

HISTORIC ORNAMENT  
Treatise on  
DECORATIVE ART  
AND  
ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT

*POTTERY; ENAMELS; IVORIES; METAL - WORK;  
FURNITURE; TEXTILE FABRICS; MOSAICS;  
GLASS; AND BOOK DECORATION*

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With Three Hundred and Seventeen Illustrations

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, LIMITED  
1897

## TAPESTRY.

Tapestry weaving is an art that requires greater care and skill on the part of the workman than any other branch of textile manufacture, especially in that kind known as "storied tapestry," in which is woven a design or picture copied from a previously executed cartoon.

Tapestry is woven in the "high warp" (*haute-lisse*) or in the "low warp" loom: in the former case the loom is vertical, and in the latter horizontal. The largest sized and the more important kinds of tapestry, such as the "Gobelins," are made in the high warp looms.

On account of the skill required, the accuracy and diffi-

culty connected with the weaving of storied tapestry, it takes a long time to educate and perfect the training of a tapestry weaver—who must be an artist himself, so much being left to him in the selection, harmonizing, and shading of the different colours, even after the design is made that he is required to copy.

In tapestry weaving the warp is covered by the woof on both its sides. The warp is divided into two leaves or parts by a thread, and by a glass rod or tube called the *bâton de croisure*.

“To form the web, the workman takes a shuttle mounted with wool or silk, the end of which he fastens to the warp to the left of the space to be covered by the colour in his shuttle; then passing his left hand between the two leaves, separated by the *bâton de croisure*, he draws towards him the thread which this shade is to cover; his right hand, passing between the threads, lays hold of the shuttle, which he brings to the right, and his left hand taking hold of the coats brings forward the back thread of the warp, while the right hand returns the shuttle to the place from which it was first moved. This passing and returning of the shuttle forms what is called two shoots or a course.” (De Champeaux).

One of the great difficulties of the weaver is the shading off or gradation of the colours, which is rendered more difficult by the design being reproduced on the wrong side from the position of the weaver. Hatching and stippling are resorted to in order to prevent a harsh or mosaic-like appearance, and it is here that the great skill and artistic knowledge of the weaver are most required. An extraordinary number of tones and shades are used in an important piece of work, all of which require to be fast dyed in colour in order to secure durability of tone in the fabric. It is said that M. Chevreul, the late famous French chemist and director of the dyeing department of the Gobelins, had composed a chromatic prism of 14,420 different tones.

The best wool used in principal tapestry works on the

Continent has always been imported from Kent in England.

The art of tapestry weaving was originally acquired from the East, where carpets of a floral and ornamental design were woven in the imitation of the old hand-made embroideries. In Europe the names of Sarazins or Sarazinois tapestry were given to these products from the fact that they were made and exported by the Saracens. Perhaps the earliest woven tapestries of Europe were the Flemish, which were first made towards the end of the twelfth century. The towns of Arras, Oudenarde, Lille, Brussels, Valenciennes, Tournay, and Bruges were celebrated for the manufacture of tapestry, of which the town of Arras was the most important, hence the old name of "Arras" used in England for all kinds of storied tapestry.

Flanders was a rich and powerful country during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and at that time the ports of Bruges and Antwerp were the greatest in the world. The various trades were protected by the great corporations or guilds against the encroachments of the nobles on their rights, and the most sturdy and turbulent of all the guilds was that of the Flemish weavers, by reason of their numbers and general prosperity of their trade. The product of the Flemish looms found its way to all parts of Europe and particularly to England, and as far as design and workmanship were concerned, and in the flat treatment of the former to the material, these old Flemish tapestries have never been excelled. The flat decorative treatment in the figure subjects of the earlier work, consisting of allegorical designs and romances by such artists as Roger van der Weyden, Stuerbout, Hugo van der Goes, and other artists of the Van Eyck school, were singularly appropriate to the material, and immensely superior to the more gorgeous effects of colour and misapplied shading of the later French tapestries. Examples of this earlier work are still in existence in the museums and palaces of Europe.

Louis XI., King of France, took the town of Arras in 1477, and this was practically the death blow to the manufacture of tapestry at that place, but immediately after this event Brussels under the Burgundian rule rose to great prosperity. Artists and tapestry weavers flocked to Brussels, which soon became a great centre of this industry. Designs were sent from Italy by the Popes and other princes to be woven in tapestry, and many of the best Italian and Flemish painters made designs for the Brussels ateliers. Pope Leo X. had the tapestries—now in the Vatican—from the celebrated cartoons by Raphael, made in Brussels. These cartoons are now in the Kensington Museum. They were bought by Charles I. from a tapestry manufactory of Brussels by the advice of Rubens.

Giulio Romano, the Italian painter, Lucas van Leyden, Bernard van Orley, Jean Mabuse, and other artists of the Renaissance period, furnished designs for Brussels tapestry.

Owing to the occupation of Flanders by the Spanish (1555-1648), the palace at Madrid contains the most extensive collection of Flemish tapestries in existence, which had been chiefly acquired during that period.

Tapestry making declined and was almost non-existent during the religious wars of the sixteenth century, but was re-established and became once more a flourishing industry in the seventeenth century, and a decree was passed in 1647 for its support by the State.

The subjects of the storied tapestry were now of a more naturalistic order: hunting scenes, landscapes, and rustic figures were woven from the designs of the Dutch and Flemish painters of the period, and many of the designs were copied from French tapestry.

The family of Pannemaker, celebrated at a former period in Brussels, set up an important atelier in Lille about 1647, which remained in full working order for about fifty years. Another well-known tapestry master named Guillaume Werniers (1701-1738) executed many compositions designed by Teniers.

Among the earliest tapestry manufactories in France was the one established at Fontainebleau in the year 1539 by Francis I. It was managed by Philibert Babou, the king's architect, and Serlio, the Italian architect and painter, designed some of the tapestries. The same manufactory existed under Henri II., with Delorme for its director and Ducerceau as the chief designer. Many tapestry weavers were attracted to France from Flanders and Italy at this period, and a colony of Flemish weavers who had settled in Paris were joined to the house of the Gobelins—a long-established family of scarlet wool dyers—in the Faubourg Saint Marcel in 1603. The house of the Gobelins had been under royal patronage for some time previous to the year 1667, when it was bought by Louis XIV. and henceforth became a royal monopoly.

Lebrun, the painter to the king, was appointed director. Some very heavy and inappropriate compositions of this painter were copied in the Gobelins tapestry, but besides these, many purely decorative and ornamental designs with rich borders were also produced. This was a period of great activity at the Gobelins factory, when nearly three hundred workmen and artists were employed. Mignard was the successor of Lebrun as director of the works (1690), then Mansard the architect. After him came the Duc d'Antin as director (1708-36), and then M. de Marigny, under whom many large paintings were reproduced in tapestry, and smaller designs of Boucher and others. This celebrated factory, like that of the Sèvres porcelain, still remains under State care and patronage.

Several other tapestry manufactories existed in Paris from the early days of the Gobelins, and a new kind of tapestry-carpet called the Savonnerie—a kind of velvet carpet made in imitation of the Oriental Turkey-stitch, was introduced into France under the patronage of Henri IV. (1580-1610), the looms being set up in the Louvre. This carpet manufactory was united to the Gobelins factory in 1826.

At Beauvais a celebrated manufactory of low warp tapestry has been in existence from early times, and though some of the Beauvais compositions are equal to the high warp productions of the Gobelins, the work as a rule consists of a smaller and more ornamental character of design.

Rheims, Aubusson, and Felletin have also been centres of the French tapestry industry. Aubusson carpets and tapestry have been noted for their soft and delicate textures, and have been used very much for furniture upholstery.

Italy has produced some good storied tapestry in the sixteenth century (Fig. 275), but has been more celebrated for its velvets, &c.

England has been content to import more tapestry than it has ever manufactured, although many important works have been executed at different times in this country. Probably the earliest piece of genuine English tapestry is that which still adorns the old St. Mary's Hall or Council-chamber in Coventry, and may have been made in the fourteenth, or early fifteenth, century.

In the laws of Edward IV. (1344) tapestry making is mentioned, and in the reign of Henry VIII., and the year 1509, Sheldon and Hicks set up a tapestry manufactory at Barcheston in Warwickshire.

The most important tapestry works were those set up at Mortlake, near London, in the reign of James I., by Francis Crane, and which were liberally supported by James and his son Charles I. During the reign of the latter monarch the Mortlake works furnished a great many important hangings for the royal palaces of Windsor, Hampton Court, Greenwich, and St. James's, among which were the reproductions of the celebrated cartoons of Raphael, which Charles I. had purchased from Brussels. Some of these tapestries are now preserved in the "Garde Meuble" at Paris. Mythological subjects, framed with rich borders, were designed by Francis Cheyne, a native of Saxony, who was the principal artist employed at the



Fig. 275.—Dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael by Abraham Italian Tapestry;  
Sixteenth Century.

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Mortlake works. During the wars of the Commonwealth the factory was closed, but was re-opened at the Restoration of Charles II., who passed some Acts for the encouragement of English tapestry making, and put restrictions on the great importations of foreign tapestries. The latter king employed Verrio the painter to make designs for the Mortlake textiles. On the death of Francis Crane, the founder, in 1703, the works were finally closed.

Unimportant tapestry works were in existence at Soho and Fulham about the middle of the eighteenth century. Another attempt at tapestry weaving was made by a French Protestant refugee named Passavant, who established a factory at Exeter about the end of the seventeenth century, and of late years there has been an attempt made to carry on tapestry weaving at Windsor under the patronage of Her Majesty.

Some excellent work, equal if not superior to some of the best Flemish tapestry, has been successfully made by William Morris from the designs of Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

England has given great attention to the manufacture of low warp carpets, in which she is only excelled by some of the best products of Oriental looms. The manufacture of printed and woven carpets now forms one of the most important factors in the national prosperity of England. Brussels carpets are now made chiefly at Kidderminster; originally they were made at Wilton. Axminster and Kidderminster carpets are made in Glasgow, Wilton, and Kilmarnock, and Wilton carpets in Yorkshire.

Turkey carpets are imported chiefly from Smyrna. Persia, India, and Tunis are still great centres of the Eastern carpet industry. The carpets from these places are in great request in Europe for their beauty of colour and design and for their great wearing qualities.

Carpets were originally used as *portières*, table and couch coverings, but have gradually become coverings for floors, owing to their cheapened cost of production.