design is formed by short stitches knotted across the warp with a wooden needle called a *broach.* It is a sort of link between textile work and embroidery, from which it differs in having its stitches applied, not to a finished web, but to the stretched strings of a warp.@@1 It is made on a high loom, and the whole process, though requiring much skill, is mechanically of the simplest kind. It is very probable that many of the woven hangings used in ancient Egypt, Greece, and other countries were true tapestry ; but little is known on this point. Till after the 12th century, in northern Europe, embroidery seems to have served the place of tapestry, as, for example, in the wrongly named Bayeux tapestry (see vol. viii. p. 162) ; while in the south of Europe and in Oriental countries its place was supplied by the rich silken textiles and pile carpets mentioned above.

In the 14th century tapestry began to be largely made, especially in Flanders, where the craft of weaving became very important at an early time. The designs on the very few existing samples of 14th-century tapestry closely resem­ble those of contemporary wall painting. A characteristic early specimen in the Louvre has rows of medallions, each containing a scene from the life of St Martin, with two or three figures treated in a very simply decorative way. The spaces between the circles are filled up with a stiff geo­metrical ornament. To the end of the 14th century be­longs the magnificent tapestry in Angers cathedral, on which are represented scenes from the Apocalypse ; these were made at Arras, the chief seat of the tapestry manu­facture, both for quantity and quality. Hence the name *arras* (Italian *arazzi*) came to mean any sort of tapestry, wherever it was made. Another magnificent series of arras work is preserved in Rheims cathedral, with designs from the history of Clovis ; these date from the middle of the 15th century. In the 14th century Flanders produced enormous quantities of woven stuffs. At that time twenty- seven streets were occupied by the weavers of Ghent ; in 1382 there were 50,000 weavers in Louvain ; and at Ypres there is said to have been a still larger number. From about 1450 to 1500 was the golden age for tapestry, especially in Bruges and Arras, where large quantities of the most magnificent historical pieces were woven from designs supplied by painters of the Van Eyck school. The Flemish tapestries of that time are perfect models of textile art, rich in colour, strong in decorative effect, graceful in drawing and composition, and arranged with consummate skill to suit the exigencies of the loom and the æsthetic requirements of wall decoration. A very beautiful example of this class exists at Hampton Court, hung in the dark under the gallery in the great hall,—a striking contrast to the clever but artistically degraded tapestries of half a century later, which hang round the main walls of the hall. Other fine examples exist in the Cluny, Bern, and other museums, and especially in Madrid@@2—in the royal collection and in that of the duke of Alva—and elsewhere in Spain. Though very rich and varied in effect, the tapestry of the best period usually is woven with not more than twenty different tints of wool,—half tints and grada­tions being got by hatching one colour into another. In the 16th century about sixty colours were principally em­ployed in the still fine but rapidly deteriorating tapestry

of that period ; and in the laborious but artistically worth­less productions of the Gobelin factory more than 14,000 differently tinted wools are now used.

In the 16th century the art began to decline ; very slight symptoms of decadence are visible in the beautiful tapestries with Petrarch’s *Triumphs* in the South Kensington Museum, —most gorgeous pieces of textile art, of the richest decora­tive effect. These were worked very soon after 1500 (see fig. 10). The influence of Raphael and his school succeeded that of the 15th-century Flemish painters, and was utterly destructive of true art value in tapestry. Raphael’s car­toons, fine as they are in composition, are designed without the least reference to textile requirements, and are merely large pictures, which the weavers had to copy as best they might. This new style, which reduced the art to a feeble copyism of painting, gave the death-blow to the produc­tion of really fine tapestry. Brussels became the chief place for the manufacture after the taking of Arras by Louis XI. in 1477, and its weavers with wonderful skill imitated any sort of painting that was put before them. Cartoons were drawn by several of Raphael’s pupils, such as Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udine, and by Mabuse, Michiel Coxcie, Bernard van Orley, and other Italianized Flemish painters.

In 1539 Francis I. founded a factory for tapestry at Fontainebleau, and soon after other high looms were set up in Paris, examples from which still exist and show a rapid degradation of style. In 1603 a new factory was started in Paris under royal patronage, in the workshop of a family of dyers named Gobelin, after whom the new factory was named (see Gobelin). The Gobelin looms were first worked by weavers from Flanders, who soon taught the

@@@1 In tapestry the weft stitches are put in loosely and carefully pressed home, so that the warp strings are completely hidden.

@@@2 See Riano, *Tapestry of the Palace at Madrid,* London, 1875 ; of all countries Spain is the richest in tapestry of the 15th and 16th centuries. The royal collection contains 2000 large pieces. Rich stores also belong to the principal cathedrals, such as Toledo, which on the feast of Corpus Christi is completely hung round with tapestry outside as well as inside. In the 17th century tapestry looms were worked in Spain under royal patronage. One of Velazquez’s finest pictures in the Madrid Gallery (Las Hilanderas) represents the visit of some court ladies to a tapestry fabrique, in which women are work­ing the looms.