.

But, although they work so cheaply and with a rare willingness, there is a great difficulty confronting them, the lack of a market. For the purpose of obtaining markets for these poor women, two societies were formed in the island, the Benevolent Society of Ponce and the Woman's Aid Society of San Juan. Since the organization of these societies, orders have been obtained from the United States, but not nearly as many as desired or expected from a country which should be interested in the welfare of its new possessions.

It is for this reason that the two benevolent societies of Porto Rico are superintending the exhibits of needlework, baskets and hats at the exposition. Mrs. Teresa Antonsanti of San Juan, honorary member of the board of women managers of the Pan-American Exposition, has been here for several weeks, trying to interest Americans to the extent of buying the goods displayed here and of ordering more from her native land. She is ably assisted by Miss Cortes of San Juan, whose family is of the aristocracy that, like the middle classes, has suffered severe reverses of fortune.

Miss Cortes has some of her own very elaborate embroidery and drawn work on exhibition in the court of the Manufactures building. Among the articles shown is a picture of Columbus embroidered in black and white on white silk. It is so marvelously executed that even the closest observer will not be convinced that it is needlework until the picture is taken down from its place upon the wall and held up before the light. It is, even then, difficult to discern the fine stitches. Although the picture is not larger than an

ordinary cabinet, it required six months to make it. Miss Cortes was awarded first prize at the Porto Rican Exposition in 1894.

Some of the other artistic pieces of needlework shown by Miss Cortes are a dainty towel of embroidery and lace, some beautifully drawn and embroidered baptismal cloths, handkerchief cases and a set containing a bedspread, valance and pillow cases. This set is made of squares of pale blue satin embroidered in white silk, with alternate squares of Mexican wheel lace in white and blue. Each piece is edged with a ruffle of the wheel lace.

A linen altercloth embroidered in linen thread in black and white is as interesting as it is beautiful. Upon examining it closely one sees a number of tiny holes which have been carefully darned, and when an attendant is asked to explain so many darned places in a cloth that is exhibited and is expected to be sold, one learns that the cloth was struck by some of the first balls that came to the island when Rear-Admiral Sampson bombarded Porto Rico. The altar cloth was in a case of fancy work at the Beneficiencia Orphan Asylum at San Juan. With the exception of this one piece, the contents of the case were entirely destroyed.

This orphan asylum has sent some well-executed fancy work, which has been done by the children. Some pretty pillows embroidered in silk and leather and some daintily embroidered handkerchiefs and collars are shown. The work of the women includes all kinds of drawn work, embroideries and hand-made lace, made into almost every conceivable article of utility or ornament. Dress waists, collars, pillow covers, table covers, dollies, draperies, bedspreads, children's bonnets, underwear and trimmings for underwear and outer garments are shown in great variety. There is also a display of curious straw hats and braids that have been made by the women and children of the island.

A great deal of the straw trimmings and pretty hats that adorn the dainty little building of Porto Rico is the work of very young children. The Porto Ricans have no hat factories, the women and children making all the hats used in the island, and as many more as they can market.

The Porto Rico building is in charge of Miss Lopez, a pretty senorita, whose sparkling black eyes, quick wit and sweet southern accent entertain and charm the visitors. She divides her energy between serving Porto Rico coffee and calling attention to the handsome picture of Andrew Carnegie, embroidered in black and white by Miss Darilae. To the casual observer the picture appears to be a very fine crayon, and it is only after Miss Lopez explains that it is done with the needle that one has even a slight realizing sense of the magnitude and value of the work.

By serving Coffee, it is expected that Americans, especially, will learn the superior quality of the Porto Rico article and that a demand will be created for it. Even though it is so much superior to the coffees generally used in this country, Porto Ricans have difficulty in marketing their coffee here, nearly all of it going to Europe, the growers selling it for almost nothing.