and wound round a thread of silk or hemp so closely as to look like a solid gold wire. In and since the 15th cen­tury gold thread has been made by twisting a thin ribbon of gilt silver round a silken core. In this way much less gold is required, as the silver ribbon is gilded before being drawn out to its final thinness, and it is thus liable to tarnish, owing to the partial exposure of the silver surface. In classical times attalica and other gold stuffs were made of solid gold wire beaten out with the hammer.@@1 Masses of this fine gold wire@@2 have been found in the tombs of Egypt, Greece, and Etruria, the metal having lasted long after all the rest of the stuff had crumbled into dust. In 1544 the grave of the wife of Honorius was opened and 36 lb of gold thread taken out of it and melted.

Throughout the Middle Ages cloth of gold was largely employed for ecclesiastical and royal purposes. In some cases the whole of the visible surface was formed of gold thread, producing the utmost splendour of effect. Westminster Abbey still possesses a magnificent gold cope of the 15th century, in almost perfect brilliance of preservation. In the 13th and 14th centuries Cyprus and Lucca were specially famed for their gold stuffs, and the royal inventories of France and England show that the kings possessed stores of this to an immense value. The enormous sum of £11 a yard@@3 is recorded to have been given for a “ cloth of estate ” in the private accounts of Henry VII. This was a cloth to hang over the royal throne, and must have been unusually wide, as other cloth of gold at the same time was bought for 38s. the yard. Various names were at different times given to textiles which were wholly or in part woven in gold, such as *ciclatoun* (a word of obscure origin), *baudekin* (from Bai­dak or Baghdad), *nak,* and *tissue*.@@4 *Samite* or *examite (έξ μίτoι)* was so called because the weft threads were only caught and looped at every sixth thread of the warp, lying loosely over the intermediate part. Mediæval samite was sometimes made of gold ; if of silk it was a variety of satin, called *satin of six.* Modern satin usually has its weft looped in less closely—*satin of eight* or *ten.*

Although throughout the Middle Ages the finer stuffs used in England were to a great extent the product of foreign looms, there was no lack of native textiles, many of which were of great beauty. In the use of the needle the women of England were especially skilful, and rich English embroideries were much exported, even into Italy, from the 12th to the 14th century,@@5 and were esteemed more highly than the productions of any other country. Two fine examples of early English silk and gold needle­work—a stole and maniple with the inscription *Aelfæd fieri precepit : pio episcopo Fridestano—*are preserved in the Durham library. Fridestan became bishop of Win­chester in 905. Other examples of native textiles have been found in the coffins of many ecclesiastics in England. Some interesting fragments are preserved in the chapter­house of Worcester cathedral ; the ground is of silk, and the pattern, of conventional scroll foliage, is a character­istic example of 13th-century design. Pictures in English MSS. show that the low loom was mainly used,— this being the most convenient for ordinary weaving.@@6 England

was specially celebrated for its wool and woollen stuffs, and even at the present day English wool is used for the Gobelin tapestries; in the 15th and 16th centuries it was largely imported into Flanders. In the 14th century Bath produced the finest woollen cloth, and that of Worcester was equally celebrated ; in the 15th century the produc­tion of woollen stuff was a great source of wealth to Norwich and other towns in the eastern counties. A special sort of woollen yarn took its name from Worstead in Norfolk, where it was made ; it had a closer and harder twist than most woollen thread, and thus could be made up into cloth of special fineness, which was used for chasubles and other vestments, as is recorded in the in­ventories of York, Exeter, and other cathedrals.

*Old English Names for Textiles.—*A large number of names for different sorts of textiles occur in old English writings, many of them derived from the name of the place where the stuff was made or exported. *Buckram* was a woven cloth of much richness, highly prized, probably quite unlike what we now mean by the word. *Damask* or *damas* got its name from Damascus. *Fustian,* from Fostat (Old Cairo), was a cheaper stuff made of linen and cotton mixed. *Muslin,* from Mosul, was a fine cotton stuff. *Cloth of Tars* (Tarsus) is often mentioned, usually meaning a purple cloth. *Camoca* or *camak* (Arab. *kamkha,* from Chinese *kimkha,* “brocade ”) was another richly decorated Oriental stuff. *Cendal* or *sandal* and *syndonus* were fine silk stuffs. *Taffeta* was made of silk or linen of very thin substance. *Satin* (from Low Lat. *seta)* was a glossy silk stuff made like samite. *Velvet* (from It. *velluto,* “shaggy”) had a silk weft woven so as to form a raised pile, the ends of which were cut or shaved off to one even level ; hence it is also called in Italy *raso. Diaper,* “jasper-like” (Ital. *diaspro),* was not only used to denote a regular geometrical pattern, but in some cases means also a special sort of linen or silk. Phrases such as “ silk of brydges” (Bruges), “silk dornex,” from Dorneck in Flanders, and “sheets of raynes” (Rheims) often occur. A large number of other similar names are to be met with in mediæval writings.@@7

Space will not allow a description of the textile work in each separate country. That of Italy and the East was by far the most important throughout the Middle Ages. Even Chinese textiles of gold and silk were imported into the west of Europe, and were sometimes used for ecclesias­tical purposes. Mediæval vestments of Chinese stuff still exist, the shape and added borders of which show that they date from as early as the 14th century. These fabrics exactly resemble in design and workmanship some which are woven in China at the present day. A very interesting survival of the mediæval style of weaving exists in Sweden and other Scandinavian countries. Articles of dress, counterpanes, table-covers, and the like are woven by the peasantry in a simple, highly decorative way, with patterns which have altered little during the last three or four centuries. Though coarse in texture, many of these are of great artistic beauty: nothing but an occasional use

@@@1 The process of making wire by drawing it through conical aper­tures in a steel plate is said to have been first invented at Nuremberg in the 14th century.

@@@2 The Museo Gregoriano (Vatican) contains examples from Etruscan tombs.

@@@3 Equal to quite £50 of modern money.

@@@4 Hence thin paper laid between the folds of these rich stuffs to protect them was called *tissue paper.*

@@@5 The celebrated cope in Pienza cathedral, which once belonged to Pius II. (Piccolomini), is a magnificent example of English needle­work of the 15th century.

@@@6 Among Chaucer’s pilgrims are included “A webbe, a dyer, and a tapisser,” the first a low-loom weaver, the last a weaver of tapestry on the high loom.

@@@7 The most extraordinary spelling often occurs in lists of textiles in mediæval documents, especially in the case of foreign names. Thus we find in the Bury Wills (printed by the Camden Society) “ fuschan in Appuies,” meaning Naples fustian, and many similar blunders.