THE ECCLESIOLOGIST.

"Surge igitur et fac: et erit Dominus tecum."

No. CLVIII.—OCTOBER, 1863.

(NEW SERIES, NO. CXXII.)

ON MEDIAEVAL EMBROIDERY.

A Paper read before the Durham Architectural Society, by G. E. Street, Esq., F.S.A.

When I was asked to read a paper before this society, I was at first inclined to refuse, feeling that there were but few subjects on which it would be possible for me to say much which would have, in the first place any novelty or interest, and in the next place any permanent value. I feel however very strongly that it is the duty of architects, whenever and wherever they have the opportunity, to show their respect for, and sympathy with those who, like most of my present audience, are engaged in the same pursuits as themselves, but from pure love of the subject, and not (as may be supposed to be the case with them) in some degree from mixed motives of love and interest. I am satisfied that the art of architecture owes very much, if not all, the advance which it has made within the last few years, to the intelligent and enthusiastic interest which amateurs have taken in it. Without that interest our work would certainly be cold, lifeless, and unsympathetic; with it there is no real reason why in due time it should not rise even to the level of ancient work. I feel it the more necessary to make this acknowledgment, because I have seen with pain lately one of those weak attacks upon non-professional critics and students of art which some of my brethren now and then make, but which never deserve more than very slight notice, and never I believe proceed from men whose opinions deserve much consideration.

Having then, with this feeling, consented to aid, so far as I could, the cause of this society, it seemed to me that I should do well if I were to take up one of those subordinate subjects which cluster round the more important centre of my art, and which admit in a large measure of study and elucidation by those who, (like many among you,) may have more time to study them than can be afforded by an architect whose hands are ever full of other work. I proposed therefore, to your committee, to give a lecture on ancient embroidery, with a view in part to illustrate the valuable examples of this long neglected art which are still preserved in the library of your cathedral, and in part to inspire some of my fairer hearers to emulate these glories of a past age, and to give up the miserable drudgery of cross stitch, crochet, and the like, in favour of work which admits of delicacy, refinement, and art in its execution, and is, when finished, full of beauty and value. We ought, indeed, to have some national pride in this matter of embroidery, seeing that in the Middle Ages our forefathers had a reputation for this

work so far surpassing that of other people as to lead to its being commonly called *Opus Anglicanum*; and a story is told by Matthew Paris, of Pope Innocent IV., (A.D. 1246,) who admiring the orphreys of some vestments, and finding they were of English work, cried out, "Truly England is our garden of delight; in sooth it is a well inexhaustible; and where there is great abundance, from thence much may be extracted." (Quoted by Mr. Henry Shaw, Dec. Arts of the Middle Ages, p. 16.)

The work of Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, the famous Bayeux tapestry, is known to most of you: and if not before, at any rate after her time, our English ladies long continued to emulate her skill. Richard the First's wife, for instance, according to the chronicle of Normandy, made for the church of Notre Dame at Rouen a cloth of silk and broidery, covered with stories of the virgin and the saints. The names of other embroiderers have been preserved: and among others Mr. Hudson Turner (Dom. Arch. of Mid. Ages, p. 99.) says that Henry III. had many church vestments made by one Mabel, of Bury S. Edmunds, whose skill as an embroidress seems to have been remarkable, and of whose curious performances many interesting records might, he says, be collected.

It would be a mistake, however, to give credit to ladies for all the old embroideries. In this as in other apparently feminine accomplishments, men have constantly attempted, and successfully, to vie with them; and old documents afford ample evidence of the fact that the profession of embroiderer was one commonly pursued by men, a corporation of embroiderers having existed at Cologne, and the names of many embroiderers being preserved in the liberate rolls of the 13th and 14th centuries, with the prices given for their work: prices so enormous as to involve the necessity at last of introducing severe sumptuary laws, to stay the extravagance to which this art in no slight degree ministered. Some notion of the cost of these works may be gathered from the facts stated by Mr. Henry Shaw. He found a payment for a cope of red silk, for a Bishop of Hereford in 1241, which allowing for the altered rate of money, must have cost about £360. Henry III. gave another bishop a mitre which cost £1,230; and a sum equal to £2,100 was given to Thomas Cheiner, for a vestment of velvet embroidered, purchased by Edward III. for his own chaplain.

There were then, even more than now, various kinds of work; and each kind varied from age to age in obedience to that law of developement and progress which so strongly marked the whole course of art in the middle ages: and I shall endeavour to-day to give you some general idea, not only of the character of the work, and the different purposes to which it was applied, but also of the various modes and processes which marked its execution. In doing this, I shall be able to a small extent, to illustrate what I have to say by the work which has been kindly lent to me to-day by Miss Blencowe, Miss Hutchinson, and Messrs. Jones and Willis of Birmingham, as well as by one or two examples of old work, in addition to those interesting works preserved in your cathedral library, some of which you will be able, no doubt, at all times to examine and study.

Fortunately you have still preserved here some of the rarest kind of silk tissues, which though not embroidered, are still so much connected with my subject, that it would be impossible to overlook them, and which are evidently of Eastern origin. 'These tissues were found, together with some embroidered vestments, in the coffin of S. Cuthbert, when it was, as I cannot but think, irreverently opened a few years ago. Of their age there is no exact evidence, and I am quite unable to hazard more than a guess on the subject; but of their Eastern origin there can, I think, be no doubt whatever.

So far as I know there are no other examples of the same kind preserved in England, unless I include one fragment in the South Kensington Museum; but in France and Germany there are several, and their character is invariably the same as that which marks these at Durham. The probability would seem to be that many of these tissues were brought back by crusaders from the east; but, before the crusades, many were undoubtedly imported into France from Constantinople, Asia, or Greece. They were always, it is evident, extremely prized, and used either for enclosing relics, or for burying with the bodies of the most distinguished men, or for use as veils or hangings on either side of the altar, as in the case (mentioned by the Abbé Leboeuf in his *Mémoires concernant l'histoire civile et ecclesiastique d'Auxerre*) of Bishop Gaudry, in A.D. 925, who having a very fine tissue powdered with lions, and with a Greek inscription in the centre, had no rest until he could find another stuff of the same design. Having found one he purchased it, and gave it to his church in order that they might adorn both sides of the altar. M. de Caumont, in his *A.B.C-daire*, has given drawings, to which no doubt you can refer, of four of these eastern tissues of extreme magnificence, and which all present certain common characteristics, and are worthy of mention here.

That at Chinon is diapered with gaunt figures of hunting leopards *passant regardant*, and chained with collars round their necks; a bird is descending on the back of each, and between their feet are hares standing with their heads down. The ground of this tissue is blue, and the leopards are alternately white with red spots, and yellow with green spots. The colour of the birds and hares are similarly counter-changed. M. le Normand, a good French authority, considers that this tissue is distinctly a Persian work of the period between the fourth and seventh centuries.

Another tissue preserved at Le Mans is supposed by M. le Normand to be of the same age. On this there is a similar diaper of lions facing each other. Between them is a sort of torch, or altar with fire, and each lion has a star on its hind quarters. The ground of this stuff is red, the lions are of green with red lines marking the muscles and ribs, and small yellow edgings divide the colours. At Auxerre is another tissue diapered with spread eagles and roses. This is said to have been given by the Empress Placidia, to cover the coffin of S. Germain, when his body was brought from Ravenna in the 5th century. It is known as the *Sudarium* of S. Germain. The design of these birds is extremely fine of its kind, bold, precise, and definite. The feathers are much conventionalized, but the head and beak are well and vigorously drawn. At Metz there

is a cope, said to have been given to the church by Charles the Great. This has also quaint conventionalized eagles, somewhat similar in general character to those just described, but remarkable as being arranged in lines radiating from the centre, as if from the first intended for a cope or other similar vestment; circles are inscribed on the wings, and in some of these there are animals introduced, which are very similar in character to those which may be seen in the Durham tissues. In the Cluny museum, at Paris, there are preserved some fragments of similar tissues and laces, taken from the coffin of a bishop, who died in the thirteenth century, at Bayonne: here there are not only the usual devices of birds facing each other, but others also of foliage which is distinctly Arabic in its character.

In the church of S. Gereon, at Cologne, is preserved another of these tissues. It is diapered with circles, each of which contains a griffin fighting with another conventional animal. There are broad bands or collars across the necks and bodies of these animals: a feature often seen in these Eastern stuffs. The circles are about two feet in diameter, and the grounds alternately of brownish and blueish tints.

At Le Puy en Velay, I remember seeing Eastern tissues used between the leaves of an illuminated Bible of the ninth century. These were made of China crape, cotton, silk, linen, and camel's hair, and were of extreme delicacy, and various colours and patterns.

Similar tissues were discovered some years ago in opening two tombs at S. Germain des Pres in Paris, those of the Abbots Morard and Ingou. The skeleton of Abbot Morard, buried in A.D. 990, was clothed with two vestments: the first was a long cloak, with large folds descending to the feet, of a dark red, and thick satin, of a large pattern. The second vestment was a long purple tunic of woollen material, ornamented with embroidery in wool, on which had been worked some ornaments. The costume of the skeleton of Ingou was very much more rich. I quote the description that M. Desmarest gives of them in his Mémoire on the subject. ‘‘The vestments,” he says, ‘‘are composed of taffetas of close tissues and open tissues, of laces of different widths, and work and stuffs of sculpturesque design. The taffeta of close tissue is that of the chasuble and cassock; it was of a reddish brown colour; the other taffetas of open or loose tissues were used generally for linings. The remnants of close tissues had been put together, not by being simply sewed, but by means of lace, which marked the junctures, and the place of the bindings. Thus this lace showed as many bands of ornament as there were pieces of tissue. Amongst these laces, the narrowest were enriched at certain intervals with rosettes, showing shades of gold and silver; the wider ones were ornamented with designs of a running pattern all the way along. There was also a sort of very transparent serge composed of very fine threads of gold which formed the collar of the robe. The legs of the skeleton of the Abbot Ingou were clothed in long gaiters *appliqués* on a piece of cloth, which were in place of stockings, and tightened towards the garter by a running cord of silk. The material of these gaiters was a tissue of silk and gold enclosed in hexagonal panels, in the centre of which were birds woven in gold, and outside hares and gazelles also in gold.” A drawing of this tissue is

given in Willemin's *Monuments Inédits.* Pl. 15. The beauty of these stuffs struck those who were learned on the subject very much, and as they thought they had found examples of the process of fabrication mentioned by Pliny and others, of the richest fabrics of the Greek and Roman ages, they attempted to prove by means of them that the most beautiful manufactures of Pagan civilization had never been lost amongst the Gauls. Unfortunately for these speculations, those who made them (M. Desmarest may be mentioned as the author of one in the "*Mémoires de la Classe des Sciences Physiques de l'Institut*, 1806,") had not remarked the Arabic legend which is found repeated four times round each compartment, and which contains an invocation to GOD, taken from the Koran.

Nothing can be more curious than this fact of a sentence from the Koran serving as an ornament to the gaiters of an Abbot of Saint Germain-des-Pres in the 10th century. Willemin in his grand work *Mon. Inédits*, plate 78, gives a drawing of a silk tissue found in the coffin of Bishop Peter Lombard, in the church of S. Marcel, at Paris, who died in 1160. This has birds and griffins alternately facing each other, with stems of foliage between them, and is described by him as being evidently Eastern. Another piece, preserved at Notre Dame, was brought from Palestine by S. Louis, and has an Arabic inscription on it of the 10th century. The early woven fabrics all came from the Levant and the East. S. John Chrysostom, describing in the fourth century the dresses of the Emperor Theodosius, says that they were of silk and gold, diapered with dragons; and Anastasius ("le bibliothécaire,") in the 9th century, describing the furniture of some churches mentions "Vestes cum rotis et aquilis, cum leonibus et gryphis et unicornibus, cum pavonibus; habentes leones cum arboribus et gryphis, cum cancellis et rotis," &c., all of which describe accurately enough the patterns on the stuffs I am referring to. I may just mention here that authorities seem to doubt whether some of these tissues are not rather of wool than of silk. To my eye those which I have seen look like silk, but I may have been mistaken.

The mention of these old examples is prefatory only to that of the tissues which are preserved in the library of your cathedral, and which are of precisely the same class and character of design. These as you probably know, were discovered in the coffin of S. Cuthbert; they are however, so decayed and so rotten, that it would be impossible to propose to exhibit them on such an occasion as this. Their rarity makes it a bounden duty on the part of their guardians not to allow them to be handled by any one; and they ought indeed to be properly mounted in frames, glazed and protected from the effect of light. At present they are rolled together and must suffer seriously every time that they are rolled or unrolled. I trust before long to hear that they are more carefully preserved, for I am sure that there is nothing even in Durham which more rightly deserves preservation, nothing of which the loss would be more felt by those most competent to judge than that of these almost unique remains.

These precious fragments of old work were, as I have said, found in the tomb of S. Cuthbert. From the earliest ages it has been the custom to inter monks and priests in the habits of their

order, whilst nuns it is said had, in addition to their conventual dress, the hair which had been cut off when they took the veil tied to their girdles and buried with them. And it is probable that, in the case of so great a saint as S. Cuthbert, his body would have been wrapped in the most precious materials it was possible to procure, and hence these rare Eastern fabrics may have been an offering of their best from some who had a pious love and regard for a very holy man. In the case of these tissues, we know that this was the fact, for on consulting the history of S. Cuthbert we are enabled to say with something like certainty when these silk tissues were placed in his coffin. He was buried in 698, eleven years after his death, and in 1104 his coffin was opened, and a full description of the robes found in it is given by the contemporary monk Reginald. He says further that they were removed, and their places supplied with others of similar nature but greater beauty. One he describes as being "of silk, thin, and of the most delicate texture;" another "costly, of incomparable purple." (Raine's S. Cuthbert, p. 197.) There can be no doubt, I think, that he referred to the very robes now rolled up in the library of the cathedral, and taken from the saint's coffin some five and thirty years ago.

The descriptions I have already given of the various tissues of Eastern origin in France and Germany are very nearly applicable to these which you have here. The same system of manufacture, the same kind of colouring, the same peculiarities of design are found in each, and in none is there the slightest appearance of similarity to any of the ornamentation of the Byzantine or Romanesque schools of art. In Raine's "*Life of S. Cuthbert*," there is a careful account of these works, with engravings (some of which are from drawings by Mr. Salvin) to which I must beg you to refer. There are three examples. In one, the ground is diapered all over with large circles about two feet in diameter. In each of these circles is a representation of the sea in which are fishes and ducks swimming, and a large vessel (which may be a vase, or may be a ship) stands on the water laden with fruit. In the spandril spaces between the circles are ducks or geese swimming in the sea; the borders of the circles have grapes, pears, and apples introduced. The whole are extremely well drawn, and the heads and necks of the birds in particular are very natural. The drawing is quite unlike Saxon drawing in every respect. The colour of this tissue is mainly red, with the devices in yellow.

Mr. Raine in his account of this says that it must have been made for S. Cuthbert's shrine, because there is the sea with which he was surrounded at Lindisfarne and Farne, the Solan geese which frequent both islands, the porpoises which abound there, and the eider ducks in which S. Cuthbert took so much pleasure that they have ever since been called by his name. (Raine's S. Cuthbert, pp. 195, 196.)

Another piece consists also of a diaper of circles, ten inches and a half in diameter, in each of which stands a quaint two-headed bird, with a magnificent tail displayed behind it, and recalling the Auxerre and Metz tissues. In the spandril spaces are winged beasts sitting in pairs, but with their faces turned away from each other. This silk was yellow, with the devices in green. Another piece has a diaper of eight-foiled figures, each enclosing a figure of a man

on horseback, with a hawk on his hand, and a dog running between the horse's feet. The spandril spaces are diapered with the common eastern pear-shaped devices, and the border which still remains has figures of rabbits seated. The colours are crimson and gold. The gold seems to be yellow silk, which looks as though by some process it had been gilded on the surface only.

It may perhaps be said that this representation of a man on horseback proves that the work cannot come from the East. To this it may be answered, if one may be allowed to be facetious, that the man is very little like a man; but I remember some gates in the chapels of the crypt under the cathedral of Le Puy, which are undoubtedly Eastern, and which are covered with subjects in illustration of the life of our LORD. So that it is clear that eastern workmen did occasionally introduce the human figure to suit the wants of their customers.

The examination of these stuffs has a twofold interest, for it is impossible not to see, in looking at them, whence it was that many of the devices so common on the tiles, the mural and other decorations, of the Middle Ages were derived. They came undoubtedly from the acquaintance which their designers had with these beautiful Eastern fabrics.

I will not detain you farther on this preliminary branch of my subject, but will now go on to explain to you something of the various modes of work with which the linens, silks, tissues, and velvets of the Middle Ages were so abundantly adorned. And first of all it will be necessary that I should describe to you the manner in which the ancient embroidery was executed. There are two principal modes of execution—the first and oldest being always embroidery wrought over the whole ground or surface of the vestment; and the second and latest being embroidery *appliqué* on a ground of velvet or silk. The latter mode is that which is now almost invariably employed, for the simple reason, no doubt, in the first place, that the labour it entails is a fraction only of that which is required for the earlier system: and in the second that people seem hardly to be aware that there is another mode of execution; nevertheless it were much to be wished that the earlier system should be again revived, seeing how superior and how far more harmonious its effect is than that of the later *appliqué* work. All embroidery is done in gold thread and silk upon a linen ground, and the difference in execution between early and late work is, that in the latter the ground is only partially, whilst in the former it is entirely, covered with work.

The mode of execution cannot well be explained without the work itself before your eyes. But the main feature to be observed is, that gold thread is generally used only on the surface of the linen, being laid on it and carefully stitched down with cross stitches of sewing silk, whilst the silk is almost always worked through the linen, though it is occasionally laid down like the gold thread, and then quilted with stitches arranged in diagonal lines. The stitch commonly employed for the silk work is almost always a long stitch, and the stitches pass between each other so as thoroughly to cover the ground. In the early works when the whole

of the ground of the work is embroidered, the stitches are usually arranged in diagonal or zigzag lines, and worked with all the accuracy of machine-executed work, and sometimes (as in the magnificent chasuble of the 13th century, which belonged to Margaret de Clare, Countess of Pembroke, and niece of Henry the Third,) gold passing is used in the same way, but in this case the embroidery is executed on blue silk and not on white linen. The earliest embroidery at Durham is executed on red linen. Diagonal lines of gold passing are used upon a silk ground in the vestments of S. Thomas à Becket, which are still in part preserved at the cathedral at Sens. The mode ordinarily adopted in the execution of this work is to strain the linen which is to be embroidered in a frame, and then to mark on it in ink the outline of the work that is to be done. This done, the embroidery can be executed with certainty and precision. If the work is to be *appliqué* on another ground, then it will have to be taken out of the frame, cut close round the edges, and stitched on to the silk or velvet ground, and the rough edges of the linen are then concealed by a binding made of floss silk, or of twisted silk and gold thread. This binding is laid down over the rough edge of the work, and kept in its place by cross stitches of silk.

The materials to be used are gold passing, which may be obtained best of Messrs. Stillwell, Ledger, and Co., late Tappolet, of No. 6, Little Britain; and silks, which may be had at Pearsall's, in Cheapside, or Wilks', in Regent Street: the ground should be a stout linen. I have taken the trouble to obtain gold thread from Constantinople—but I found that it lasted no better than, if even as well as, the gold thread which I have bought at Tappolet's. It is a fashionable custom at the present day to substitute yellow silk for gold thread in embroidery. This is done partly on the score of the danger of gold thread tarnishing and partly on the ground of expense,—though indeed the amount which is saved in any one garment or vestment by such a change is ordinarily not very great. The alteration in effect on the other hand is sadly for the worse. It seems absurd to have to say that gold and yellow do not produce the same effect, yet it is necessary to say so very strongly. The main argument of those who substitute the worse for the better is that gold thread tarnishes. In reply to this, I can only say, that old gold thread lasts longer and better than old silk, and that even when tarnished gold thread looks far better than faded yellow silk and quite as well as the same silk when fresh. But it is not the fact that gold thread does tarnish always or rapidly. The first altar-cloth I ever designed was for the first church I ever restored, and was worked circa A.D. 1850. I saw this work not along ago, and it was as bright as ever. My friend, Miss Hutchinson, of Checkley, some of whose beautiful work executed from my designs is exhibited here to-day, writes to me on this point to the following effect: ''The sedilia hangings have hung in their place in Hollington church uncovered ever since the church was consecrated about two years ago. This is an example in favour of real gold. The white Frontal in the same church, though only used on Festivals, and kept carefully at other times in a tin box, has already begun to change colour where yellow silk was used (by an unfortunate mistake) in place of gold. The green frontal always on the altar and worked in gold passing is as bright and beautiful as it was the day it was done."

Miss Hutchinson's evidence completely confirms what I have always maintained, in opposition to the popular practice of the day—viz., that if we wish to have really effective work it must be of the same materials in all respects as the old works which have lasted so long and so well in spite of every kind of bad usage.

If spangles are used they should not be flat, but convex on the face, and these as well as the velvets and silks for mounting *appliqué* work may be bought with safety of Messrs. Jones and Willis, of Birmingham, who have devoted much attention to this kind of work, and some of whose embroideries, executed under my direction, are by their kindness exhibited here to-day.

The old work was not always confined to the kind I have been describing here. But before I mention any of the other modes of needle-work commonly practised in the Middle Ages, it will be as well that I should go on to describe some of the examples of the kind of embroidery I have been referring to. And first of all, a few words may be introduced as to the vestments on which embroidery was most commonly used. The vestments of the clergy were usually most sumptuous. They were,

1. The amice. This was a linen cloth, worn round the neck and turning down over the shoulders with embroidery on its edge, called the apparel of the amice.

2. The albe. This was a long linen garment reaching to the ground and tied in at the waist. The albe was adorned with embroidered apparels, sewn on each sleeve over the wrist, and a square apparel of embroidery in front. The albe is the original from which both surplices, and the rochets worn by bishops, are derived. The apparels of albes were sometimes not only embroidered but enriched also with jewels.

3. The girdle was a cord of twisted silk by which the albe was bound round the waist.

4. The stole was a narrow band of silk or embroidery, worn round the neck, and with its two ends hanging down in front. Deacons wore it over one shoulder only.

5. The maniple—a shorter band of the same character as the stole, worn over the left arm.

6. The chasuble or vestment *par excellence*. This is one of the most frequently met with vestments, and is still ordered to be worn by the law of the English Church. The chasuble is adorned with an orphrey of embroidery (which originally was in the shape of the pall), down the centre, and often with an embroidered edging. It was cut of old very much in the form of a vesica piscis with a hole for the head in the centre, and fell in graceful folds before and behind. The modern Roman vestment is utterly unlike the old, and extremely heavy and

ungainly looking. The chasuble of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries generally had the orphrey on the back arranged in the form of a cross and filled in with the most delicate embroidery of Scripture subjects.

7. The dalmatic was a vestment generally worn by deacons. It forms also one of the coronation robes still worn by our kings at Westminster Abbey. It is a short square-cut garment, with large sleeves, and on them and in front were often richly embroidered apparels.

8. The cope: this was a processional vestment, and is perhaps more commonly met with than any other; it is often sumptuously embroidered all over and with borders to its edges. The cope is semicircular in form, and the patterns generally radiate from the centre, so that when worn they may fall vertically from the shoulders. The cope had a hood in the centre, which was usually the most gorgeously wrought part, and it was fastened across the throat with a morse, which is a sort of large brooch, and generally jewelled.

9. The gloves, the mitre, and the sandals of the bishop, were also embroidered, as may be seen by consulting monumental brasses, on which the patterns of the vestments were usually very carefully represented.

It is hardly necessary in this place to say that many of these vestments were worn long after the Reformation, and that in fact until long after that date they were worn as a matter of course. The vestments in the cathedral of Durham were worn till they were so worn out as to be unfit for use, and appear to have been given up solely on this ground,—unless indeed the story given in the *Quarterly Review* for 1825 be true (as it probably is). The reviewer says that asking the verger why the copes were disused, he said, ''It happened in my time: did you ever hear of Dr. Warburton, sir? a very hot man he was, sir: we never could please him putting on his robes. This stiff high collar used to ruffle his full-bottomed wig; till one day he threw the robe off in a great passion, and said he never would wear it again: and he never did: and the other gentlemen soon left off theirs too." Copes are still used at coronations, and many of the post-Reformation bishops are vested in them on their tombs.

The account of Durham cathedral in 1635, given in Brereton's travels (published by the Chetham Society), is worth quoting here. He says: "The minster is kept as neatly as any in England. Herein is a stately pair of organs which look both into the church and chancel; a stately altar stone, all of fine marble, standing upon a frame of marble columns. When the Communion is here administered, which is by the bishop himself, there is laid upon the altar a stately cloth of gold: the bishop useth *the new red embroidered cope*, which is wrought full of stars like one I have seen used in S. Denis in France. There are here two other rich copes, all which are shaped like unto long cloaks reaching down to the ground, and which have round capes." This is one only of almost endless references to their use in the seventeenth century.

One more extract from the "Shepherd's Oracle" will serve to show that copes and vestments were not the only things objected to by them who were most active in suppressing their use, as well as those who used them:

"Whate'er the Popish hands have built
  Our hammers shall undo,
We'll break their pipes and burn their *copes*,
  And pull down churches too.

We'll exercise within the groves,
  And teach beneath a tree;
We'll make a pulpit of a cart,
  And hey! then up go we.''

And now having thus shortly described the usual vestments, I will go on to describe several examples of them; and of these the earliest with which I am acquainted are the embroidered stole and maniple, preserved in the cathedral library here, and on the back of which are wrought the interesting inscriptions which record their having been made by order of Æffleda for the pious Bishop Fridestan. Æffleda was Queen of Edward the Elder, was married circa A.D. 900, and died about A.D. 916, and Fridestan was Bishop of Winchester, and was consecrated in A.D. 905: so that these pieces of work date from about the latter year, or at any rate between A.D. 905 and 916. It seems pretty clear that this stole and maniple were offered at the shrine of S. Cuthbert by King Athelstan in the year 934, and no doubt as one of the most precious offerings it was possible to make. (See Raine's S. Cuthbert, p. 208, and note.) The whole of this work is so astonishingly delicate that I confess myself fairly puzzled to say how it can have been executed. The extreme regularity, neatness, and delicacy of the gold groundwork give the impression of a manufactured material; but a careful inspection with a magnifying glass rather made me doubt whether this could have been the case. At any rate if it was woven, it was made with the openings exactly prepared to receive the embroidered figures, the gold in the ground being nowhere cut but turned backwards and forwards at the edges in the usual way of handwork in gold. The stole and maniple are similar in their general scheme: they are long narrow strips of embroidery, with figures of saints one below the other, each standing under a sort of canopy made by a branch of foliage. The names of each saint are written in Roman capitals on each side of the figure. The whole of the surface is embroidered, and none of the linen ground is visible. It must I suppose be worked, as later work is, on fine linen. But I could not detect the presence of any, save the red linen on which the whole was mounted, though the cross stitches of red or dark yellow silk which fasten down the gold thread are very evident. The embroidery seems to have been *gummed* down (A sprig on a fifteenth century cope in the Cluny Museum was similarly gummed down on a backing of red silk, before being *appliqué* on the velvet ground.) on some red linen of rather coarse texture, and under this again is a backing of fine red silk, which forms the lining of the whole. The work seems to have been pressed or ironed to flatten it after the work was finished. The grounds throughout are

entirely of gold thread; this is extremely fine, and is laid down on the linen ground in a succession of lines, and bent and returned when it joins the figures, canopies, or other enclosing lines, and it was kept in place by cross stitching. It is necessary to use a magnifying glass to see how this work was done, and I do not hesitate to say that it is absolutely impossible to get any imitation of it executed at the present day. The canopies over the figures, the ground on which they stand, and the figures themselves, are wrought in silk, most of which still retains its original colour to an extraordinary extent. The crimson silk is always the first to change colour and becomes a light brown by exposure. This has happened to this work, and the edging of the draperies which are now marked with brown lines may originally perhaps have been crimson. The lines on the draperies are all marked with double strands of gold passing twisted together, and stitched down with very fine silk. The foliage over the heads of the figures is a sort of acanthus leaf worked in blue or red silk, and delicately shaded. The edging to the stole and maniple is a ⅜ inch band of gold, which looks as though it had been manufactured, not wrought by hand. One or two delicate lines of red in this edging give the gold about them a very red effect, which contrasts strongly with the yellow effect of the rest of the gold. This is a very frequent mode of changing the colour of goldwork in all ages.

A full and interesting account of these vestments will be found in Raine's *S. Cuthbert*, pp. 202—210, and it is so complete as to make it unnecessary for me to do more than refer to it here.

Willemin, (*Mon. In.* pl. 22,) has figured a band or girdle preserved at Nuremberg, and said to be Charles the Great's, and which seems to be precisely similar to the stole and maniple of S. Cuthbert.

At S. Rambert sur Loire is preserved a chasuble which seems to unite the earliest embroideries with the eastern patterns on the tissues I have already described. Here the ground is silk, and this is divided into panels by lines of gold, and each panel has alternately two birds and two lions looking at each other. The whole scheme is thoroughly eastern, but the mode of work appears to be French. I have not seen thie curious vestment, and only describe it from a published drawing.

The vestments of S. Thomas of Canterbury illustrate a period of art later than those which you have here, and they are even more interesting. S. Thomas was in exile between the years 1160 and 1170, and as the unvarying tradition has been that he gave these vestments to the church in which for a time he had found shelter, they have an additional value as being accurately dated examples. Their character agrees entirely with the date thus given to them. His mitre, the apparel of an amice, the chasuble, the stole, and the maniple, are all preserved, and some of them being in duplicate were given (most improperly as it seems to me) to Cardinal Wiseman on the occasion which called forth a rather famous (perhaps infamous would be a better word !) ''*Durham Letter*'' some years since.

The peculiarity about all this work at Sens is that the whole of the ornaments are running patterns of foliage of the most thorough late twelfth or early thirteenth century character. Drawings of many of these vestments have been published by Mr. Henry Shaw in his valuable work on the "*Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages*," but owing probably to his not quite understanding how the work was executed his drawings do not always explain what we want to know in order to reproduce them.

The apparel of the amice is one of the most elaborate portions of the whole. The whole ground is covered with a pattern of interlacing circles. The spaces enclosed within these are wrought in coloured silks with a gold cross in the centre. The gold is laid in very close straight lines and stitched with red silk arranged in diagonal lines. The binding consists of a double line of very neat stitching with gold, the stitches being arranged chevron-wise. The silk grounds are worked in very regular stitches arranged in diagonal lines with extreme neatness. The colours both in the centre and in the border round the amice are varied and counterchanged. The mitre is worked in gold on a white silk ground. The conventional branch of foliage on it is exquisitely drawn and beautifully worked. The chasuble is of dark purple silk with the pall and border formed of gold lace *appliqué* on the silk. On each side of the opening for the head is some very richly wrought foliage, but the rest is all rather plain.

Not very much later in date than the vestments at Sens is the chasuble now in the possession of J. B. Nicholl, Esq. and which is said to have belonged to a niece of Henry III. Here we see both the delicate conventional branching foliage, and also an architectural arrangement of quatrefoil panels filled with figures and subjects. There are some great peculiarities here. In the faces, the blue ground is left exposed for all the high lights, and the rest of the face is wrought all over with white silk in very delicate stitches, and generally in circular lines following the direction of the shadowed outlines. A head of S. Peter has very light blue hair and beard, whilst in a head of S. Paul the hair is green. Altogether the colouring is perfectly unnatural, and the dark lines on the faces very repulsive looking, but the design of the foliage and animals is admirable, and the workmanship as it usually is in early work, is almost perfect. The gold passing in the delicate stems of the foliage is all wrought in diagonal lines, the direction of which is retained throughout.

I was so fortunate some years ago as to purchase a vestment which was made up of portions of work of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, and to this I must now call your attention, as the mode of work on the earliest portion is very similar to that which I have been describing. In this work, the three-quarter figures of S. Lawrence and S. Stephen which form the outer arms of the cross, are undoubted works of the 13th century. The foliage in the border, and the spandrils of the trefoiled arches over the figures, prove this very clearly. You will see if you examine this work closely, that the stitches in the gold ground are all arranged in the way I have been already describing. A peculiar but common practice is also illustrated by these

figures, viz., the indentations in the cheeks evidently produced by the use of an iron. The rest of this piece of embroidery, is work of the 14th century, and will be noticed in its place.

For the student of ancient embroidery there is probably no city which contains so rich a store of early work as Berne. There is preserved there a vast collection of vestments, banners, altar-cloths and the like, some of which were taken from Charles the Bold of Burgundy at the fatal battles of Grandson and Morat, and some of which are said to have belonged to Lausanne Cathedral. There are here no less than eight or ten dalmatics, four or five altar frontals, the orphreys and hoods of several copes, many banners, and some very elaborate hangings worked in worsted. One of the altar cloths here is quite Byzantine in its character. It has a figure of the Blessed Virgin in the centre with S. Michael and S. Gabriel on either side, all wrought very delicately in gold on a violet silk ground. The lines of the draperies are put on over the gold in dark silk in the same way as the lines on the vestments in the Durham stole. Another of the Berne altar-cloths appears to be of the 13th century. It has a regular trefoiled arcade: the Blessed Virgin and our LORD being seated in the centre division and a figure of a Saint standing in each of the others. There is seen here the extremely rare feature of silver thread used for the foliage of the caps of columns and for the lining of the head-dress and cloak of the Blessed Virgin. The ground is violet silk, and most of the draperies are of gold varied by the colours of the silks with which it is stitched down. The lines of the draperies are all marked with red silk worked in the usual way, but *over* the gold ground-work. I think this is one of the earliest examples I have met with, in which the edges of the draperies are marked with hard black lines. Here these were only intended to give definiteness to the figures, and were not used of necessity as in the later *appliqué* work. The Blessed Virgin holds an apple which is made of red beads, a very unusual material in old work, and her dress is diapered with flowers which are not embroidered at all, but only marked strongly with brown ink on the linen.

Another vestment of not much later date than these, is the famous Sion House cope, which is now the property of Bishop Browne of Shrewsbury. This was exhibited in the Loan Collection at South Kensington in 1862, and is probably known to many of you. Still as probably the finest complete work in England, it must not be passed over. The cope is covered all over with figures formed by quatrefoils inscribed on squares, which intersect each other slightly at all their junctions. In the spandril spaces are seraphs, and in the larger panels (13 in number) subjects from the life of our LORD, figures of saints and the like. The ground of the panels was probably red (it is now faded to brown) and of the spandril spaces green. The whole of this was wrought in silk, arranged in stitches which are worked in lines forming a chevron, just like the gold thread ground in my figures of S. Lawrence and S. Stephen. The gold thread work here is very coarse as compared with that in Mr. Nicholl's vestment, just as that again is coarse when compared with the earliest Durham work. The linen on which this cope is worked, is of rather coarse quality and dark colour. It is left unworked in the parts of faces, hands and feet, which are meant to be in shadow. This is by no means an uncommon

arrangement, and will be seen if you examine the central limb of the cross on my own old vestment, where in all the figures the unbleached linen forms the shaded, and white silk embroidery, the light part of the faces. You should examine closely the crucifixion in the centre of this work of mine. It is seldom that any better work can be found; and the beautiful diaper of foliage produced by the simple device of working the gold stitches on the leaves at right angles to their direction on the ground, is worthy of all praise. The figures above and below the crucifixion in this work must not be confounded with it. They are somewhat (though not very much) later in date, very inferior in their workmanship, and evidently not by the same hand.

Of about the same date as this, i.e. early in the 14th century, is the beautiful cope still preserved in the church at Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire. The whole ground of this is divided into panels somewhat on the same principle as the Sion House cope. But the dividing lines, instead of being merely architectural in their shape, are here converted into very pretty branches of ivy and maple leaf. Extremely quaint lions, with tails of which they may well be proud, shew their teeth grimly in the spandril spaces, whilst the panels contain the crucifixion and other subjects admirably worked. The borders of this vestment are very note-worthy, having quatrefoils at intervals. Each quatrefoil has a rose in the centre, four fish arranged in a square round the rose, and animals in the cusped spaces. Between the quatrefoils are very quaint figures of *angels on horseback*, playing musical instruments, and with very peacocky wings; the eyes in the feathers being pressed with an iron in the mode commonly adopted for faces. The ground on which the angels are worked, is a fine diaper of gold in which all the effect is produced by the varying direction of the lines of gold, just as in the ground of the crucifixion in my vestment.

The fine antependium in Mr. Bowden's possession is of the 14th century, and has elaborate subjects, under cusped ogee canopies with crockets. The adoration of the Magi from this vestment has been published in the "*Calendar of the Anglican Church*," and shews that the design is almost too architectural to be very good. The design and workmanship of the figures is, however, excellent.

Somewhat later in date than these works is another of the Berne frontals—in which I have for the first time to describe work mounted on velvet. In this case the crucifixion, with S. Mary and S. John, is worked in the centre and figures of saints are placed under three divisions of arcading on either side of the centre. The draperies here are all very well drawn and shaded, and the work seems to be of early fourteenth century date. Some peculiarities in the detail deserve notice on account of their novelty. The capitals had vellum in two thicknesses, and gold foil laid over the vellum for the work to lie upon. The pinnacles and crockets, tracery and cusps were made in the same way and thick and round in section with a sort of network of gold thread, fastened over the gold foil. The bindings are all of gold, made of very thick

gold threads twisted together. Three lions below the foot of the cross are covered with white beads and their manes are made of pieces of bullion.

Some of the finest altar hangings I have ever seen have probably seldom been seen by English eyes, and though later in date than the works I have just been describing, are wrought on the same principle as the early works, not being cut out and *appliqué* on velvet or silk. One of these is preserved in the collegiate church at Manresa in Catalonia, and is, I believe, the most exquisite work of its age. It is a great altar frontal 10 ft. 9 in. in length, by 2 ft. 10¾ in. in height, and it has in the centre a large picture of the crucifixion, and on either side nine subjects from the life of our LORD. An inscription under the central subject in large raised Lombardic letters, gives us the name and residence of the artist (for he was no less) who executed it—Geri: Lapi: Rachamatore of Florence. The whole was wrought on a fine linen, on which the subjects to be represented were marked out in brown ink, and the faces were finished with a brush like the most careful miniatures. The character of the faces, the treatment of the subjects, the colouring and the *tout-ensemble* of this work, are like some exquisite work of Fra Angelico, and carry the art of embroidery no doubt to the utmost allowable limit in this direction. I imagine that its date must be about A.D. 1400. The work is so delicate that it requires close examination, in order to be sure where the painted work ends, and the embroidery begins.

In the sacristy of the Cathedral at Valencia are two hangings, measuring ten feet by three feet, which are second only to that of Manresa, and second mainly in that their author was evidently a German instead of a Florentine. They are covered with a series of Scripture subjects, treated in an extremely picturesque way, and full of life and action. The tradition, I believe, is that these vestments came from Old S. Paul's, at the time of the Reformation. Of somewhat similar character to this, are the splendid vestments discovered (concealed) some years ago in pulling down old Waterford Cathedral, and presented by the Dean to the Roman Catholic Bishop (!) and by him to S. Mary's College, Oscott, where they are now preserved. They consist of two dalmatics, two orphreys of chasubles, and a stole. The orphrey of one of the chasubles, contains a charming picture of the Nativity,—S. Mary and S. Joseph, kneeling before our LORD, surrounded by angels, whilst in the fields beyond, angels are announcing the nativity to the shepherds: on the same orphrey are the Annunciation and Salutation. The drawing and workmanship here are both of the best, and among other things, the ground diapers and other parts exhibit a plentiful use of cord laid down on the linen, in order to raise the gold thread. This was a plan very commonly adopted in all late work. The other chasuble is embroidered with a tree of Jesse. The stole has figures of the Apostles, and the dalmatics are covered with figures of Saints; one of them for instance, has on the apparel of the neck the blessed Virgin, with our LORD in front; and on the back, the instruments of the crucifixion, held by angels, and on one side, figures of SS. Anna, Joachim, B. V. Mary as a child, S. Gabriel, and the Blessed Virgin, the two other Maries, S. Elizabeth and S. Joseph; and on the other side, angels holding S. Veronica's napkin, and SS. Peter, Paul, Catharine, Barbara, Andrew,

James the Great, Elizabeth of Hungary, Agatha, Michael and Agnes. The other dalmatic is equally gorgeous.

Of about this age is a very fine orphrey of a chasuble, in the possession of Miss Blencowe. Here the drapery of the figure at the foot of the cross is managed most admirably by arranging the gold passing in lines corresponding with the direction of the folds, and stitched down with green silk of various shades, so graduated as to give the necessary shadows in the hollows of the drapery. Later than this again is the fine pall, belonging to the Fishmongers' Company. Some years ago, my sister made an accurate copy of one of the angels on this pall, from which Miss Blencowe again has made another copy, which she has been so good as to lend me for your inspection, together with the orphrey of the chasuble, to which I have just referred. Beside these examples, is the charming book cover, belonging to Mr. Greenwell, which he exhibits to-day, and which is made by working over cloth of gold, in small stitches of silk. The hood of the blue cloth of gold cope, preserved here and probably of 17th century work, was wrought in the same way, and with very good effect.

I now come to a class of embroidery which, so far as it is possible to judge from the modern works usually seen, are supposed by most persons to be the only products of the middle age. These are the late diapers and powderings of conventional flowers, *appliqué* on silk or velvet, which were fashionable in the 15th and 16th century, and which therefore are the most commonly to be met with now. The character of the sprigs, which cover these vestments, is generally very much the same, roses, stars, double-headed eagles, *fleurs de lys*, seraphs, and other devices, which are quaint and picturesque in outline, but hardly to be described as imitations of any natural form. Between these sprigs are various tendrils, spreading about all over the surface of the velvet, with spangles on either side of their ends. One of the finest of these works is the cope at East Langdon, near Dover; this has large sprigs, with the monograms of our LORD and the Blessed Virgin, and in the centre a fine group of the Annunciation. At Bircham S. Mary, the cope has in the centre the Assumption, with seraphs all round. At Romsey again, there is a fine cope, made of green stamped velvet, diapered all over with gold stars, under an opening in the centre of each of which is a piece of red silk; the border is also of velvet, and powdered with roses and conventional sprigs.

The list of late works might be largely extended. At Llangharne, Conway, Ely, Emneth, Cothele, Stoke Canon, Chipping Campden, Cirencester, Kinnersley, Barton, S. Gregory Norwich, Ling, Blickling, Madeley, Othery, Yatton, Isfield, Lutterworth, Buckland, and in other places, examples are preserved. The ground on which these sprigs are mounted is frequently very magnificent, either cloth of gold or stamped velvet; both often covered with fine conventional patterns, which might well be reproduced in modern fabrics.

The vestments preserved in the library of the Cathedral of Durham are of this late age and character, and save for their extremely decayed state, would give a very fair idea of its style.

The best of them, I think, is a cope of magnificent blue cloth of gold, one of the finest examples I have seen of this kind of fabric. The orphreys, or borders, contain the following eight subjects. (1.) The betrayal. (2.) The scourging. (3.) Our LORD bearing the cross. (4.) Our LORD nailed to the cross. (5.) The Resurrection. (6.) The incredulity of S. Thomas. (7.) The Ascension, and (8.) The descent of the HOLY GHOST. On the head is a figure of our LORD seated, with angels round Him; but little, if any, of this last is original work. The canopies over the subjects deserve study, being good examples of a rich uncommon form of canopy, which though derived no doubt from stone canopies, is nevertheless very ingeniously adapted for embroidery, and does not give the idea of being a mere imitation of stonework. The band, for fastening across the neck, remains on this cope, and is embroidered with a coat of arms. You will find in this work several points worthy of careful study. The subjects are elaborately drawn and charmingly coloured. The gradations of tints are generally rather sudden, and must be more so in proportion to the distance from which they are to be seen. The diapers on the gold ground, are made without cord, by leaving the gold thread loose and unstitched in parts. Gold bullion is introduced in some parts of the work, as e. g. to form flowers on the ground. Finally, the borders are worked in one piece, and the work is not *appliqué*, and consequently requires very narrow edgings.

Another of these copes is of purple velvet, and is powdered with seraphs and conventional sprigs of precisely the same design that we see in many specimens in other parts of England. There is an embroidered cross on the back of this cope, with a crucifix, and the emblems of the Evangelists on it, and the border has very richly embroidered figures of saints. The seraphs and sprigs on this cope may be compared with the Bircham and Emneth sprigs with which they are nearly identical. The third is a red velvet cope, diapered with seraphs and two-headed eagles, and conventional flowers. The orphreys have single figures in niches, the red edging to this, is, I need hardly say, modern. A fourth cope is of blue velvet, and has on the border, which is red, a chalice and wafer embroidered; and a figure of S. Margaret is worked on the hood; it is diapered with a very good flower, which is repeated also on the band. On these sprigs you will see the use of spangles and tendrils. The latter are of the usual twisted gold thread and silk, with a double line of yellow silk in a sort of chain stitch on one side. The bindings of the sprigs are white on the upper edges, and yellow on the lower edges. This cope has a modern border. These four are all mediæval vestments, but there is another which is even more interesting, as having been given to the Church (as I understand) by Charles the First. It is of crimson satin, powdered all over with stars, and David with Goliath's head is worked on the hood; the border is covered with cherubs. This is the latest English cope I know, but I believe those at Westminster Abbey are much more modern.

The mode of work adopted in these late sprigs is generally very much the same, and requires some description, seeing that it differs considerably from that adopted in earlier work. The great object was evidently to accomplish at less cost and with greater speed the ornamentation of vestments and hangings, which were no doubt required in increased

numbers, and which on the old process were enormously expensive. The embroidery was applied very partially therefore, on a velvet or silk ground, and in order to convey the effect of work over the whole surface, the tendrils from the leaves were carried about in all directions, with a pretty and delicate effect, which was heightened by the use of spangles. The work was done, as before, on linen and cut out, mounted on the velvet or silk, and then edged to conceal the rough edge of the linen.

The edgings were of various colours. At Emneth, where the ground is of blue velvet, the edging is of white silk to some sprigs, and of twisted gold thread and yellow silk to others. Black silk and crimson are also used for bindings; the twisted gold thread and yellow silk is also used for the tendrils, generally strengthened by a line of floss silk, added in long stitches on one side. The gold thread is usually laid down rather loosely, and fastened with cross stitches of silk, either yellow, red, or green. It is often however, diapered very beautifully in patterns formed partly by the stitching, and partly by pieces of twine laid down on the linen before the embroidery is commenced. Sometimes, as in the centres of the stars on the Romsey cope, a piece of silk is laid down on the linen and embroidered around.

In most modern copies of this kind of work, it appears to me that the bindings and the tendrils which radiate from the foliage are not sufficiently delicate, and when this is the case, much of the effect of the sprigs is necessarily lost. Manufactured yellow silk cords are often used in modern work, but they are hard and ineffective, and not to be recommended; the simple fact is, that the twist of gold thread and silk being difficult to make, it is seldom used. It must be made by turning gold thread round and round a piece of floss silk, held tight, and must be laid down and stitched on the work as it is made, otherwise the gold thread will not be seen at all, being lost in the midst of the silk. No good work can be had without trouble, and in this work, the trouble is well rewarded.

The multitude of vestments possessed by our great churches before the Reformation, can hardly be imagined by us at the present day. It is necessary to look through some of the inventories of their possessions to realize their wealth. I have not had an opportunity of looking at any Durham inventories, but probably its possessions were as great as any, and the four or five copes still left are a very sorry remnant of its former vestments, which were no doubt counted by hundreds. The old inventories are valuable in other respects. You are probably aware that the Roman Church associates certain colours with certain seasons, as, e.g., violet with Lent, white with Easter, &c.; red with martyrs, whilst green is used for ordinary days. Now old English inventories seem to prove that no such rule obtained here, (or at any rate), at all universally.

At Exeter Cathedral, there were frontals of cloth of gold, of white satin, of red satin, of red and green cloth, of blood-coloured satin, of white velvet, of red cloth of gold, of ‘‘divers colours,” and many others. And generally you will find that they were of very various

materials and colours, and adorned with subjects, coats of arms, and figures, simply with the view of making them as beautiful as possible. It is a little difficult to speak of the designs of old antependia or altar frontals; very few remain, but these are often arcaded and embroidered with the crucifixion and figures of saints. At York Minster, there were the following cloths belonging to the high altar. "Three pieces of white baudekyn, with gold flowers wove in it. Item, two pieces of white velvet, one of them with a crucifix, the other with the salutation of the B. V. Mary. Item, two pieces of blue sarcenet, with the images of the crucifix, Mary and John, *stained*. Item, two pieces of white linen cloth with a red cross, for Lent. Item, one great pall, for Good Friday," &c. &c. And at Lincoln, among others, were the following altar vestments. ''*Imprimis*, a costly cloth of gold for the high altar, with images of the Trinity, our Lady, four Evangelists, four angels with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, virgins, and many other images, having a frontlet'' (super-frontal?) "of cloth of gold, with Scriptures, and a linen cloth enfixed to the same. Item, a cloth of gold, partly red and partly white, with an image of our Lady in the midst, with her Son in a circle with eight angels, and on her right hand an archbishop standing in a circle with eight angels, and on her left a bishop standing with eight angels; with a frontlet of the same suit, having in the midst the TRINITY, with two angels incensing on every side." And at S. Paul's we have ''a cloth for the high awt of blue baudekyn, with the picture of our LORD, Mary, and John, and many others." At Durham the usual frontals were of red velvet, with great flowers of gold embroidered; but ''on the feast of the Assumption they were of white damask, beset with pearls and precious stones, which made the ornaments more glorious to behold."

In some of the German churches, where everything has been preserved very much in the atate it was left at the Reformation, there are still to be seen enormous collections of vestments. In the cathedral at Brandenburg the sacristy retains all its old presses, and these are absolutely full of ancient vestments; and at Halberstadt there is said to be even a finer collection in a sacristy, to which I was refused admission. There is no difficulty, therefore, in studying this old work in all its varieties of style and age; and the suggestions and hints I have been giving you may, I hope, induce some of my audience to take up this study, and to emulate in some degree these old works.

I should lay very great stress, however, on the importance of the study rather of the earlier than of the later works. There is just the same kind of degeneracy in this as in every other kind of art; and as no one, I suppose, doubts that thirteenth century architecture is better than that of the fifteenth century; so it is undoubtedly the fact that thirteenth century embroidery is in every way superior to that of the fifteenth.

Unfortunately this seems hardly to have been realized by the ladies who have given themselves to this good kind of work, for most of their labours have been devoted to the mere imitation of the latest works. I am able to exhibit a few specimens of modern work which may serve to show you what is now being done all over the country. To Miss Hutchinson, of

Checkley, I am indebted for the loan of an altar cloth, and of a piece of hanging; the latter executed with gold thread, the former with yellow silk. There is no more fatal mistake than this use of yellow silk in place of gold; and these two works exhibit the mistake in the strongest possible light—the effect of the hanging being far better than that of the altar cloth.

Messrs. Jones and Willis, of Birmingham, have also lent me a frontal which they have worked from my designs, and which is a good specimen of what may be achieved by women employed on such work for their livelihood, and at no very tremendous cost.

Usually, however, when a church is restored, some lady may, it is to be hoped, be found willing to give up some of her time to so good a work as adorning GOD's house. And if not, there are many religious ladies, as for instance, the Sisters of Mercy at S. Mary's Home, Wantage; at Clewer; at All Saints', Margaret Street; and at Oxford, who are always ready to devote what time they can spare to this kind of work. There is, too, the Church Needlework Society, of which Miss Blencowe and my sister were the founders, and which was established for the express purpose of giving aid, direction, and instruction to other ladies who wished to become as proficient as the founders of the society.

I am afraid that I must not venture to say so much as I ought upon the other kinds of work which were practised in the Middle Ages. They were very numerous, and almost all of them are worthy of our emulation and imitation. One of the most interesting methods is well illustrated by one or two examples which are now being exhibited at the South Kensington Museum. I refer to the hangings lent for exhibition by Dr. Bock, of Aix-la-Chapelle. They are of worsted covered with subjects; the figures comprising which are cut out of cloth and *appliqué*. The colours of the grounds under the subjects are counterchanged, and an arcade is carried along over each subject. The figures are all bound round the edges in the same way as in embroidery. The advantage of such work is that it may be made very rapidly, and is very effective when made, and it seems especially suitable for hangings or curtains. Banners are often made in the same way, though perhaps more commonly stained or printed. And here I must remind you of the banner described in the Ancient Rites of Durham, "made with pipes of silver, to be put on a staff five yards long, &c." "The banner cloth was a yard broad, and five quarters deep, and the bottom of it was indented in five parts, and fringed and made fast all about with red silk and gold. It was also made of red velvet on both sides sumptuously embroidered, and wrought with flowers of green silk and gold," &c., "and three fine little silver bells fastened to the skirts of the said banner cloth, like unto sacring bells. And this banner being so sumptuously finished, was dedicated to S. Cuthbert," "and was never shewed in any battle but" ''it brought home victory." The bells mentioned here were often put on vestments.

Funeral palls were often very gorgeously embroidered. Two of the finest are still in the possession of the Fishmongers' and the Saddlers' Companies in London. Messrs. Jones and

Willis, of Birmingham, have been good enough to send for inspection one which I had made to illustrate the applicability of the system of *appliqué* work without embroidery to our own uses.

The Aix-la-Chapelle hangings are probably as early as the end of the thirteenth century, and it is therefore not a little amusing to find people some three or four years ago claiming to have *invented* this kind of work. They should have limited their claim to its revival, and then even they were but following others who have more or less used one material upon another whenever it would economize time and labour without seriously diminishing the effect of the work.

Another very effective kind of work for hangings is also illustrated by an example at the Kensington Museum. This is of black cloth, and it is covered with patterns formed by means of a cord stitched down on its ground with white stitches and with occasional coats of arms in *appliqué* work. This sort of work may be done extremely rapidly, and looks very well indeed. Another linen vestment in the same collection, has the ground wrought all over with long worsted stitches, the figures being left unworked, with the folds of the draperies marked by lines of worsted plaited together and sewed down on the linen.

In Lübeck there are preserved some good examples of embroidery on fine white linen. There is a corporal with a large cross in the centre, four crosses at the angles, and a border, all wrought very delicately in lines formed by a succession of small cross stitches in blue and red, the two colours being counterchanged everywhere. The corporal I exhibit, worked by Messrs. Jones and Willis, is very much a copy of this. In another corporal of the 13th century there are figures of saints under canopies; here the dresses are stitched in patterns arranged in squares, diamonds, &c., and the folds of the drapery marked by being left unworked.

Two linen altar cloths in the same collection are very remarkable. One has the story of Reynard the Fox worked on it; and the other has figures of prophets and foliage. The whole seems to have been marked with ink on the linen, and the figures are then embroidered in white long stitches, worked in diaper wherever the space allows; a very little colour is introduced occasionally on the hair and on parts of the draperies, but most of the work as well as the ground is white.

The white cloth which hung over the pyx in front of the altar at Durham was probably work of the same kind as these Lübeck embroideries. It is described in the Ancient Rites of Durham, as being ‘‘of very fine lawne, all embroydered and wrought about with gold and redde silke, and four great and round knopes of gold, marvellous and cunningly wrought, with great tassels of gold and redde silke hanginge at them and at the four corners of the white laune cloth, and the crooke that hung within the cloth that the pix did hang on was of gold, and the cord that did draw it uppe and doune was made of fine white strung silke.”

In addition to all these varieties of work, which may well be revived at the present day, 1 must also say a few words on the subject of tapestries and painted hangings. The latter were largely used, though I believe that any remains of them are very rarely to be met with.

At Reims, in the Hotel Dieu, several of this kind of hanging are still preserved, and have been described by M. Lebertais in a volume devoted to them, published in Paris in 1843. They were used for hanging from the triforia of churches, from windows of houses on the occasions of great solemnities and for similar purposes.

The Bayeux tapestry is one of the earliest, if not the earliest work of the kind, and was probably meant to be used in the same way. It is, as might be expected, rude in execution, but at the same time full of vigour and honesty of expression. I was extremely struck by the contrast it affords in this respect to most modern work. The story is told throughout so well and naturally, that there is no possibility of mistaking it; and the character of the work executed with wool on linen is infinitely effective, and obtained with far less labour than these works in cross stitch to which ladies devote themselves so much in this 19th century. The Bayeux tapestry measures about 210 feet by 19 inches, and is, as Angincourt observes, a history written and painted at the same time; for, as is usually the case in these early works, the figures bear their names inscribed by their sides, and there are other inscriptions below them referring to the events represented. It is all executed in wool on linen. The stitches are long single stitches, and the lines of drapery folds and edgings are all marked with lines of twisted wool laid down on the work. The material is different, but the mode of execution is the same as in the early Durham embroidery.

The subjects usually selected for these early tapestries were from the Old and New Testament, the lives of the saints, fables of antiquity, and mediæval versions of Roman history; allegories, hunting pieces, and the like were also represented, and, in short, these tapestries represented as much as anything the popular feeling, spirit, and literature of the age. They were mystical and chivalric in the early period, allegorical in the decline of the mediæval period, and Greek and Roman at the period of the Renaissance in the 16th century.

Inventories show how much these tapestries were prized. In 1385 Philip the Hardy bought at Arras, for 700 francs, a piece of 36 ells long, representing the virtues and vices. This was a “high-warp” as distinguished from a ‘‘low-warp.’’ The former was most prized, and was marked with a perpendicular waif, in place of a horizontal one as in the latter. And in 1419, a piece of tapestry measuring 210 square ells, was sold to Jean Sanspeur for 4,000 francs.

At Halberstadt, in Hanover, the choir of the cathedral still retains all its old hangings, some of them thoroughly Byzantine in their style: the others of more advaneed Gothic character: all of them illustrating Scripture subjects.

The earliest of these are no doubt works executed entirely by hand, but the later tapestries were loom and not hand works. The finest examples in England of these are, I believe, the tapestries under the screen in the hall at Hampton Court, and those at the end of S. Mary's Hall at Coventry. Both of them appear to be the work of foreign looms, and that at Hampton Court is one of the finest examples I have ever seen. In France the cathedral and the church of S. Remi at Reims, the church at Montpezat and the Abbey of Chaise Dieu, and churches or collections at the Cluny Museum, Dijon, Nancy, Beauvais contain some of the finest: and the magnificent series of tapestries preserved in Berne cathedral must not be forgotten. In many of these lines of gold and silver thread are worked in with the work, and add much to the beauty of the fabric. The Chaise Dieu tapestries are fourteen in number, ten feet in height, and of various lengths. They contain the life of our LORD, with the Old Testament types, and have been illustrated in a volume published by M. Jubenal, to which I must refer those who desire further information on the subject. The names of figures are often *appliqué* in embroidery on tapestry.

Carpets may also be worked by hand, though I should always recommend the purchase of Eastern carpets in preference. They are as good, to say the least, as any thing we can do, and always beautiful in their colour, They were not commonly used at an early period of the middle ages, for Matthew Paris relates the indignation of the Londoners on the occasion of the entry of Eleanor of Castile:—"They remarked that the manners of the Spaniards were utterly at variance with English customs and habits, for that whilst the walls of their lodgings in the Temple were hung with silk and tapestry, and *the very floors* covered with costly carpets, their retinue was vulgar and disorderly, and they had few horses, and many mules." Carpets made at Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire, are said to have been used about this time for hangings and sometimes for floors.

I have I fear wearied you by the necessarily very technical character of most of what I have had to say to you to-day. Let me ask you to bear with me a little longer whilst I venture to put before you some of the considerations which have induced me to bring such a subject before you. My object has been then simply and entirely a practical one. I am sure that with women just as much as with men no work is good that does not serve some good purpose in itself, and to the person who works.

In Mr. Ruskin's words, all good works are the expression of man's joy in the work GOD has given him to do. He must, therefore, thoroughly enjoy his work to do it well. Now is it possible for anyone to feel any joy in the contemplation of the work in which so many ladies pretend that they find pleasure—that contemptible system of cross-stitch work, which requires no sense, no thought, hardly any manual dexterity, on the part of the worker; and which be the worker good, bad, or indifferent, produces the same hard formal absence of good result. I would, therefore, beseech those among my audience, who have ever wasted

time on such work to remember, that it is possible now, just as much as it was when S. Cuthbert's vestments or the Bayeux tapestry were worked, to undertake works which may exhibit the industry, the intellect, and the good taste of the worker. If they feel certain they have none of either of these qualities, then, and then only, let them condemn themselves to the drudgery of cross-stitch, stringing of beads and the like; but if they have any ambition let them devote themselves to what their sisters in the Middle Ages, with fewer advantages, so successfully achieved. They will ask me, perchance, to what purpose is their work to be devoted? and I will answer this question by anticipation. The furniture of our homes, our curtains, table-cloths, napkins, and the like, may all be decorated in the way I have shown that old works were adorned. Better still than this will it be for our women to offer their handywork for the service of the Church, and to devote some of their time to the decoration of the house of GOD. There is ample opportunity for such offerings, and no disposition, so far as my experience goes, to throw difficulties in the way of those who make them. I have myself had a vast number of altar cloths embroidered of late years, and the number of those who are willing to work them increases year by year. Hangings of the kind I have described to you would also very often be most usefully bestowed. And funeral-palls, altar-linen, vestments, and the like would also afford unlimited scope for such liberality in the bestowal of time and skill.

Those who are disposed to do such works, will recollect how when Bezaleel the son of Uri of the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, were filled with the Spirit of GOD for the work required of them for the service of the sanctuary, He "filled them with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work of the engraver, of the cunning workman, *and of the embroiderer in blue and in purple, in scarlet and in fine linen, and of the weaver,* and of those that devise cunning work." And just as Bezaleel the architect of the temple was appointed to work with Aholiab the embroiderer, so now every architect who aims at building churches really worthy of their holy purpose, will gladly welcome the aid of all who will give them their help in the embroidering of the fitting furniture of their buildings. Some at least of their time, all who can work are bound to offer as first-fruits to the Church. And I will conclude with the words of one who has touched on this subject before me, and in which I believe all of us may heartily agree: There is "no material or workmanship which GOD has given us which has not its fitting place in His house, and which may not be rightly employed there without risk of idolatry, or of superstition. I believe, on the contrary, that there is great spiritual idolatry, worse even than material idolatry, which we set up in our houses, in our worship of works of art and luxury, wrong chiefly in its selfishness and in its estranging our hearts from GOD's house to our own; whereas, I believe, we should have more real and conscientious enjoyment in these beautiful productions of the mind and skill of man, if we had first hallowed them by dedicating the highest efforts of each and every art to the LORD's service." These are the words of one competent to speak, (The Rev. Thomas James, Secretary of the Northampton Archeological Society.) and to speak without fear of being charged with any want of

zeal for or obedience to his mother church, and I heartily subscribe, as I hope all of you will, to what appears to me to be the obvious truth of his remarks.

A few words more and I have done. It is just possible that to some of you it may have seemed strange that an architect should come down to you all the way from London to speak to you only about embroidery. It may be strange, but believe me I do it from a thorough belief that I shall do far more good by such a lecture, than by a more taking address on some of the more common topics which have a less practical end in view. I am too, I confess, very anxious to show as far as I can that as no subject is too high, none is too humble, for the study of anyone who aspires to make his work at all thorough or consistent in all its parts. So when an architect tells you that he is an architect *pur et simple*, and nothing more, believe me that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he is not even that! Take the case of a church, and how is it possible that it can be tolerably arranged by any one who despises the apparently minor accessories on which, nevertheless, half at least of the effect after all depends? It is too much by far the fashion for our architects to confine themselves to designing the shells of buildings, the woodwork and the stonework, the walls and roof, and no more. Those who do so neglect at least half their work. It is the same in a house as in a church, for he who is prepared to design a home fit for a Christian man to live in, (and by that of course you will understand me to imply a Gothic house,) must be prepared also to design its furniture and fittings, so as to save his client from the otherwise melancholy fate of building something pretty for his neighbour to look at, whilst he himself looks out of his window if he wishes to avoid the furniture and fittings with which his upholsterer is sure to flood him!

I maintain that we are bound to understand enough, at least, of the principles of execution of all the subsidiary arts to enable us to design, or at any rate to direct the whole. This done honestly and faithfully, our work will perhaps in time have that harmony in all its parts which is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, charm of Mediæval works. With this defence of my eccentricity in giving you a long paper on such a subject, I conclude with a parting repetition of my trust, that the suggestions I have made will be soon acted on by some among you, and that if they have not already done so, the women of Durham, the wives and daughters of the members of your society, will attempt to emulate the beautiful works which were done by women in old times, and to which so many of their sisters in the south of England have of late years devoted so much of their time, their enthusiasm, and their skill. I promise them at least one result, the hearty admiration and esteem of all in my profession who care to see their works complete in every part; and beside this, the happiness which must result from employing their fingers and their eyes upon eomething fair and beautiful to behold, instead of upon horrid and hideous patterns in cross-stitch, for footstools, slippers, chair-covers, and the like too common objects!