TAPESTRY, or TAPISTRY, a curious kind of manufacture, ſerving to adorn a chamber, or other apartment, by hanging or lining the walls of it.

Some uſe tapeſtry as a general name for all kinds of hanging, whether woven or wrought with the needle; and whether ſilken, woollen, linen, leathern, or of paper, (in which they are countenanced by the etymology of the word, formed from the French *tapiſſer*, *to line*; of the Latin *tapes*, a cover of a wall or bed, &c.) But, in the common uſe of our language, the term is now appropriated to a kind of woven hangings of wool and ſilk, frequently raiſed and enriched with gold and ſilver, repreſenting figures of men, animals, landſcapes, &c.

The invention of tapeſtry ſeems to have come from the Levant; and what makes this the more probable is, that formerly, the workmen concerned in it were called, at leaſt in France, *Sarazins*, or *Sarazinois*.

Some have ſuppoſed that the Engliſh and Flemiſh, who were the firſt that excelled in it, might bring the art with them from ſome of the croiſades or expeditions againſt the Saracens. Accordingly they ſay, that thoſe two nations were the firſt who ſet on foot this noble and rich manufacture in Europe, which afterwards became one of the fineſt ornaments of palaces and churches, &c. At leaſt, if they be not allowed the inventors, they have the honour of being the reſtorers, of this curious and admirable art, which gives a kind of life to wools and ſilks, in ſome reſpects not inferior to the paintings of the beſt maſters. However, it does not appear at what preciſe era this manufacture was introduced into Europe; nor is it certain to whom it was owing.

Guicciardin, in his "Deſcription and Hiſtory of the Netherlands," printed at Antwerp in 1582, aſcribes the invention of the art of making tapeſtry hangings to the Netherlanders, but he does not aſſign the time of the invention.

The art of weaving tapeſtry was brought to England by William Sheldon, eſq. about the end of the reign of Henry VIII. See Dugdale's Warwickſhire in Stemmate Sheldon, p. 584.

In the reign of king James, the manufacture of tapeſtry was ſet up at Mortlake, in Surrey. Aubrey, indeed, in his hiſtory of that county, dates its inſtitution in the ſubſequent reign; but Lloyd (State Worthies, p. 953.) is not only poſitive for the former era, but affirms, that at the motion of king James himſelf, who gave two thouſand pounds towards the undertaking, ſir Francis Crane erected the houſe at Mortlake for the execution of the deſign; and this is confirmed by authentic evidence; for, in Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xviii. p. 66, there is an acknowledgment from king Charles in the firſt year of his reign, *viz.* 1625, that he owes ſix thouſand pounds to ſir Francis Crane for tapeſtry; and he grants to him two thouſand pounds yearly, for ten years, towards the maintenance of the ſaid work.

Theſe works at Mortlake, which at firſt had been conducted after old patterns, were afterwards formed from

 deſigns,

deſigns, both in hiſtory and groteſque, furniſhed by Francis Cleyn, and thus carried to ſingular perfection.

From the deed above recited, it is plain that the manufacture was then arrived at great perfection. See Mr. Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting in England, vol. ii. p. 36.

In the year 1663, a ſtatute was enacted (cap. 15.) for the encouragement of the linen and tapeſtry manufactures of England, and diſcouragement of the very great importation of foreign linen and tapeſtry.

The firſt eſtabliſhment of a tapeſtry manufacture at Paris was under Henry IV., in the year 1606 or 1607, by means of ſeveral excellent artiſts, whom he invited from Flanders.

But this fell with the death of that prince. Under Lewis XIV. the manufacture was retrieved by the care and addreſs of the great M. Colbert, to whom is owing the eſtabliſhment of the Gobelins, a royal tapeſtry manufactory, which has produced works of this kind ſcarcely inferior to the fineſt Engliſh or Flemiſh tapeſtry, either with regard to the deſign, the colours, or the ſtrength.

In this manufactory both wool and ſilk are uſed, and ſometimes gold and ſilver. The fineſt paintings may be copied in this work, and the greateſt maſters have been employed in draughts for the tapeſtry weavers.

The weavers of the Gobelins work behind, or on the wrong ſide of the loom, which ſtands upright, and the pattern is placed on either ſide of the workman.

As the tapeſtry of the Gobelins is made of pieces of a certain breadth only, there are other workmen, called rentrayeurs, or fine-drawers, who are employed in ſewing or fine-drawing the ſeveral parts together, ſo that no ſeam is diſcernible, but the whole appears as one deſign, like a piece of ſilk from a loom. Theſe workmen are alſo uſeful in mending and cleaning tapeſtry when damaged or ſullied.

The tapeſtry-men diſtinguiſh two kinds of work; *viz.* tapeſtry of the *high* and the *low warp*, though the difference is rather in the manner of working, than in the work itſelf, which is, in effect, the ſame in both, only the looms, and conſequently the warps, are differently ſituated; thoſe of the *low warp* being placed flat, and parallel to the horizon, and thoſe, on the contrary, of the *high warp*, erected perpendicularly.

The French have had three conſiderable tapeſtry manufactories beſides that of the Gobelins; the firſt at Aubuſſon, in Auvergne; the ſecond at Felletin, in the Upper Marche; and the third at Beauvois: they were all equally eſtabliſhed for the high and the low warp; but all laid aſide the former, excepting that of the Gobelins.

There are admirable low warps in Flanders, generally exceeding thoſe of France; the chief and almoſt only Flemiſh manufactories were at Bruſſels, Antwerp, Oudenard, Liſle, Tournay, Bruges, and Valenciennes.

At Bruſſels and Antwerp they ſucceeded both in human figures and animals, and in landſcapes: and that both with reſpect to the deſigning and the workmanſhip. At Oudenard their landſcapes and animals were good, but their human figures not well executed. Liſle, and the other cities named, came behind Oudenard. The French manufacture of Felletin has done tolerably well in landſcapes, Aubuſſon in figures, and Beauvois in both.

The uſual widths of tapeſtries were from two ells to three ells and a half, Paris meaſure.

The manufacture of tapeſtry of each kind (though leſs faſhionable and in uſe than formerly) is too curious to be here paſt over without a ſhort deſcription. We ſhall give each under its ſeparate article.

Manufacture of Tapeſtry of the High Warp.—The loom on which this is wrought is placed perpendicularly: it conſiſts of four principal pieces; two long planks or cheeks of wood, and two thick rollers or beams. The planks are ſet upright, and the beams acroſs, one at top, and the other at bottom, a foot diſtance from the ground. They have each their trunnions, by which they are ſuſpended on the planks, and are turned with bars. In each roller is a groove, from one end to the other, capable of containing a long round piece of wood, faſtened in it with hooks. Its uſe is to tie the ends of the warp to. The warp, which is a kind of worſted, or twiſted woollen thread, is wound on the upper roller; and the work, as faſt as woven, is wound on the lower.

Withinſide the planks, which are ſeven or eight feet high, fourteen or fifteen inches broad, and three or four thick, are holes pierced from top to bottom, in which are put thick pieces of iron, with hooks at one end, ſerving to ſuſtain the coat-ſtave: the pieces of iron have alſo holes pierced in them, by putting a pin in which, the ſtave is drawn nearer, or ſet farther off; and thus the coats or threads are ſtretched and looſened at pleaſure. The coat-ſtave is about three inches diameter, and runs all the length of the loom; on this are fixed the coats, or threads, which make the threads of the warp croſs each other. It has much the ſame effect here as the ſpring-ſtave and treddles have in the common looms. The coats are little threads faſtened to each thread of the warp, with a kind of ſliding-knot, which forms a ſort of maſh or ring. They ſerve to keep the warp open, for the paſſages of broaches wound with ſilks, woollens, or other matters uſed in the piece of tapeſtry.

Laſtly, there is a number of little ſticks, of different lengths, but all about an inch diameter, which the workman keeps by him in baſkets, to ſerve to make the threads of the warp croſs each other, by paſſing them acroſs: and that the threads thus croſſed may retain their proper ſituation, a packthread is run among the threads above the ſtick.

The loom thus formed, and mounted with its warp, the firſt thing the workman does, is to draw, on the threads of this warp, the principal lines and ſtrokes of the deſign to be repreſented on the piece of tapeſtry; which is done by applying cartoons made from the painting he intends to copy, to the ſide that is to be the wrong ſide of the piece; and then with a black-lead pencil following and tracing out the contours of them on the thread of the right ſide; ſo that the ſtrokes appear equally both before and behind. As to the original deſign the work is to be finiſhed by, it is hung up behind the workman, and wound on a long ſtaff, from which a piece is unrolled, from time to time, as the workman proceeds.

Beſides the loom, &c. here deſcribed, there are three other principal inſtruments required for working the ſilk, or wool of the woof within the threads of the warp. Theſe are a broach, a reed, and an iron needle.

The broach is of hard wood, ſeven or eight inches long, and two-thirds of an inch thick, ending in a point, with a little handle. It ſerves as a ſhuttle, the ſilks, woollens, gold, or ſilver, to be uſed in the work, being wound on it. The reed, or comb, is alſo of wood, eight or nine inches long, and an inch thick at the back; whence it uſually grows leſs and leſs, to the extremity of the teeth, which are more or leſs apart, according to the greater or leſs degree of fineneſs of the intended work.

Laſtly, the needle is in form of a common needle, only bigger and longer. Its uſe is to preſs cloſe the wool and ſilks, when there is any line or colour that does not ſit well.

All things being prepared for the work, and the workman

man ready to begin, he places himſelf on the wrong ſide of the piece, with his back towards the deſign; ſo that he works, as it were, blindfold, ſeeing nothing of what he does; and being obliged to quit his poſt, and go to the other ſide of the loom, whenever he would view and examine the piece, to correct it with his preſſing-needle.

To put any ſilk, &c. in the warp, he firſt turns and looks at his deſign; then taking a broach full of the proper colour, he places it among the threads of the warp, which he brings acroſs each other with his fingers, by means of the coats or threads faſtened to the ſtaff: this he repeats every time he is to change his colour.

The ſilk, or wool, being placed, he beats it with his reed, or comb; and when he has thus wrought in ſeveral rows over each other, he goes to ſee the effect they have, in order to reform the contours with his needle, if there be occaſion.

As the work advances, they roll it up on the lower beam, and unroll as much warp, from the upper beam, as ſuffices them to continue the piece: the like they do of the deſign behind them. When the pieces are wide, ſeveral workmen may be employed at once.

We have but two things to add: the firſt, that this high-warp tapeſtry goes on much more ſlowly than the low-warp, and takes almoſt double the time and trouble. The ſecond, that all the difference the eye can obſerve between the two kinds conſiſts in this, that in the low warp there is a red fillet, about one-twelfth of an inch broad, running on each ſide from top to bottom; which is wanting in the high warp.

Manufacture of Tapeſtry of the Low Warp.—The loom, or frame, on which the low warp is wrought, is much like that of the weaver's: the principal parts of it are two ſtrong pieces of wood forming the ſides of the loom, and bearing a beam, or roller, at each end: they are ſuſtained at bottom with other ſtrong pieces of wood, in manner of treſtles; and to keep them the firmer, they are likewiſe faſtened to the floor with a kind of buttreſſes, which prevent any ſhaking, though there are ſometimes four or five workmen leaning on the fore-beam at once.

The rollers have each their trunnions, by which they are ſuſtained: they are turned by large iron pins three feet long. Along each beam runs a groove, in which is placed a *wich*, a piece of wood of about two inches diameter, and almoſt of the length of the roller: this piece fills the groove entirely, and is faſtened in it, from ſpace to ſpace, by wooden pins. To the two wiches are faſtened the two extremities of the warp, which is wound on the farther roller; and the work, as it advances, on the nearer.

Acroſs the two ſides, almoſt in the middle of the loom, paſſes a wooden bar, which ſuſtains little pieces of wood, not unlike the beam of a balance: to theſe pieces are faſtened ſtrings, which bear certain ſpring-ſtaves, with which the workman, by means of two treddles, under the loom on which he ſets his feet, gives a motion to the coats, and makes the threads of the warp riſe and fall alternately. Each loom has more or fewer of theſe ſpring-ſtaves, and each ſtaff more or fewer coats, as the tapeſtry conſiſts of more or fewer threads.

The deſign or painting, the tapeſtry-man is to follow, is placed underneath the warp; where it is ſuſtained from ſpace to ſpace with ſtrings, by means of which the deſign is brought nearer the warp.

The loom being mounted, there are two inſtruments uſed in working of it: *viz.* the reed, and the flute. The flute does the office of the weaver's ſhuttle; it is made of an hard poliſhed wood, three or four lines thick at the ends, and ſomewhat more in the middle, and three or four inches long. On it are wound the ſilks, or other matters, to be uſed as the woof of the tapeſtry. The comb or reed is of wood or ivory; it has uſually teeth on both ſides; it is about an inch thick in the middle, but diminiſhes each way to the extremity of the teeth: it ſerves to beat the threads of the woof cloſe to each other, as faſt as the workman has paſſed and placed them with his flute among the threads of the warp.

The workman is ſeated on a bench before the loom, with his breaſt againſt the beam, only a cuſhion or pillow between them; and, in this poſture, ſeparating, with his fingers, the threads of the warp, that he may ſee the deſign underneath, and taking a flute, mounted with a proper colour, he paſſes it among the threads, after having raiſed or lowered them, by means of the treddles moving the ſpring-ſtaves and coats.

Laſtly, To preſs and cloſe the threads of the ſilk or yarn, &c. thus placed, he ſtrikes each courſe (*i. e.* what the flute leaves in its paſſing and coming back again) with the reed.

What is very remarkable in the manufacture of the low warp, is, that it is all wrought on the wrong ſide; ſo that the workman cannot ſee the right ſide of his tapeſtry, till the piece be finiſhed and taken out of the loom.

M. Le Blon, in endeavouring to fix the true harmony of colouring in painting, found that all viſible objects may be repreſented by the three primitive colours, red, yellow, and blue; becauſe out of theſe, all others, even black itſelf, may be compounded.

From the principle of producing any viſible object with a ſmall number of colours, and from obſerving the compounded colours which were reflected from two pieces of ſilk of different colours, placed near to one another, he arrived at the ſkill of producing in the loom all that the art of painting requires. In weaving, indeed, he hath been obliged to make uſe of white and black threads, beſides red, yellow, and blue; and though he found that he was able to imitate any picture with theſe five colours, yet for cheapneſs and expedition, and to add a brightneſs where it was required, he found it more convenient to make uſe of ſeveral intermediate degrees of colours.

In his new way of weaving tapeſtry in the loom with a draw-boy, it may be performed almoſt as expeditiouſly as fine brocades; for when the loom is once ſet and mounted, any common draught-weaver, unacquainted with drawing or painting, and indeed hardly knowing what figure he is about, may exactly produce what the painter hath repreſented in the original pattern: and thus a piece of tapeſtry may be woven in a month or two, which, in the common way of working, would take up ſeveral years; and what in the common way coſts a thouſand pounds, may, by this means, be afforded finer and better for a hundred.

The main ſecret of this conſiſts in drawing the patterns, from which any common draught-weaver can mount the loom; and when that is done, the piece may be made of any ſize, by only widening the reeds and the warp: and a reverſe may be made with the ſame eaſe; which is done by the boy's pulling the laſhes up again in the ſame order in which he pulled them down before: by which contrivance the tapeſtry may be ſuited to any room, whether the light comes in on the right, or on the left. The patterns are painted upon paper, on which are printed ſquares from copper-plates, and theſe ſubdivided by as many lines as anſwer to the threads of the warp, which run lengthwiſe of the piece; then they try how many threads of the ſhoot anſwer in breadth to every ſubdiviſion of the ſquares. Every thread

of the warp goes through a ſmall braſs ring called a *male*, or through a loop in the leiſh, and hath a ſmall long weight or lingoe hung below, to counterbalance the packthreads, which going from the top of the rings or loops, are paſſed over the pullies in the table directly over the loom, and are continued nearly in an horizontal poſition on one ſide of the loom to a convenient diſtance; where they are all ſpread on a croſs piece faſtened to two ſtaples: theſe are called the *tail of the mounture;* and from each of theſe packthreads, juſt by the ſide of the loom, are faſtened other packthreads, called *ſimples*, which deſcend to the ground; ſo that by pulling theſe ſimple cords, you raiſe any of the threads of the warp at pleaſure: wherefore they faſten a loop or potlart to as many of theſe ſimple cords as there are threads of the warp to be pulled up at every ſhoot, or every throw of the ſhuttle; by which means the ſhoot ſhews itſelf on the right ſide, where the warp is pulled up: and in ordering this, they are guided by the pattern, on which they count the diſtances of the ſubdiviſions, which contain the ſame colours in the ſame line, and can be ſhot at once: then they faſten potlarts to the ſeveral ſimple cords that draw up the rings, through which thoſe threads of the warp run, which are to lie behind this colour; they tie all theſe loops together, and faſten a piece of worſted or ſilk to the knot, of the ſame colour that the workman is to throw; and the boy, when he pulls each loop, names the colour, that the weaver may take the proper ſhuttle, and ſo on for every colour to be thrown. Phil. Tranſ. abr. vol. vi. p. 469, &c.

In connection with this ſubject, we are naturally led to give a brief account of the manufacture of carpets. This is ſaid to have been introduced into France from Perſia, in the reign of Henry IV., where it has been diſtinguiſhed by extraordinary encouragement. The moſt conſiderable manufactory of this kind was that of Chaillot, or the royal manufactory of La Savoniere, or the Soap-houſe, about a league from Paris. This manufacture was altogether of wool, and worked in the manner of velvet. All ſorts of figures of animals may be imitated in this work, but fruits and flowers anſwer beſt; and it is moſt ſucceſsfully applied to the manufacture of carpets and all ſorts of ſcreens.

The carpets are, in ſome reſpect, wrought by the upright way of tapeſtry. The two rollers are placed the ſame way: the warp is braced from the top downward; the chain, with its loops, keeps all the threads of the warp equally perpendicular; the ſtick, which facilitates their croſſing, runs through them in the ſame manner, and ſeparates the foremoſt threads from the reſt; the lizier-pole holds all the ſtrings, which ſerve to draw the fore-threads in their turns, and then the oppoſite threads, in order to inſert the ſpindles of wool. But the method of working in this manufactory differs from the upright way of tapeſtry in the following particulars.

The warp is divided, both before and behind, into parcels of ten threads, nine white and one blue; which is regularly continued through the whole width of the piece. The weaver works on the fore-ſide, and conſequently ſees what he does. The deſign or pattern is traced in its proper colours on cartons, tied about the workman, who looks at it every moment, becauſe every ſtitch is marked upon it, as it ought to be in his work. By this means he always knows what colours and ſhades he is to uſe, and how many ſtitches of the ſame colour. In this he is aſſiſted by ſquares, into which the whole deſign is divided; each ſquare is ſubdivided into ten vertical lines, correſponding with each parcel of ten threads of the warp; and beſides, each ſquare is ruled with ten horizontal lines, croſſing the vertical lines at right angles. The workman having placed his ſpindles of thread near him, begins to work on the firſt horizontal line of one of the ſquares. Theſe lines marked on the carton are not traced on the warp, for this would be endleſs; becauſe an iron-wire, which is longer than the width of a parcel of ten threads, ſupplies the place of a croſs line. This wire is managed by a crook at one end, at the workman's right hand; towards the other end it is flatted into a ſort of knife, with a back and edge, and grows wider to the point. The workman fixes his iron wire, or rod, horizontally on the warp, by twiſting ſome turns of a ſuitable thread of the woof round it, which he paſſes forward and backward, behind a fore-thread of the warp, and then behind the oppoſite thread, drawing them in their turn by their leiſhes. Afterwards, if it be neceſſary, he brings his woof-thread round the wire, in order to begin again to thruſt it into the warp. He continues in this manner to cover the iron rod or wire, and to fill up a line to the tenth thread of the warp, which is the blue one. He is at liberty either to ſtop here, or go on with the ſame croſs line in the next diviſion. According as he paſſes the thread of the woof round the iron wire, and into the warp, the threads of which he cauſes to croſs one another at every inſtant; when he comes to the end of the line, he takes care to ſtrike in, or cloſe again all the ſtitches with an iron reed, whoſe teeth freely enter between the empty threads of the warp, and which is heavy enough to ſtrike in the woof he has uſed. This row of ſtitches is again cloſed and levelled, by a dweet of blue thread doubled, which the workman puts into the warp, ſliding his hand over the whole length of line he has wrought. He croſſes the ſame threads of the warp, and then ſtretches through them another ſingle blue thread. He beats in theſe two threads, one after another, with his reed; theſe dweets of croſs thread, which are a ſupport to each line, will be hid by the pile on the fore-ſide, and they indeed diminiſh the beauty of the wrong ſide; but this is of no conſequence. This done, the workman draws the iron rod or knife out of the loops of the woof that covered it; and as it is wider towards its end, theſe loops reſiſt its paſſage; but being edged at its fore part, it cuts them through. Then the workman with his left hand lays a ſtrong pair of ſhears along the finiſhed line, cuts off the looſe hairs, and thus forms a row of tufts perfectly even, which, together with thoſe before and after it, form the ſhag. One line of this ſort comprehending the row of ſtitches and woollen pile, with the two blue threads which ſupport them, ſomewhat ſurpaſs in thickneſs the ſpace between the firſt and ſecond croſs line of a ſquare. By this means the workman always ſees what he is doing. He follows, ſtitch for ſtitch and colour for colour, the plan of his pattern which he is at, and paints magnificently, without having the leaſt notion of painting or drawing.

The manufacture of carpets, after the manner of Chaillot, was introduced into London in the year 1750, by two workmen who left the manufactory in diſguſt, and came here to procure employment. They were encouraged and furniſhed with materials by Mr. Moore, to whoſe aſſiduity and zeal the eſtabliſhment of this ſort of manufacture has been principally owing. However, theſe men afterwards connected themſelves with a Mr. Peter Pariſot, who, under the patronage, and by means of the pecuniary aſſiſtance of his royal highneſs the duke of Cumberland, purſued the manufacture of a carpet already begun at Paddington. This undertaking was ſoon removed to Fulham, and, under the munificence of the duke, promiſed to be durable and advantageous. In 1752, Pariſot, the undertaker, propoſed a plan of ſubſcription, the nature of which it is now needleſs to recite; as the whole ſcheme, as far as he was concerned in it, ſoon came to nothing. But Mr. Moore, being pro-

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vided with the neceſſary materials, and engaging proper workmen, and riſking a very conſiderable expence, ſucceeded in eſtabliſhing this important and uſeful manufacture, inſomuch that, in 1757, he obtained a premium from the Society of Arts, &c. for the beſt carpet in imitation of the Turkey carpets; and by his ingenuity and perſeverance in bringing this manufacture to perfection, it is now arrived at a very high degree of reputation.

Mr. Whitby and Mr. Paſſavant were alſo honoured with premiums for carpets of their manufacture by the Society of Arts in 1757 and 1758. We have alſo manufactories for carpets that are much eſteemed at Axminſter and Wilton; not to mention thoſe of Kidderminſter and other places.