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1310. EMBROIDERED VELVET *Fukusa*. "Jō and Uba."  
19th century.

*Frontispiece.*]

[See p. 47.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES

GUIDE TO  
THE JAPANESE TEXTILES

PART I.—TEXTILE FABRICS

BY

A. D. HOWELL SMITH



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## PREFATORY NOTE.

SOME progress had already been made with the printing of this guide when the exigencies of the war led to its temporary abandonment.

Since this guide was first set in hand, the Museum has lost a helpful and sympathetic friend in the late Mr. Wilson Crewdson. His life-long interest in the art of Japan has often been of good service to the staff, and his loss is lamented by many personal friends in the Museum.

Mr. Hogitaro Inada's translations, and his explanatory notes of various Japanese objects in the Museum, supplied from time to time, have been made use of in the following pages. The thanks of the Museum are due to Mr. Luther Hooper for the technical description of the velvet panel No. 841.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

CECIL H. SMITH.

*August*, 1919.

## NOTE.

THE preparation of the first part of this guide has been entrusted to Mr. A. D. Howell Smith, Assistant in the department. The collection cannot at present be regarded as adequately representative of the textile art of the Japanese, but there is quite enough to warrant the publication of this guide, the scope of which is to describe, in simple fashion, the most noticeable examples. The advice and help of Mr. A. J. Koop, of the Department of Metalwork, have been invaluable.

A. F. KENDRICK.

DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES.



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# GUIDE TO THE JAPANESE TEXTILES.

## PART I.—TEXTILE FABRICS.

### INTRODUCTION.

THE art of weaving, all the world over, is one that goes back to prehistoric times, and Japan can boast to have shown great skill in the making of textile fabrics from a very early epoch. Silk-weaving, in particular, has been long practised by the Japanese. There is still preserved in one of the great Shintō shrines in Ise province (in the south of the main island), amongst the “nine sacred treasures,” a very ancient metal loom.<sup>1</sup> According to the records, it was constructed for weaving with five threads of different colours. About the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century of the Christian era, a large number of Chinese weavers became naturalised in Japan, and stimulated the silk industry there under Japanese control. In the sixteenth year of his reign, the Emperor Yūriaku (5th century A.D.) issued a rescript concerning the plantation of mulberry trees, and distributed the Chinese weavers over all the provinces. This event took place two centuries after the collapse of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.—220 A.D.), whose rule partly coincides with the dawn of Chinese influence, chiefly through the medium of Korea, in Japanese civilisation. It is during the later period of the Han dynasty that Buddhism becomes a powerful force in China. Not, however, until the middle of the 6th century, during the period of the “Six Dynasties,” which followed the collapse of the Han, did Buddhism cross the waters and introduce a new set of forms and motives into Japanese art. The art of this epoch, known as the Suiko (552–644), is almost wholly religious in character. The name Suiko is that of the Empress in whose reign Buddhism and Chinese civilisation gained a strong and permanent footing in the country. In the succeeding epoch, the Hakuho<sup>2</sup> (644–710),

<sup>1</sup> W. Crewdson, *The Textiles of Old Japan*, Plate IV.; see also Plate V.

<sup>2</sup> Strictly speaking, Hakuho is the *nengō* (period) 672–686, in which the artistic forms characterising the epoch as a whole were most fully developed; see p. 23.

a second great wave of continental influence can be traced. The T'ang dynasty (618-906) was then ruling China and extended the limits of its dominion very far westwards, approaching, if not touching; the borders of Persia. Indo-Persian influences colour Chinese art of this time, and find their reflection in Hakuō art. In the Fujiwara<sup>1</sup> epoch (794-1192) art is turned into more secular channels; at the same time it becomes less serious, reflecting the growing luxury of the age. Late in this epoch appears the third great wave of influence from abroad, which is due to Buddhist monks of the Zen (or "Contemplation") sect, and pilgrims coming from China. The contemporary reigning dynasty in China was the Sung (960-1279), under which an attempt was made to fuse Buddhist ideas with those of the earlier Taoist and Confucianist systems; a movement which resulted in a fresh impulse to art and the evolution of new forms. The effects of this impulse in Japan continued through the succeeding Kamakura<sup>2</sup> (1192-1335) and Ashikaga<sup>3</sup> (1335-1573) epochs. The Zen sect, which became extremely popular at this time, chiefly among the class of the military nobles (*samurai*), and in the 13th century gave birth to new sects, encouraged a realistic tendency in art. Love of nature and truthfulness in the depiction of natural objects were the ideals it inspired. A similar spirit was fostered by the indigenous faith of the Japanese, known as *Shintō* or *Kami no Michi* ("the Way of the Gods"), which was developed under Chinese influence and harmonised by the Buddhist propagandists with their system. In *Shintō* all nature is of divine origin and essence. Japan is the land of the "Gods" (*Kami*), a term embracing not only ancestors and the living Emperor, but even animals and inanimate things of a character to excite awe or wonder; Mount Fuji, often represented in art, is a special object of veneration. China continues to affect Japanese art in various ways, during the Momoyama<sup>4</sup> (1573-1602) and the Tokugawa<sup>5</sup> (1602-1867) epochs. The former of these partially

<sup>1</sup> See p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> So named after the town which Yoritomo, the first Shōgun, made his capital in 1192.

<sup>3</sup> So named after the family which held the Shōgunate during the epoch.

<sup>4</sup> So named after the hill near Fushimi, on which the famous general, Hideyoshi (d. 1598), who usurped the supreme power, built his palace in 1593.

<sup>5</sup> So named after the family of the Shōguns of Yedo (modern Tōkiō), whose rule starts with Iyeyasu (d. 1616).



coincides with the period of the Ming dynasty (1368–1643), and the latter is largely contemporary with the dynasty of the Ch'ing (1644–1911).

Japan has still in her possession a multitude of woven silk stuffs and embroideries to which native as well as several European experts ascribe a high antiquity, many being thought to date as far back as the 7th century A.D. One of the oldest and most famous is a panel of silk embroidery with a picture of the Western Paradise, known as the *Tenjūkoku-mandara*, and now preserved in the Chūgū-ji nunnery at Nara. There is definite documentary evidence<sup>1</sup> that this quaint piece of embroidery is of Japanese origin and dates from the Suiko epoch. Only a small fragment of the original hanging now remains. The pattern represents "Pure Land" (*Jōdo*), the Western Paradise of Amida. Sacred beings are shown emerging from lotuses; other figures appear walking or within buildings; a "phoenix" (*hōō*) and inscribed tortoises (*kame*) are also depicted. The inscription on the complete hanging once consisted of over 400 characters, of which only a few are now legible. But the full text is recorded in an old work<sup>2</sup> relating to Prince Shōtoku. From this we learn that after the death of the Prince in 621 his consort ordered the ladies of her Court to make an embroidery of the Western Paradise, so that she might be comforted by beholding the representation of her husband's soul resting in celestial peace. The documentary evidence further shows that the designers were Chinese and Koreans of families long naturalised in Japan.

In possession of the Japanese Imperial Household are a number of silk banners embroidered with *Bosatsu* (Bodhisattvas, or beings destined to become Buddhas in their next birth; the name is also given to supernatural beings who postpone the attainment of Nirvana in order to save all creatures). They were formerly in the Hōriū-ji temple and are held to be not later than the Nara epoch (710–794).<sup>3</sup> These fragments belong to the class of religious embroideries which the Japanese term *nuibotoke* ("embroidered Buddhas"). In the style of work they have a marked resemblance

<sup>1</sup> *Kokka*, Vol. XXI., p. 6 (art. by Seiichi Taki, on the *Relation between Embroidery and Painting in Ancient Japan*); also *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plates 192 to 194, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Jōgū Shōtoku-hō-ō-teisetsu*.

<sup>3</sup> So named after Nara, the capital from 710 to 784. Kiōto became the capital in 794.

to a fine Chinese embroidery representing a Buddha standing between two saints, believed to belong to the period of the T'ang dynasty (618-906). This embroidery was found by Sir Marc Aurel Stein in a walled-up temple library at Tun-huang in Khotan<sup>1</sup>; it is now in the British Museum. Such banners may perhaps be identical with the "baptismal flags" referred to in the *Nihongi*,<sup>2</sup> the ancient Chronicles of Japan (completed in the year 720). A sort of baptism was practised by the Japanese Buddhists in former days. This ceremony, derived from China, was known as *kwanjō*, and consisted of washing the head in perfumed water. Passing under a "baptismal flag" was believed to have the same efficacy.

Another interesting religious embroidery of early date is generally attributed to Chinese craftsmanship. This is a hanging,<sup>3</sup> embroidered, in coloured silks, with a representation of the preaching Buddha, seated on his throne and surrounded by Bodhisattvas or other sacred beings. It is in the possession of the Kwanju-ji monastery (Kiōto prefecture). The character of the design is strongly Indian, but Indian reflected through a Chinese medium. It belongs to the same class of work as the "embroidered Buddhas" just referred to. There is a close resemblance between this embroidery and the fresco paintings<sup>4</sup> of the Kondō (one of the buildings of the Hōriū-ji temple), which are said to be the work of a Korean artist. According to Japanese archæologists<sup>5</sup> these paintings were done in the Hakuho epoch (644-710), probably in the sixth decade of the 7th century. They represent Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and may be compared with the Ajantâ<sup>6</sup> cave decorations in India and with the Buddhist frescoes of Khotan. The Kwanju-ji hanging has been attributed to the same date as the Kondō paintings. But many archæologists would place it as late as the period of the Sung dynasty (960-1279).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Desert Cities of Cathay*, Vol. II., Plate opp. p. 206; see also *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Vol. VI., p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Nihongi* (W. G. Aston's translation, published by the Japan Society, *Transactions*, Vol. II., pp. 149 and 390).

<sup>3</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plates 215-217, pp. 116 and 117.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Plates 218-220, pp. 117 and 118.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117 and 118.

<sup>6</sup> Copies of these paintings may be seen in the Indian Section; see also John Griffiths' *Paintings in the Buddhist Cave Temples of Ajantâ*.

<sup>7</sup> *Kokka*, Vol. XXII., pp. 114 and 116.

The Museum possesses only a few examples of textiles illustrating Japanese Buddhism, such as a silk brocade (35) woven with the Buddhist wheel, and a *kakemono* (1431, Plate XXIII.) depicting the 33 incarnations of Kwannon, the "Goddess of Mercy."

To China we have strong reasons for ascribing at least a considerable number of pieces in the great collection of textiles which is enshrined in the little wooden building at Nara, the old imperial capital, known as the Shōsō-in or Imperial Treasury, and also many of those in the Hōriū-ji,<sup>1</sup> a temple founded (607) by Prince Shōtoku, which is also at Nara. A large proportion were probably brought from beyond seas, as presents to the Emperor. Persian influence shows itself in several of the designs; one of the most interesting pieces is a silk fragment woven with the portrait of a Persian king engaged in a lion hunt.<sup>2</sup> This piece, which is said to have been given to the Hōriū-ji temple by the Emperor Shōmu (reigned 724-748), bears a marked resemblance to the well-known Sassanian "hunting stuffs," and must have been made by Chinese weavers after a Sassanian original; it is now in the Imperial Museum at Tōkiō. It appears to be a product of the 7th or 8th century of our era. The Shōsō-in was built to contain the treasures hitherto stored in the Tōdai-ji,<sup>3</sup> in the grounds of which temple the Shōsō-in now stands. There is still extant the prayer offered at the time of the donation of the State's treasures in the Tōdai-ji, to bring peace to the soul of Shōmu. This document is the work of Kōmiō, the dowager Empress. In 756 she collected Shōmu's personal belongings and made a donation of them to the "Great Buddha" (*Daibutsu*) of the Tōdai-ji. The list of these donations (*Kemmotsu-chō* or "Memorandum of Donations") follows after the prayer. Mention is there made<sup>4</sup> of embroidered Buddhist robes, 15 mirrors "wrapped in scarlet *aya*" (a figured silk stuff with slanting lines in the ground), and two arm-rests, "one covered with purple brocade having a phoenix pattern, the other with brocade having long stripes." An early example of *aya* (Plate I.),

<sup>1</sup> The oldest extant Buddhist temple in Japan. The building of Buddhist temples begins as early as the 6th century, soon after the introduction of Buddhism into the country.

<sup>2</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plate 203, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> Erected in 728 by the Buddhist priest Riōben.

<sup>4</sup> *Tōyei Shūkō*, Plates 90 to 94; and text of the *Kemmotsu-chō* (Eng. trans., pp. 2 and 20).

believed to date from the Nara epoch (710-794), is on exhibition in the Museum ; it belonged to the late Mr. Wilson Crewdson. The stencilled pattern consists of the eight-spoked sacred wheel (*rimbō*), symbolising the Teaching of the Buddha. The patterns on the Shōsō-in and Hōriū-ji textiles, and similar ancient textiles elsewhere, are frequently drawn from the vegetable and animal worlds. Floral and leafy stems<sup>1</sup> are much favoured ; they are generally conventionalised and are often crude. Symmetrical arrangement<sup>2</sup> appears in many early textile designs, as in the case of one of the mirror-wrappings in the Shōsō-in to which reference has been made, where the pattern shows a composition of rosettes within interlaced foliage of scroll form. Realism is not unknown. The Shōsō-in has a beautiful example of early realistic treatment. This is a square piece of brocade<sup>3</sup> with a pattern of two goats with curved horns, flanking some foliage about which butterflies are flitting. There is a textile fragment with a graceful and wonderfully naturalistic pattern of delicate curving leafy stems, in white on blue, belonging to the Shingo-ji, a temple in Yamashiro province ; it is attributed to the 12th century. In a modern book of patterns<sup>4</sup> it is described as a piece of cloth worn as a lower garment by Narinori, a member of the noble Fujiwara clan, which virtually ruled Japan through the Emperors from the end of the 9th century until the middle of the 11th century, when its power waned before the growing ascendancy of the Taira clan. Animals figure on several textiles of reputedly ancient date. On a fragment of a silk banner<sup>5</sup> given by Shōmu to the Hōriū-ji is a pattern of hexagonal compartments, some enclosing tortoises, and others symmetrically arranged leafy stems. Confronting beasts,<sup>6</sup> which flank trees, within compartments formed by interlaced circles, is the design, typically Sassanian, decorating a belt said to have been used by the Empress Kōken (reigned 749-758). On a brocaded throne-carpet,<sup>7</sup> used, according to tradition, by the same Empress, two birds are depicted facing each other within an octagonal compartment. A pattern representing a bird amid leafy sprays<sup>8</sup> appears on what is, possibly, a yet earlier textile—a brocaded table-cloth, whose use is attributed to Prince Shōtoku. In the pattern-book

<sup>1</sup> *Tōyō Shūhō*, Plates 89 and 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 99.

<sup>4</sup> *Kodai Moyō Kagami*, Plate 88.

<sup>5</sup> *Kodai Moyō Kagami*, Plate 46.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 51.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Plate 63.



above referred to,<sup>1</sup> a textile fragment, with a "foreign design of female and male bears," is illustrated. It is said to have been in the possession\* of a certain Shimotsukeno Atsumitsu in 1257. But how much earlier it is there is nothing to determine. *Kirin-nishiki* (brocades with pattern of the "unicorn," *ch'i-lin* in Chinese, *kirin* in Japanese) are said to have been made about the middle of the 7th century under the Emperor Kōtoku.<sup>2</sup>

A curious pattern<sup>3</sup> is shown in the case of a fragment of a purse, which is believed to have been the property of the Buddhist priest Kōbō-daishi (774-835), founder of the Shingon sect. This pattern consists of rows of conventional flames, in red, separated by oblique yellow stripes. As in the case of other textiles above mentioned, a doubt arises whether this too is not an example of Chinese or Korean weaving. Kōbō-daishi is known to have visited China. The sacred wheel (*rimbō*),<sup>4</sup> symbolising Buddhism, appears on a fragment of a silk banner given by the Emperor Shōmu to the Hōriū-ji. A Japanese authority<sup>5</sup> states that "several fine brocades" were produced under the Emperor Kōtoku, who ascended the throne in 645; among other stuffs he mentions the "wheel-shape brocade" (*shakei-nishiki*). In the Imperial Museum at Tōkiō is a portion of a *nō* dancer's robe,<sup>6</sup> ascribed to the time of Hideyoshi (d. 1598); it is *semé* with *rimbō*, of different colours and sizes, on a ground of close square diaper. The Japanese authority just referred to<sup>7</sup> gives the following list of *aya* (figured silk stuffs with oblique stripes in the ground) woven during the Yengi period (901-922):— "one bird's nest," "two bird's nests," "three bird's nests," "roses," "little parrots," "melon seeds," "two flowers," "rape flowers," "wild grass," "large flowers," "small flowers," "waves," "wheels" (the Buddhist sacred wheel), "lions" (*shishi*), "petals of a flower," "small lotus flowers," "rice shells," "wings of cicada," "falcon," "reeds," "mountain in distance" (probably Mount

<sup>1</sup> *Kodai Moyō Kagami*, Plates 101 and 102.

<sup>2</sup> Kurokawa Mayori, *Kōgei Shiriō*, I., trans. p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Kodai Moyō Kagami*, Plate 41; also O. Münsterberg, *Chinesische Kunstgeschichte*, p. 388, Plate 566.

<sup>4</sup> *Kodai Moyō Kagami*, Plate 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Kōgei Shiriō*, I., trans. p. 27.

<sup>6</sup> See O. Münsterberg, *Japanische Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. II., Plate opp. p. 241.

<sup>7</sup> *Kōgei Shiriō*, I., trans. pp. 36 and 37.

Fuji), "diamond-shaped pattern." Many of these were produced in the Imperial weaving department at Kiōto, a city which became the capital under the Emperor Kwammu in 794.

Examples of Japanese textiles prior to the Tokugawa epoch (1602-1867) are extremely rare, and in Europe almost non-existent. They consist, for the most part, of wrappings for swords, mirrors for lacquered boxes, mounts for *hakemono* (hanging picture-scrolls), and fragments of robes,<sup>1</sup> banners, carpets, etc. Complete garments are also to be found. Louis Gonse<sup>2</sup> figures a robe in his possession, which he assigns to the 14th century. He is of opinion that it was worn at the Court of the Hōjō, who usurped supreme power, while nominally acting as regents for the Shōgun, from 1219 to 1334. This robe is made up of red and white vertical bands, with a pattern of chrysanthemum badges (*kiku-mon*) on a ground of chequer diaper.

A pocket-book (*kami-ire*, Plate II.), made out of a piece of silk brocade, which is said to have once formed part of the robe of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (d. 1598), belonged to the late Mr. Wilson Crewdson. The pattern consists of a diaper of hexagons, each enclosing a Chinese character signifying "long life," "treasure," "luck," etc.

A number of Court robes<sup>3</sup> exist in the Kōdai-ji at Kiōto, among other treasures left there by Hideyoshi, the famous general of the usurping ruler Oda Nobunaga (d. 1582), and virtual master of Japan after the latter's death. They cannot therefore be later than the second half of the 16th century. The patterns on these are of a simple and uniform character, e.g., cloud ornament separated by vertical wavy stripes; a diaper of fourfold lozenges (*yotsu-waribishi* "four-split lozenges")—a very ancient pattern among those characteristic of Japanese Court robes; a diaper of *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*) and conventional curving stems (*karakusa*); and "double-crane" (*niwa-dzuru*) badges on a ground of hexagon diaper (*kikkō-tsunagi*).

Among Museum specimens an example of the "four-split lozenge" pattern is shown on a fragment of silk damask (1201), partly embroidered, and partly printed with a "resist" and dyed, which dates from the Genroku period (1688-1703).

<sup>1</sup> O. Münsterberg, *Japanische Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. II., pp. 231 and 236.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Art Japonais*, Plate opp. p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Hōkō Ihō Dzuriaku* (Relics of the Taikō, illustrated).

A Japanese book,<sup>1</sup> published in 1815, illustrates a number of patterns for Court robes, which have been in use for many centuries. Patterns of this class are generally rigid and highly conventional. More naturalistic, however, is the full dress pattern for the Emperor ; it is entirely in yellow, though the ground may be either brown or green. The details of the design consist of two "phœnixes" (*hōō*) above two *kiri* trees, at the foot of which are a couple of "unicorns" (*kirin*). The Museum possesses several examples of Japanese textile patterns showing a combination of "phœnixes" and *kiri*. This motive appears on a woman's robe (1222), of silk damask, partly embroidered, and partly printed with a "resist" and dyed, which dates from the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century.

The numerous paintings and sculptures of old Japan, which are in the possession of Japanese Buddhist temples and monasteries, are of great value as a record of the designs woven or embroidered on the garments worn in past centuries. A few of the more interesting examples may be noticed here.

In the Yakushi-ji, a temple at Nara, is an ancient painting of the *tennin* (Buddhist angel) Kichijō, which is held<sup>2</sup> to date from the 8th century. The pattern on her dress is very simple, consisting of rosettes and the "four-split lozenge" diaper just referred to. Nearly as simple in point of design are the robes on the figures in two paintings,<sup>3</sup> attributed by Japanese authorities to the latter part of the Heian<sup>4</sup> or Fujiwara epoch (794-1192). One, "Kwannon of the Sea," is at the Riūkō-in temple, Kōya-san. The pattern on the dress shows large "cash" devices (*shippō*) and circles filled with floral ornament on a ground of close *shippō* diaper. The other, described as one of the sixteen *Rakan* (disciples of the Buddha), is now at the Raikō-ji, a monastery at Shimo-Sakamoto (prefecture of Shiga) ; the pattern on the dress here consists of rosettes, some within circles, and fourfold lozenges grouped in fours. In the Konkai-kōmiō-ji, a monastery at Kiōto, a painting, apparently dating from the Kamakura epoch (1192-1335),<sup>5</sup> represents "Amida of the Mountains." The robe of this Buddha bears a pattern of

<sup>1</sup> *Shōzoku Shokubun Dzuyē.*

<sup>2</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plate 247, p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Plates 357 and 378, pp. 156 and 161.

<sup>4</sup> Heian is an old name for Kiōto.

<sup>5</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plate 444, p. 184.

delicate leafy stems and "lightning diaper" (*inadzuma-tsunagi*); the foliage is treated in a naturalistic manner. Belonging to the 14th century are two remarkable paintings<sup>1</sup> in the Daitoku-ji monastery, Kiōto, founded by the priest Daitō-kokushi (d. 1337). The approximate date of both of these is known. One bears a eulogy of Daitō-kokushi written with his own hand by the ill-fated Emperor Go-Daigo (dethroned by the Shōgun Ashikaga Takauji in 1335). The other is inscribed with an attestation by the priest that the artist was his contemporary. In the former example the following patterns appear on the different robes:—Floral sprays (covering the whole of his outer garment), circular medallions each formed of two confronting cranes, and large Chinese dragon medallions on a ground of conventional cloud diaper. The latter painting shows a pattern, beautifully brocaded in gold on red, of curving peony stems, and also, in white, of large flowers of another species; the pattern is typically Chinese, and the use of gilt strips or gold thread in Daitō-kokushi's robe also argues a Chinese origin, since the weaving of gold brocades in Japan is stated by Japanese experts to have commenced at a later period than this.<sup>2</sup> A pattern of perhaps a couple of centuries later appears on the garment worn by a warrior represented in a painting<sup>3</sup> belonging to the Jizō-in monastery, Atsuta (prefecture of Aichi); it consists of a diaper of *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*) and conventional curving stems (*karakusa*). This painting is held to be a production of the Ashikaga epoch (1335-1573).

Examples of nearly all these patterns exist on Japanese textiles in the Museum, which, however, date from more recent times. The embroidery showing the "four-split lozenge" device has been already mentioned. The "cash" devices (*shippō*) on the dress of "Kwannon of the Sea" appear on several Museum pieces; the best example is a Buddhist priest's vestment (1) of the 18th century, the whole ground of which is covered with *shippō*. The "lightning diaper" (*inadzuma-tsunagi*), a sort of fret, on the robe of "Amida of the Mountains" is similar to that which covers the ground of a small piece of silk brocade (2), which may be a product of the 19th century, or is perhaps a little earlier. We may also

<sup>1</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plate 458, p. 191; *Kokka*, Vol. XX., No. 235, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Japanese Temples and their Treasures*, Plate 252, p. 222.



compare it with the large fret, woven in strips of gilt paper, on a silk textile (3) of the 18th century ; in the latter case, cloud-forms complete the pattern, the whole suggesting a conventionalisation of a thunderstorm. The Chinese dragons decorating one of the garments of Daitō-kokushi appear frequently on Japanese textiles, and are illustrated by several Museum examples (*e.g.*, 4, 5, 6 and 7) ; 8, a silk brocade of the late 17th century, is a good example of the pattern of medallions formed out of dragons. The fine pattern of peonies, shown in the portrait of Daitō-kokushi, is most nearly represented by a square piece (9), dating from the 18th century, where the pattern, consisting of lotuses and lotus foliage, is in strips of gilt paper on a ground of red satin. The circular badges, each formed of two cranes, which decorate one of the priest's robes, recall a similar badge on a silk fragment,<sup>1</sup> woven for a Court robe, which is believed to date from the second quarter of the 19th century. For a good example of the design of *kiri* combined with curving conventional stems, though differently treated to those on the dress of the warrior in the Jizō-in monastery portrait, the student may consult a panel of silk gauze (10), given by Her Majesty Queen Victoria, where strips of silvered paper are chiefly used for the pattern ; the date of this panel is probably about the middle of the 19th century.

Heretofore we have found Japanese textile patterns to be largely of Chinese and Korean origin. But in the 16th century a new influence appears in Japanese art, that of Europe. Marco Polo, the famous Venetian traveller of the 13th century, never visited Japan, but he refers to it in his book of voyages, under the name of "Zipangu." He speaks of the country as abounding in gold, and notes that the inhabitants, "although living quite separate" from other nations, are fair, handsome, and of agreeable manners." Marco Polo's account much impressed the European explorers of the 15th century. Japan ("Zipango") figured on Toscanelli's map of the world, used by Christopher Columbus, as a prominent region to the east of Asia. Columbus and others were anxious to find a route to this romantic spot ; but the first Europeans to visit it were three Portuguese who were accidentally stranded on Tanega-shima in 1542 or 1543, during a voyage from Siam to China. Commercial relations were soon established with Portugal, and later with Holland and England. In 1549 Francis Xavier landed

<sup>1</sup> In the Ninagawa Collection (148 (2)).

at Kagoshima, and the Jesuit mission, which was to have such momentous results, commenced its activities. In 1584 a Japanese embassy arrived in Europe, and visited Rome and Spain; it was welcomed by Pope Gregory XIII. and King Philip II. Among the rich presents brought by the ambassadors were a number of specimens of silk weaving. An interesting illustration of the garments worn by the Japanese nobility at this time is found in a portrait<sup>1</sup> of the ambassador Hasekura, now in the possession of Prince Borghese at Rome. Hasekura's robe shows a very realistically treated pattern of deer, and delicate floral stems with thin, wavy foliage. The beauty and freedom of the design anticipates the Tokugawa epoch. Velvets and brocades were bestowed on the Japanese ambassadors by their European hosts, and from this time forwards European influence begins to be appreciable in the textile art of Japan.

After the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries, and the final stamping out of the Christian movement following on the suppression of the Shimabara revolt in 1638, Japan was completely cut off for over two centuries from all foreign intercourse, save as regards coast trade with the Chinese and the Dutch, who were not allowed to penetrate into the interior. This era, during which the Tokugawa Shōguns held supreme sway, was characterised by official tyranny and espionage of the most rigid type. But the country enjoyed prosperity and freedom from civil war, to which it had been a stranger for so many centuries. During this time there was a great efflorescence of literature and art. Female dress became more gorgeous than the male, the reverse having been the case during the middle ages. Moreover, the purpose of the textile industry was now changed. In the old days silks were woven largely as tribute to the Emperor, but from the beginning of the Tokugawa epoch the purpose was more commercial, and this had an important effect on the character of the work produced. Designs grew more and more elaborate and naturalistic. A certain simplicity and restraint characterises the beautiful robe patterns of the 17th and early part of the 18th century. But as the latter century advances, there is a growing tendency to extravagance, and sometimes to overcrowding in point of design; and the same tendency shows itself in the 19th century as well. We can trace the evolution by means of a series of

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions of the Japan Society*, Vol. VI., Plate opp. p. 190.

paintings,<sup>1</sup> beginning with Iwasa Matabei (d. 1650), founder of the *Ukiyoye* ("pictures of the passing world") or Genre School, and continuing through the works of artists like Hishikawa Moronobu (second half of 17th century), Okumura Masanobu (d. 1764 or 1768), Utamaro (d. 1806), Hokusai (d. 1849), and Kunisada (d. 1864), covering a period of over two centuries. Dated Japanese books<sup>2</sup> of patterns for ladies' *kimono*, ranging from 1730 to 1890, may further assist the inquirer in studying the development of styles, and the wealth of art-motives to which the weavers, embroiderers and stencillers of the Tokugawa and Meiji<sup>3</sup> epochs had recourse. Flowers, fruit, trees, gardens, waterfalls, landscapes, buildings, human figures, stirrups, articles of dress, and selections of the *takaramono* or treasures of the Gods of Luck, are among the many varieties of design that lend a charm, all its own, to the costume of the ladies of Japan. The latest<sup>4</sup> of this series of pattern-books shows an increasing fertility of imagination. In skill and naturalistic charm the 19th century does not seem to have fallen behind earlier times, although it has not surpassed the beauty of design and execution shown by the two previous centuries. The 18th century was particularly noted for its gorgeous *fukusa* (coverings for lacquered boxes conveying presents). But the wholesale manufacture of textiles for a world market during the Meiji epoch has not always been a success from the artistic standpoint. Many fine specimens of 19th century weaving were on view at the great Paris Exhibition of 1878, which did so much to foster European interest in Japanese art.

Japanese works of art are not likely to have reached Europe before the second half of the 16th century, when, as we have seen, the country was opened up to Portuguese traders and Christian missionaries. China is reported to have had commercial relations with Japan from an early date. Brinkley<sup>5</sup> notes that the first of the Ashikaga Shōguns, Takauji (d. 1358), was persuaded by a Buddhist priest to fit out, year by year, two ships, laden with goods, to trade with the Celestial Empire. The overthrow of the Yūan

<sup>1</sup> See E. E. Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, Vol. II., Plates opp. pp. 182, 184, 186, 190, 191, 193, 198, and Plates at end of book.

<sup>2</sup> In the Department of Engravings. See list of books, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> The Meiji ("Enlightened Government") epoch dates from 1868, the second year of the reign of the late Emperor Meiji-tennō.

<sup>4</sup> Yamanaka Kichirobei, *Moyō Hinagata Miyako no Nishiki*.

<sup>5</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Japan," 11th ed., Vol. XV., p. 224.

dynasty (1280-1367) by the Ming interrupted, for a time, the commerce between the two countries, which was restored under the Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (d. 1408). At the insistence of the Chinese Emperor, the importation of Japanese goods assumed a tributary character. They were delivered into the charge of the Chinese Government in exchange for copper cash, instead of being thrown directly on the market. "The articles found most suitable in China," writes Brinkley,<sup>1</sup> "were swords, fans, screens, lacquer wares, copper and agate, and the goods brought back to Japan were brocades and other silk fabrics, ceramic productions, jade and fragrant woods." It is interesting to note that there existed no demand, or no demand worth mentioning, on the part of the Chinese for Japanese silks, although those of China found a market in Japan. China, therefore, cannot be regarded as a medium through which Japanese silks are likely to have come to Europe. It must be remembered, too, that the disturbed state of Japan during a large part of the 15th century was eminently unfavourable to the weaving industry, which is stated to have reached its lowest ebb in the period extending from the sixth decade of that century to the pacification of the country by Hideyoshi—a time of almost continuous civil war. The first arrival of Europeans in Japan was the beginning of a century of enormous trade expansion, during which every port was thrown open to a host of eager merchants. The earliest in the field were the Portuguese, who appear to have been more desirous of obtaining gold than works of art. Kaempfer<sup>2</sup> tells us that "the gold of the country was exchang'd against European and Indian curiosities, medicines, stuffs, and other things of the like nature. Upwards of 300 tuns of this precious metal were exported every year, for at that time they had full liberty to import, and to export, what goods, and in what quantity they pleased." In the 17th century the Dutch, soon followed by the English, became the trade rivals of the Portuguese; all three nations had warehouses at Hirado. An interesting disclosure of the eagerness of the Japanese, at this time, to obtain foreign patterns is made in a letter of Ralph Coppindall, writing on behalf of the East India Company, to Robert Larkin and Adam Denton. This letter, which is cited in the diary of Richard Cocks,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Japan," 11th ed., Vol. XV., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Japan* (English translation, 1728), pp. 313 and 314—Engelbrecht Kaempfer, the famous German traveller, and the earliest European historian of Japan; he was in that country from 1690 to 1692, as physician to the Dutch Embassy.

<sup>3</sup> Hakluyt Society's Publications, Vol. II., p. 273.



a factor of the Company, is headed: "Firando (Hirado) in Japan, le 5th December, 1615." It runs as follows:—"Yow are to note that the people of this country doe not buy our sortes of India cloth soe much for necessity as for the new and strange fashions and painteings thereof, being a people desireinge change, for they have greate store of silkes and linnen stufes made here better and cheaper than we can afford our India cloth. Soe that we must strive to procure strange sortes of cloth with strange painteinges every yeare; but such cloth as hath any redd painteinge will not sell here." It is on record<sup>1</sup> that during the early part of the 17th century the Japanese fitted out large merchantmen and carried on an extensive commerce with foreign countries, which included "New Spain" (America). Among their exports were dyed textile fabrics, and among their imports silk fabrics and woollen stuffs. But the Western demand for Japanese textiles appears to have been very small, and it is doubtful whether any exist in Europe that have been brought over before the second half of the 19th century. There was, however, a growing taste for Japanese art, as is shown by the vogue of Japanese lacquered cabinets, which reached England as early as the 17th century. They appear to have been known as "Indian cabinets," many of them coming to Europe *viâ* India.<sup>2</sup> Evelyn mentions such in his account of the sumptuous furniture of Katherine of Braganza, queen of Charles II. "The Queen," he writes,<sup>3</sup> "brought over with her from Portugal such Indian cabinets as had never before ben seene here." How vague and confused at this period was the knowledge of the art products of the Far East is well shown by another entry of Evelyn's Diary. Speaking of his visit to the house of a Mr. Bohun, he notes that it "is a cabinet of all elegancies, especially Indian; in the hall are contrivances of Japan skreens instead of wainscot. . . . The landskips of the skreens represent the manner of living, and country of the Chinese."<sup>4</sup>

After the inauguration of the anti-foreign policy of the Tokugawa Shōguns, the Dutch—by this time the only European nation allowed to trade with Japan—were confined to the small island of Deshima, in the harbour of Nagasaki. Their exports as well as their imports

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Empire of Japan* (Brinkley's translation), p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> See the petition of a certain Edward Hurd to the State in 1692, cited in C. P. Macquoid's *A History of English Furniture*, Vol. II., pp. 150 and 151.

<sup>3</sup> Entry for 9th June, 1662.

<sup>4</sup> Entry for 30th June, 1682.

were subjected to a rigid official scrutiny. Kaempfer<sup>1</sup> gives a list of contraband goods, which the Dutch might neither buy nor export; it includes "all sorts of fine silken stuffs," "all sorts of stuffs made of hemp," "stuffs manufactur'd of cotton," and "mats of silk." He expressly states<sup>2</sup> that "stuffs woven in the country" were liable to be seized, if found in possession of an exporter. Banishment was the least penalty the unfortunate Dutchman could be made to suffer, while any native who might have been privy to his act was put to the torture.

The reopening of Japan to general European, as well as American, trade in modern times, after the signing of the first commercial treaty in 1858, naturally brought about a growing acquaintance with Japanese art on the part of Western nations. Most of the art objects exported to the West would, of course, date from the 19th century, products of an earlier period leaving the country only in exceptional circumstances. A few Japanese exhibits were sent to the Great Exhibition of 1851, and as early as 1854 an exhibition of Japanese art was held in the Galleries of the Royal Water-Colour Society,<sup>3</sup> in London. The objects shown were brought over by the one Dutch merchantman that traded every year with Japan. The Museum began to acquire Japanese textiles as far back as the 'sixties of the last century. The principal donor at this time was Her Majesty Queen Victoria, for whom a number of brocades were woven by order of the Shōgun. As might be expected, in view of the facts of the case, only a few specimens of Japanese weaving of an earlier date than the 18th century appear in the Collection. Most of the Japanese textiles belong to the 19th century, but the weaving of the previous century is well illustrated. The less modern pieces are, on the whole, the acquisitions of more recent years, and we may reasonably hope that the Museum will be able to obtain still older examples.

Reference has already been made to the silk fragment which appears to be a product of the Nara epoch (710-794), and to the pocket-book made out of a piece of silk brocade dating from the 16th century.

A small hand-painted cotton fragment (*kikisarasa*), which may date from about the year 1500, will be considered more particularly

<sup>1</sup> *History of Japan* (English Translation), p. 390.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> Marcus B. Huish, *Japan and Its Art*, p. 360, Plate 224.

later on.<sup>1</sup> No other pieces are in possession of the Museum that were made at so early a date. To the late 17th century may be ascribed two pieces of silk brocade (stitched together) (17, Plate III.), which are the gifts of Mr. Sydney Vacher. They once formed part of the vestment (*kesa*) of a Buddhist priest. Strips of silvered paper are plentifully mixed with the silks. To the same date, or perhaps a little later, we may ascribe a beautiful fragment (18, Plate IV.), woven for a *nō* dancer's robe (*nō-ishō*). The pattern is of a floral character, peonies and chrysanthemums springing from wavy vertical stems, with a ground partly fretted. The flowers are in floss silks, but gilt paper is used for the rest of the design. Two small embroideries on exhibition date from the Genroku period (1688-1703), a time of great luxury and artistic refinement. One of these (1200, Plate XVI.) is an example of *nuihaku* ("embroidery and gilding"), *i.e.*, embroidery in silk and gold thread, combined with printing in gold—a method characteristic of this period; *shibori* ("tie and dye work") has also been used. The pattern consists of delicate floral sprays, minute floral badges within *sangai-bishi* (a form with the outline of three overlapping lozenges), circular medallions filled with conventional waves, and lozenge diaper, on a ground of horizontal stripes. The embroidery is worked on a piece of silk damask, with a fret pattern; one of the two oldest Japanese silk damasks in the Museum. The other example (1201) of Genroku embroidery has been noticed above for its ancient pattern of the "four-split lozenge"; this device is enclosed in lattice work, and associated with sprays of peonies. Printing with a "resist" has been used, as well as embroidery in gold thread and floss silks, to produce the pattern. The ground, in this case too, is of silk damask, with a pattern of peonies, chrysanthemums, and wisps of cloud.

To the early 18th century we may ascribe a piece of silk brocade (19, Plate V.), which was woven either for a Buddhist priest's vestment or for an altar-cover (*uchishiki*, "spread-out"); it has a repeating pattern of circular medallions, each enclosing two dragons, with a border of "phoenixes" (*hōō*) and other mythical creatures; floral sprays further decorate the medallions and fill the interspaces. Japanese weaving of the 18th century is well illustrated in the collection. The most beautiful examples are those of fragments of silk brocade, woven for the robes of *nō* ("skill" or "talent")

<sup>1</sup> See p. 32.

dancers); the patterns are largely taken from the floral world, and floss silks, often in strong relief, are frequently used. Of these the student may note 20 (Plate VI.), where there is a realistic treatment of irises growing in water; 21 (Plate VII.), woven with sparrows in flight, and snow-laden bamboos crossed by wistaria stems; 22 (Plate IV.), woven possibly for the dress of a lady of the Court, which has a pattern of plum blossoms springing from wavy vertical stems; 23 (Plate III.), woven with pairs of mandarin ducks, swimming on water with a rippled surface; and 31, which shows a diaper of hexagons enclosing "flower lozenges." The last of these patterns appears on a *nō* dancer's robe (32), which the Museum was fortunate enough to acquire quite recently. The robe in question is the gift of Mr. John Hay, in the name of his brother, the late Captain Hay; it comes from a temple in Kiōto belonging to the Nishi-Hongwanji sect of Japanese Buddhism. The pattern on this robe is very ancient, but the freshness of its colouring and condition points to a comparatively late date.<sup>1</sup> A very interesting example of material for a *nō* robe is 166 (Plate VI.), which shows two curious masks, shaped like birds' heads, amid leaves of the maple. The bird-mask, or rather bird-hat (*tori-kabuto*), is worn by dancers in the *bu-gaku*, an ancient sword-dance, still in vogue, which was one of the sources of the *nō* dramas.<sup>2</sup> The date of this piece is not later than the beginning of the 19th century. The patterns on silk brocades woven for Buddhist priests' vestments or for altar-covers (the same material may be used for either) display a variety of motives; animals and flowers of a symbolical character, objects associated with Buddhism, such as the eight-spoked wheel, and selections of precious things being specially favoured. A common pattern, of Chinese origin, is that known as the *shokkō*, which consists of a diaper of octagons or hexagons united by rectangular figures (*see* 33, which dates from the 18th century). The following are examples of such pieces, all of which may be ascribed to the 18th century:—(34, Plate V.)—Cranes, sacred tortoises (*minogame*), branches of pine and

<sup>1</sup> The "flower lozenge" pattern, very much as it appears on 32, decorates the robe of the Japanese poetess Ono no Komachi, as shown in a portrait attributed to the middle of the Kamakura epoch (1192-1335).—*Kokka*, Vol. XXIII., p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> The development of these dramas, in connection with Buddhist worship, out of primitive native dances, dates from the 14th century, and is paralleled by the evolution of the ancient Greek drama out of the dances, accompanied by chanting, which were performed in honour of Dionysos. The *bugaku* was introduced from Korea in the reign of the Emperor Kimmei (540-571).



bamboo, heads of lucky sceptres (*niui*), pairs of rhinoceros horns, and a selection of the *takaramono*, or treasures of the Seven Deities of Luck; 35—A leafy medallion enclosing a peony badge, and sacred wheels<sup>1</sup> within medallions formed by conventional clouds; 36—Curving stems bearing lotuses and peaches; 37—Butterflies, double gourds, floral stems, and dragons pursuing flaming magic jewels; 38 (Plate VIII.)—Storm-dragons, amid clouds and lightning, entirely woven in strips of silvered paper, on a ground of dark blue silk.

A class of textiles well represented in the collection consists of silk brocades and silk damasks woven for ladies' waist-sashes (*obi*); they are made of thick and durable material, and often have marvelously beautiful patterns. To the late 18th century we may ascribe a strip of *obiji* (" *obi* stuff "), (60), made for a young girl's use, which has a pattern of cranes in flight, floral stems, and branches of pine; 61, another example of *obiji*, belonging to the same century, is woven with flowers on an interrupted hexagon diaper. Two fine examples of *obiji* date at the latest from the first half of the 19th century, and may possibly be as early as the end of the 18th century:—68, which has a close pattern of chrysanthemums, and 69, which is woven with rows of snow-laden pines. The latter piece was given to the Museum by Her Majesty Queen Victoria. A number of pieces of *obiji*, one in silk damask and the rest in silk brocade, were recently acquired by the Museum. They date from the first half of the 19th century, and are evidence of the wonderful fertility of imagination displayed by Japanese designers at this time, and the skill with which these designs were rendered by the weavers. A large proportion of them are very realistically treated (*e.g.*, 70, 71, 72). The first has a pattern of bamboo stems and foliage, and sparrows in flight. The design on 71 (Plate IX.) is decidedly quaint; lying close together, in all sorts of positions, are a number of tea-bowls, decorated with dragons, cranes and lotuses. Flat, round fans, thin waving reeds, and little black fire-flies, some crawling and others in flight, is the charmingly conceived and executed pattern of 72 (Plate IX.), one of the prettiest in the series. The treatment is almost as realistic in 73 (Plate IX.), which is woven with a repeat of *Rhodea japonica* (*omoto*); 74, which has a pattern of peonies; 75, where the *kiri* badge of the Emperor (borne also by several noble families)

<sup>1</sup> See p. 39.

appears conspicuously amid rosettes and orchids; and 76, which shows wavy floral stems, on a raised ground of close horizontal stripes. Very life-like, too, are the small cranes flying about clusters of pine foliage, forming oval medallions, which is the pattern of 77; and the chrysanthemums, peaches and peach blossoms, orchids, and bamboo stems, which figure on 78 (Plate IX.). The design on 79, which represents rows of tiny floral sprays, alternately reversed, has a more conventional air. The same may be said of 80, a rich damask fragment, with a representation of "lions" (*karashishi*)<sup>1</sup> interspersed with peonies. The pattern on 81 is quite in the conventional vein, and shows a diaper of floral sprays and lozenges on a ground of very wide fret.

Examples of embroidered, woven, printed and stencilled robes, showing a variety of patterns, can be studied in the Collection. To the 18th century we may ascribe a Buddhist priest's vestment (90), composed of several pieces stitched together,<sup>2</sup> which is woven in silk and strips of gilt paper with dragons amid curving floral stems. A young girl's *kimono* (91) of silk brocade, with a floral diaper pattern, was woven in the same century. The most lavishly decorated garments are those of geishas, actors and, more especially, courtesans (*jorō*). From the late 18th or early 19th century dates a robe (970) worn by a member of the last class; it is of silk damask, printed with a "resist" and dyed. The pattern consists of the lucky flower-cart (*hana-guruma*), which is filled with chrysanthemums, peonies, fuchsias, and other flowers, on a ground of fan-mounts decorated with foliage, rhinoceros horns, and the mallet (*tsuchi*) of the Luck God Daikoku. To the same date belongs a robe (1223), with a picturesque pattern of the "Drum Waterfall" (*Tsudzumi-ga-taki*); drumheads are seen floating in the pool below. Printing with a "resist," and, to a slight extent, embroidery, have been used to produce this design.

Four interesting examples of silk brocades for pocket-books (95 to 98) date from the first half of the 19th century. The pattern on 95 (Plate X.) betrays European influence, and recalls, in some respects, the French silk brocades of the last quarter of the 18th century; vertical bands, of different widths, are filled with bats or floral sprays, some of the latter being tied with ribbons and forming a chain crossing alternately left and right a sinuous

<sup>1</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 45.

band composed of pointed leaves. Another brocade of this class (96) is woven with a diaper of triangular compartments filled with stripes or a variety of floral devices. The pattern on 97 (Plate X.) consists of four kinds of musical instruments, with their names quoted; these are the mouth-organ (*shō*), the flute (*fuyue*), and two species of lutes (the square *jamisen* and the pear-shaped *biwa*). The most interesting pattern is that on 98 (Plate X.), which consists of cards for one of the poem-games. Some of these bear poems, and others the portraits of well-known poets, the essence of the game being to match each poem-card with another illustrating the author of the poem chosen.

A few other examples of silk-weaving of the 19th century may be mentioned here. To the early years we may perhaps ascribe a piece (115) given by Mr. Sydney Vacher; it is prettily woven with the favourite and ancient motive of cranes in flight. Geese flying amid floral sprays, branches of pine, and fallen petals is the charming pattern on a silk textile (116), of somewhat later date, which seems to have been woven for an *obi*. Several pieces of silk damask, dating from this century, can be studied in the Collection, e.g., 117, which is woven with curving stems of the *kiri* in leaf and flower; and 1273 (Plate XXI.), a *fukusa*,<sup>1</sup> with a bold design of peonies, conventional foliage (*karakusa*), and a selection of the *takaramono*; the two lobsters are in silk and gold thread embroidery.

Most of the embroideries in the collection are products of the 19th century. Several examples will be described in the course of this guide. To the second half of the 19th century we may ascribe a satin panel (1275), which is embroidered in coloured silks and gold thread with a picturesque representation of the historic Castle of Ōsaka, where the young Hideyori, the protector of the Christians, was besieged in 1605 by Iyeyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shōgunate. Below the castle, on the water, are seen two covered boats; while hills, trees, a pagoda and two huts, with clouds floating above, complete the pattern, which is typical of the growing tendency to realism and pictorial effect that characterises the modern textile art of Japan.

The Museum possesses a few objects illustrative of non-Japanese weaving and embroidery in Japan. These are chiefly models,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 42.

on a small scale, of embroidered coats worn by the Ainu ; one of them<sup>1</sup> (1610), given by Miss Andrews, is exhibited. The Ainu are the predecessors of the Japanese. They are a little taller than the latter and inclined to hairiness ; they appear to have Caucasian affinities. They now number about 18,000, and are found in Hokkaidō or Yezo, the most northern of the Japanese islands, in the Kurile Isles and in the southern part of the island of Sakhalin, all of which are under Japanese rule.

<sup>1</sup> The rest of these models, and a few examples of Ainu weaving may be seen on application at the Students' Room in the Department of Textiles. See also *The Ainu of Japan*, by the Rev. John Batchelor.

## I.—WOVEN FABRICS.

THERE are many kinds of silk-weaving with which the Japanese are acquainted, some of remote and others of comparatively recent origin. One of the most ancient is a thin stuff known as *usumono*<sup>1</sup> ("thin object"), which is said to have been introduced into Japan, at the beginning of the 3rd century A.D., from Shinra (a kingdom of Korea); it was imitated by Japanese weavers shortly after this time. The production of *sha* (silk gauze) dates from the same time, if we may believe native testimony (see 143 (7)). The art of weaving a species of plain and figured silk gauze, in the style of the Ming dynasty (1368-1643), was first taught the people of the town of Sakai by Chinese weavers, who came over in the Tenshō period (1573-91).<sup>2</sup> In the Genna period (1615-23) Chinese weavers came to Sakai and made there figured gauze having gold thread for the weft. The coarse stuff known as *tsumugi* or *momen-tsumugi* (see 144 (4)), formerly of cotton and later of silk, is of unknown origin, but mention is made of a robe of this material, belonging to the Emperor Shōmu (d. 748), in one of the registries of the temple known as the Tōdai-ji. A Kiōto weaver, at an unknown date before the end of the 15th century, invented a species of silk-weaving to which the name *ori-iro* ("woven in colour") has been given. It is made by a combination of two differently coloured threads, which give a monochrome effect. *Seigō* ("corded silk") appears to date from the 11th century. In a book published in the Yenkū period (1069-73) this form of silk-weaving is stated to have originated a little before this time. There are two kinds of *seigō*. In one both the warp and the weft threads are of corded silk. In the other corded silk is used only for the warp threads. *Seigō* (see 146 (10

<sup>1</sup> *Kōgei Shirō*, Part I. (see list of books at the end of this guide); it is the chief authority for the information given in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> The method of reckoning time in periods of a few years' duration (*nengō*, lit. "year-appellation") was introduced from China in 645 A.D., and persists to this day.



and 13) and 147 (1) ) was often used for summer Court robes. The manufacture of this stuff was abandoned soon after the commencement of the Meiji epoch (1868-1911). Under the Empress Jingō (3rd century A.D.) Korean weavers came over to Japan and first wove (so it is said) the stuff known as *aya* (see Plate I., 148 (2) and 151 (2) ), of which mention has already been made in the account given of the *Kemmotsuchō* of the Empress Kōmiō. A thick brocade, known as *nishiki* (see 152 (4) and 155 (15 and 17) ), woven with floral and other patterns in silks of different colours, is held to be of foreign origin. Hence the term *kara-nishiki* (" foreign *nishiki* "), which was first applied to the style of *nishiki* introduced by Korean immigrant weavers in the 5th century. A weaver of Kiriū, Ishida Kiūya, in the Tempō period (1830-43), invented a new kind of *nishiki*, whose peculiarity is the use of corded threads for the weft. It is called *yorito-ori* or *atsu-ita-ori*. *Kambata* is described as a brocade similar to *nishiki*. Nothing is known about its origin. *Hakata-ori* is a thick and stiff textile with stripes, or both stripes and raised pattern. It owes its name to the fact of its having been first produced in Japan by a weaver of Hakata, in the Tembun period (1532-54). Another name for *Hakata-ori* is *kara-ori* (" foreign weaving "), on account of its derivation from a Chinese stuff (see 166 (Plate VI.) and 148 (4) ). *Kinran*, or brocade made with narrow strips of gilt paper (see 167 (3), 146 (12 and 15), and 156 (1) ), was first taught the people of Sakai by Chinese weavers in the Tenshō period (1573-91). Until recently, Kiōto was the only town in Japan to manufacture this stuff. Some very fine *kinran* was produced there in the Tenna period (1681-83). *Ginran* is the name given to brocades of this class where silvered strips are used instead of gilt. These strips, whether gilt or silvered, were either woven with silk threads so as to produce a flat surface, or else wound round such threads.

*Donsu*, a damask, was introduced to Sakai weavers by craftsmen from China, about the same time as *kinran* (see 159 (1), 142 (5), and 147 (2 and 5) ). Later on, a weaver of Kiōto made a species of *donsu*, called *shichin-donsu* (or *shuchin-donsu*, see 157 (4) ), with a design of floral medallions. Also in the Tenshō period a Kiōto craftsman introduced the weaving of satin (*shusu*) somewhat after the Chinese style; and in the Keichō period (1596-1614) *rinzu*, a very fine kind of satin damask (see 168 (8) ), also in the Chinese style, was woven at Kiōto.

*Higaki-rinzu* owes its name to the design, common at this period, of a wooden fence (*higaki*) and chrysanthemums (*kiku*). Perhaps this design resembled part of that on 1037, a modern piece of stencilled silk crape, given by Col. E. F. Strange.

*Kōhaku*, a silk stuff corresponding very closely to what is now known as taffeta (*see* 170 (1) and 171 (3)), dates from the Tenna period (1681-83). Kiōto was the first town to make it, but in the Bunkwa period (1804-16) the town of Kiriū began to produce *kōhaku* of a somewhat inferior type.

Besides silk the Japanese employ several other materials for weaving purposes. Fibre cloth (*nuno*) has been in use from an immemorial antiquity. Two kinds are known:—(1) *taye* or *shiro-taye*, woven with threads derived from the fibres of the bark of the *kōdzu* (paper mulberry), and (2) *asa-nuno*, woven with threads derived from the fibres of hemp. Cotton cloth (*momen-nuno*) appears to have been manufactured in Japan since the middle of the 16th century.<sup>1</sup>

The first figured cloth said to have been made in Japan bears the name of *shidzuri*. The warp consists of hempen or other similar thread derived from bark fibres, which are variously dyed so as to produce striped patterns when combined with the weft threads. Woollen cloth (*kamo* or *origamo*) is said to have been first introduced into Japan in 554, in the form of a suit given by the King of Kudara (one of the three kingdoms of Korea) to the Emperor Kimmei. *Kamo* was at first woven in Japan from goats' wool mixed with cotton thread. A later method, started in Echigo province, was to use rabbits' wool instead of goats' wool. In the Keichō period (1596-1614) the European style of weaving woollen cloth was commenced in Kiōto. For about a hundred years these industries have been extinct. Crape (*chirimen*) has long been known in Japan (*see* 1274, an embroidered *fukusa*). The *Heihan-ki* (a record of military regulations), dated the 22nd day of the third month, Hōgen III. (1158), states that the ambassador wore an undergarment of crape on the day of the festival of the Iwashimidzu temple. This

<sup>1</sup> The cotton seed seems to have been imported into Japan from India at a very early date; but the cotton plant gradually disappeared owing to bad cultivation, and not until the 16th century was it reintroduced, through Portuguese agency. (Report of the Japanese Commission at the Paris Exhibition of 1878, Vol. II., p. 87.)

gives us a *terminus ad quem* for the commencement of the manufacture of crape. But at what date it actually started is not at present ascertainable. At a later period the industry was given up, and was not restored until the Tenshō period (1573-91), after the reintroduction of this stuff by Chinese weavers coming to Sakai. A large quantity of *chirimen*, both striped and figured, was made in the Tenna period (1681-83).

Most of the above-cited examples of Japanese woven fabrics are taken from the extensive collection<sup>1</sup> (140 to 265) made by Ninagawa Noritane, an eminent Japanese archæologist, and completed by the Austrian traveller and archæologist, Von Siebold; the whole of this collection has been described and tentatively dated by these experts. But the student may like to note a few other Japanese stuffs in the Museum illustrating different types of Japanese weaving. An example of *seigō*, woven for summer Court robes, is shown (266); it resembles the two examples in the Ninagawa collection already referred to. One of the oldest pieces of *nishiki* (a species of silk brocade) on exhibition is 270, a gift from Mr. Sydney Vacher; it is part of a Buddhist priest's robe, and has a pattern of "phœnix" (*hōō*) medallions, conventional flowers and cloud-forms; we may ascribe it to the 17th century. To about the same date may be ascribed a Buddhist priest's vestment<sup>2</sup> (271), composed of 48 pieces of *nishiki*; and a fragment<sup>3</sup> (272) of *nishiki*, woven for such a vestment or for an altar-cover, which has for its pattern a *kirin* amid rocks and waves. Two other excellent examples of this stuff, and woven for the same purpose as those just mentioned, are 273 and 274, the first dating from the 18th century and the other, apparently, a little earlier. The latter has the familiar "phœnix" (*hōō*) and *kiri* pattern, and the former is woven with a medley of religious and symbolical objects, including *hagoromo* (robes of the *tennin* or Buddhist angels) and incense-burners. An 18th century waist-sash (*obi*),<sup>4</sup> with a pattern of the *Genji-mon*, illustrates a different type of brocade (275, Plate VIII.).

Of *kinran*, 283 may be selected as a good example; it probably dates from the 19th century, and has for pattern a repetition of

<sup>1</sup> The frames containing the examples cited in the text are mostly ranged together in Room 79.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 41.



the *kotobuki* character ("long life") on a fret diaper. Another example of *kinran* is the gift of Mr. W. E. Manners. This is a rectangular piece (269), woven for temple use; it is probably part of a *nō* dancer's robe, and dates from the 18th or early 19th century. The pattern, in gilt paper strips on black silk, consists of dragons grasping sacred jewels, and the "three commas" (*mitsu-domoye*),<sup>1</sup> on a ground of lightning fret. A child's tunic (*saruko*)<sup>2</sup>, given by Dr. W. L. Hildburgh (1477), may also be noted as illustrating *kinran* weaving; it is about a century old. Other examples of *kinran* are: 284, which has the familiar pattern of the *takaramono*, or treasures of the Gods of Luck<sup>3</sup>; 285, which is woven with two floral badges; and 286, which shows varieties of the "comma" motive. A small fragment (297, Plate V.), which has the curious pattern of cocks on drums,<sup>4</sup> combines *kinran* with *kara-ori*; it may be ascribed to the 18th century.

Of Japanese damask two kinds, *donsu* and *rinzu*, have been referred to above, the latter having the finer texture of the two. In 304 we have a specimen of what is known as *ayaji donsū* ("donsu with an *aya* ground"). Other examples of *donsu* worth noting are 305, which is woven with a repeat of clematis badges, and 306, which has a beautiful pattern of peonies and chrysanthemums. The latter, which was probably woven for a lady's robe, is the finest specimen of *donsu* in the Collection. All the above examples of *donsu* and *rinzu* are products of the 19th century. A large 18th century fragment of a *nō* dancer's robe (328, Plate VIII.), with a pattern of swastikas, clouds and conventional flowers, combines damask-weaving with brocading; it has an *aya* ground.

Velvets (*birōdo*) were, as we have seen, among the presents brought back by the Embassy of 1584-5. They were first made in Japan in the Keian period (1648-51), after the "foreign" style.<sup>5</sup> Velvets, partly uncut, of a pictorial character, known as *birōdo-yūzen*,<sup>6</sup> are a still later invention (see 840, Plate XI.). They are used as a ground for picture patterns, and are partly painted or

<sup>1</sup> See p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> See Part II.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> Probably European is meant (*Kōgei Shirō*).

<sup>6</sup> Named after Miyazaki Yūzen, a dyer and designer of textile fabrics (about 1720).

dyed, and partly cut. An example of the method of making velvet is shown in a panel (84I, Plate XII.) given by Messrs. Pare and Arthur, which has a pattern of peonies, sparrows in flight and a crouching tiger; the copper wires, over which the silk pile is woven, have not been withdrawn, and the loops to form the pile are only cut in parts. Both these panels date from the 19th century.

We are indebted to Mr. Luther Hooper for a full description of the first example (840), which he has specially studied. Mr. Hooper writes:—

“ It is a panel of exquisitely woven silk velvet and is in many respects a very remarkable work. The surface, for the most part, consists of uncut velvet raised from a pile warp by means of ungrooved wires (terry velvet). The beautifully drawn and vividly coloured design is very simple and represents a group of domestic poultry. The surrounding border, separated from the panel by a narrow line of blue—the colour of the ground web—is decorated with a few floral ornaments executed in cut pile. This ornamentation is very accurately cut and must have been executed freely by the artist with a very sharp, pointed knife. The picture on the panel is also worked in cut and uncut velvet, but the extraordinary characteristic of this specimen is the way in which the changing colours—ten in all—are woven in and substituted for the ordinary silk of dull gold-tinted pile. The changes of coloured silk thread in the pile, which must have been very difficult to effect, are sometimes made for even a tiny spot of light in a chicken’s eye or at the tip of its little wing or toe. An examination of the reverse side of the stuff shows that the different coloured threads are so knotted at the back to the pile threads as to take their place on the wire when the pile is raised at the front; as soon as another colour is required it is tied in at the back and woven in in a similar way. This ‘warp brocading,’ as it might be called, must have been extremely difficult to do accurately and must have needed almost magical delicacy of manipulation to accomplish.”

Tapestry-weaving in coloured silks has been carried on in Japan for at least 300 years, though certain Japanese authorities insist on a much earlier date. It is a link between ordinary weaving and embroidery. The warp threads are stretched on a frame, and the weft threads are then put in, and pushed into their

places with the fingers or a comb. The weft threads only cover short spaces with the various colours used to make the pattern, instead of being thrown across the loom by means of one or more shuttles. Japanese tapestry, known as *tsudzure-ori* ("patched weaving"), is identical with the Chinese *k'o-ssü*, and differs from European tapestry in its much finer texture. There is a fine example (910, Plate XIII.) in the Museum in the form of a vestment of a Buddhist priest, which dates from the early 19th century. It is tapestry-woven, after the manner above described, in coloured silks and gold thread, with a scene representing the sky of the "Pure Land" (*Jōdo*) or the Western Paradise of Amida. Another example (911) of *tsudzure-ori*, dating from the 19th century, has a design of tree trunks and plum blossoms, after Ogata Kōrin (1653-1716). European tapestries of the 17th century are reported to exist in Japan, but tapestry-weaving on the European scale has not been practised there until modern times.<sup>1</sup>

Louis Gonse notes<sup>2</sup> that Hideyoshi (d. 1598) caused to be executed for Mayeda Toshiie, Prince of Kaga, a large panel of tapestry which his descendant possesses to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Of late years a Mr. Kawashima of Kiōto has copied a Gobelins tapestry. See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Japan," 11th ed., Vol. XV., p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Art Japonais*, p. 280.

## II.—PRINTED, DYED AND PAINTED FABRICS.

DYED fabrics have long been known in Japan. Many specimens (including silks) exist in the Shōsō-in at Nara, and a formidable list of dyed cloths made of different bark fibres occurs in the admittedly ancient *Kemmotsuchō*. The patterns on some of the Shōsō-in stuffs have been produced by the method of block-printing (*itajime*), others by "tying and dyeing" (*kōketsu* or *shibori*), and others again by the use of "resists" (the *rōketsu* method, the "resist" consisting of wax). The Victoria and Albert Museum possesses dyed fabrics of comparatively recent origin only. The earliest is the *sarasa* fragment to be noticed a little later. A piece of silk embroidery<sup>1</sup> of the Genroku period (1688–1703) and two *kimono*, dating from the late 18th or early 19th century, are partially decorated by the "tying and dyeing" (*shibori*) process. But most of the examples of dyed fabrics are not earlier than the 19th century.

Printing from blocks, as done in Japan, is of two kinds, positive and negative.<sup>2</sup> The second is the one preferably followed. In both, certain parts of the block are hollowed out so as to leave the rest in relief. These relief portions constitute the pattern, not only in all cases of positive block-printing, but also in those cases of negative block-printing where it is desired to leave the pattern plain on a coloured ground. If the user of the negative process wishes to leave the ground plain and to have the pattern only in colour, the latter is formed out of the hollows, so that its outlines coincide with theirs. In the positive process, the relief portions are charged with colour and pressed against the cloth. But in negative block-printing, they are left free of colour, and the printing is done from the hollows. The method followed is to bore through these to the other side in such a way as to give funnel-shaped openings from that side. After the block has been varnished to make it waterproof, it is handed over to the printer,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> For a full account of these processes, see G. A. Audsley, *The Ornamental Arts of Japan*, Vol. I., Part II., pp. 7–9.

together with a piece of wood of larger size than the block, which has been flattened and planed on one face. The cloth to be printed is stretched over the smooth surface of the plain block, and the other is placed, face downwards, on the fabric. The two pieces of wood are then tightly clamped together. The next step is to pour the dye through the funnel-shaped holes until all the depressions are filled. In this way the exposed parts of the cloth are at once saturated, while the unexposed, which are squeezed tightly against the relief parts of the upper block, are left untouched. The two blocks, still connected, are then turned over, and the surplus stain is allowed to run out. Finally, the blocks are separated, and the fabric is taken away to be dried and fixed.

A "resist" is a material with which the pattern on a fabric is covered to make it proof against the action of a dye. The resist is frequently applied by the process of stencilling. Wax is no longer used. After the application the piece is completely immersed in a dye-vat, and left there until sufficient dye is absorbed. The subsequent washing of the whole fabric removes the resist, thus making the pattern appear in contrast on a uniformly coloured ground. For examples of resist work see 970 (*kimono*), 1201 (fragment of Genroku embroidery), 1222 and 1223 (two *kimono*).<sup>1</sup>

A curious form of "resist" dyeing is practised at two small Japanese towns, Narumi and Arimatsu.<sup>2</sup> The fabrics treated in this way are known as *Narumi-shibori* (*shibori* = "tied" or "knotted"). The European term for the process is "tie and dye work." Two pieces of silk crape, of the same size, are placed over one another, and parts of the fabric, at intervals of half an inch, are pressed upwards into the shape of little cones by means of a pointed stick. Waxed silk threads are then wrapped round the cones, thus producing small tufts or knots on the surface of the double crape. The fabric is now ready for the dye-vat. The dyeing produces a shrinkage, which leaves the stuff covered permanently with a number of raised points except where the method of stretching is resorted to. The next step is to unwind the silk threads. Wherever these have been in contact with the fabric they have served the purpose of a resist against the action of the dye. Thus is given a surface marked by variations of colour as well as by conical eminences. Other kinds of silk stuffs as well

<sup>1</sup> Excepting 970, all these examples are referred to again in Chap. III., as they combine embroidery with "resist" dyeing.

<sup>2</sup> C. Dresser, *Japan*, pp. 447-449.



as common cotton cloths are subjected to a similar process. If the fabric is stretched after the dyeing a flat, instead of a wrinkled surface, is produced. The pattern formed by this process consists of groups of diamond-shaped figures, each marked with a coloured spot in the middle (see 970 (*kimono*), 1200, Plate XVI. (fragment of Genroku embroidery), 1222 (*kimono*), and 1224 (hanging)).<sup>1</sup>

Patterns may also be produced by means of "discharges." This term is given to chemical substances which are used to destroy the colouring matter in fabrics that have been dyed. There are two methods of applying the "discharge": (1) The negative process of block-printing, the "discharge" being poured through the holes in the block; and (2) the rubbing of it into the fabric with a brush and a stencil-plate. The fabric is afterwards washed and dried. This process is of modern origin.

Stencilling is another method of producing designs on fabrics, which is practised largely in Japan. The stencil-plates (*katagami*) consist of tough paper waterproofed with *shibu* (the juice of unripe persimmons) (see 1011, Plate XIV., 1012 and 1013, given by Mr. Wilson Crewdson). The stencil-plate, out of which the pattern has been cut, is held together by an irregular network of human hair; it is laid on the fabric, which, together with the stencil-plate, is completely covered with a resist. The fabric is next placed in the dye-vat, and the resist is afterwards removed by steaming. The colour will be found to have stained all except those spaces that have been in contact with the resist. To produce a coloured pattern on a white ground, the portions cut out of the stencil-plate must be fixed on the fabric, the whole of which must be covered with a resist and then dyed. In this latter case the spaces under the cut out pieces, not having a resist immediately over them, will necessarily absorb the dye, which cannot affect the rest of the fabric. For examples of stencilling in the Museum see 1035 (Plate XIV.), a cotton towel printed with the subject of "The Moon behind the Trees," after Hiroshige I. (1796-1858); and 1036 (Plate XV.), which has for its design the story of Kwakkio.

In such cases, where more detail and several colours are involved, some of the work would be stencilled in with the brush.

The Museum possesses a small piece of cotton fabric painted by hand with a pattern of rosettes and lozenge diaper, which once formed part of the lining of a purse. Mr. Wilson Crewdson, the

<sup>1</sup> Excepting 970, all these examples are referred to again in Chap. III. as they combine embroidery with "resist" dyeing.



donor of this interesting textile, dates it about 1500.<sup>1</sup> Stuffs of this kind are known as *kikisarasa*, "painted *sarasa*" (*sarasa* is a name for calico or chintz, and is said to be derived from that of a South Indian city). An illustrated Japanese work by Hōrai-sanjin, entitled *Sarasa Benran*, published in 1808, describes at length the various processes of preparing and painting *sarasa* that were current when the author wrote a century ago, and illustrates the Museum specimen. The method of painting *sarasa*, according to Hōrai-sanjin, is as follows. First of all, some *shibu* (juice of unripe persimmons) must be distilled, and then applied with a flat brush to a piece of *kanakin* (fine cotton cloth) which has been laid on a wooden board. As soon as the *kanakin* is dry, the painting can begin.

The author then describes the various paints which may be used, and how to prepare them—*shōyēnji* (a dark red paint), *airō* (a cake of blue paint), and *shiō* (gamboge). Some *sarasa* are painted with a black ground, either brilliant or dull. The former is produced by painting with blue first, and then covering it with black, while for the latter the process is reversed. White designs on a coloured ground are made by using resists. Buckwheat powder and fine powder of alum are sifted through a fine silk sieve. Equal quantities of these materials are then mixed with water and heated into a paste. This serves as a resist. Mr. Crewdson describes the process<sup>2</sup> of blowing a resist of rice paste on to the fabric through a sort of brass funnel. The spaces not covered by the resist are then filled with various dyes. As soon as these are fixed the resist is then steamed off. The name for this class of work is *fuki-ye* ("blown pictures"). It is supposed to have been introduced into Japan by the Dutch. The colours as well as the resist can be blown on to the fabric by the *fukiye* process. In *Sarasa Benran* appears a very curious illustration of a Dutch woman with tools for making *fukiye*. Hōrai-sanjin describes a method of producing *fukiye* which was invented by him: "If one desires to paint a design like *karahana* (a conventional five-petalled flower), a piece of paper will be cut in that shape and placed on the stuff. When a minute design is required, draw it with a resist over which sprinkle rice-bran through a rough sieve, then blow it with any colour desired. When a fine blowing (of colour) is required, use rice-powder instead of rice-bran."

<sup>1</sup> W. Crewdson, Plate opp. p. 22 and p. 25; see p. 16 of this guide.

<sup>2</sup> W. Crewdson, pp. 16 and 17.

### III.—EMBROIDERIES.

JAPANESE EMBROIDERY has, undoubtedly, a Chinese or Korean origin, and was practised at a very early date. Mention is made of embroidery (*nui*) in Japanese records as early as the reign of the Emperor Buretsu<sup>1</sup> (499-506). Several references to embroidery appear in the *Nihongi* (completed in the year 720). The introduction of the Buddhist religion into Japan from Korea, which took place about the middle of the 6th century, gave great encouragement to this art. Some of the earliest extant pieces of Japanese embroidery (if they are not foreign importations) are the *nui-botoke* ("embroidered Buddhas").<sup>2</sup> The *Nihongi* makes mention of this kind of work: "13th year (605), Summer, 4th month, 1st day. The Empress (Suiko) commanded the Prince Imperial (Shōtoku Taishi), the Oho-omi, and also the Princes and Ministers, all to make a vow together, and therewithal to begin to make copper and embroidery images of Buddha, sixteen feet high, one of each."<sup>3</sup>

The attention of the student has already been drawn to the ancient embroidery known as the *Tenjūkoku-mandara*, ascribed to the 7th century, which has been proved by documentary evidence to be of Japanese origin; also to the Kwanju-ji hanging, whose Chinese origin is generally admitted.

The two oldest examples of Japanese embroidery in the Museum (1200—Plate XVI., and 1201), both dating from the Genroku period (1688-1703), have been already described in the introduction.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Kokka*, Vol. XXI., p. 3 (art. by Seiichi Taki, on the *Relation between Embroidery and Painting in Ancient Japan*).

<sup>2</sup> *Kokka*, Vol. XXI., illustration on p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> The above quotation is taken from Mr. W. G. Aston's translation (*Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*. London Japan Society, *Transactions*, Vol. II., p. 133).

<sup>4</sup> See p. 17.

They combine embroidery in silk and gold thread with "resist" dyeing. Other examples of this combination of processes may be noted in the case of two robes (1222 and 1223), also noticed elsewhere in this guide.<sup>1</sup> A hanging or cover (1224),<sup>2</sup> of silk damask, with a pattern of peonies and floral badges has been similarly treated. Embroidery may also be used to embellish patterns painted by hand, as in the case of a woman's silk *kimono* (1225, Plate XVII.), where the main pattern, representing poem-cards, is painted, with the addition of a little silk and gold thread embroidery, besides powderings of gold dust, to produce the subordinate details; the poem-cards are of two kinds (*tanzaku* = "long 12 inches," and *shikishi* = "spread paper"), decorated with trees, flowering plants, birds and insects. This robe dates from the late 18th or early 19th century.

Kiōto became the Imperial capital in 794, and from an early period enjoyed a very high reputation for its embroideries. The embroiderers appear always to have been men specially trained. To a comparatively small extent was the art a ladies' accomplishment cultivated within the domestic circle.

The objects on which the embroiderers of Kiōto lavished their greatest skill were (1) *kimono*, the loose wide-sleeved robes worn by both sexes; (2) *obi*, or long and broad sashes wound round the waist; and (3) *fukusa*. These last were richly woven squares, sometimes hung with tassels, and used for covering ceremonial presents. The present was always conveyed in a lacquered box, over which a *fukusa* was thrown. The receiver of the present returned the box with the *fukusa* to the donor. This custom still exists.

The only example of an embroidered *obi* on exhibition is one given by Mrs. Watt (1226, Plate XVIII.); it is worked, in floss silks and gold thread, with a realistic pattern of butterflies, and bunches of peonies tied by ribbons. The date of this embroidery is not earlier than the 19th century.

The Museum possesses several examples of *fukusa*. One of the best, which is fitted with tassels and mounted on red silk crape, is 1247 (Plate XIX.); it has a pattern of Ōsaka Castle and the surrounding landscape, in gold thread embroidery on a dark blue satin ground.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 20, 31.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 40.

The designs for embroideries were often those of celebrated artists,<sup>1</sup> e.g., Kano Tanyū (1602-74), Ogata Kōrin (1653-1716), and Hishikawa Moronobu (d. 1714?). In the 18th century the art of embroidery, especially in the case of *fukusa*, appears to have reached a high point of excellence, both in execution and design. During the 19th century much good work was done, equal to any in the preceding age.

Most of the embroideries to be seen in European and American collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, belong to this period.

The following stitches<sup>2</sup> are specially characteristic of Japanese work, and are frequently employed :—(1) Long and regular stitches, usually running diagonally, fall side by side in nearly parallel fashion, so as to produce a satin effect. Both floss and twisted silks are used. For excellent examples of this kind of work, see two silk gauze hangings (1256 and 1257). The pattern on the former shows a cock and a hen beside a stream, with tree-peonies and chrysanthemums; that on the latter consists of a crane beside a stream, with tree-peonies and an asarum (*aoi*) plant. (2) Long and short stitches are fitted in between each other so as to give the appearance of overlapping. The general effect is that of a bird's plumage. A fine floss silk is generally used. There is a magnificent example of this kind of work in the Museum—a large silk hanging<sup>3</sup> (1264), embroidered with a forest scene; an eagle seizes a small animal, while a group of monkeys appears sporting below. Another very beautiful example is a *fukusa* (1265, Plate XVIII.), probably dating from the 18th century, which is worked with a group of cranes; the effect of the cranes' feathers is extremely realistic. (3) Gold and silk threads are laid side by side and stitched down with smaller threads of thin silk, instead of being drawn through the fabric and carried along underneath. The gold used consists frequently of strips of gilt paper twisted round a cotton or silk core. This is known as "laid work" or "couching." The Japanese employ "couching" to a much greater extent than do the embroiderers of other nations, including the Chinese. For examples, see a *kimono* (1272), two

<sup>1</sup> So too were the designs for woven and printed fabrics. See p. 29 for an example of *tsudzure-ori*, woven after a design by Ogata Kōrin.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Audsley, Vol. I., Part I., pp. 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> Bought in Kiōto; it is said to have come from the Chion-in, a temple in that city.

*fukusa* (1273 and 1274), and a satin panel (1275). Of these 1272 (Plate XX.) has a pattern of carp leaping waterfalls; 1273 (Plate XXI.) is worked with lobsters; 1274 is embroidered with a sacred tortoise (*minogame*); and 1275 has for its design Ōsaka Castle and the surrounding landscape. A remarkable form of "couching" is represented by a large 18th century hanging<sup>1</sup> (1276) in the Museum Collection. The whole surface is covered with stout corded threads rolled into flat spirals and stitched with very small threads to the ground of the fabric. (4) "Knotted stitch." To effect this, the needle is drawn up at the spot where the knot is wanted, and the thread wound round it several times. Having then passed the point through the fabric close to where it was drawn up, the needle is pulled from the underside with the right hand, while the thread is held fast with the left until the knot is secured. "Knotted stitch" is used by the Japanese to cover whole pieces, unlike the European embroiderers, who only decorate small spaces in this way, generally the centres of flowers. Japanese embroidery of this kind is sometimes done with a thick twisted thread of a larger size than any to which European workers are accustomed. For an example of Japanese "knotted stitch," see a *fukusa* (1282) of the 19th century, which is embroidered with chrysanthemum badges (*kiku-mon*).

"Appliqué" (*kittsuke*) is frequently used in Japanese embroidery, but in work of a high class not to the same extent as in the embroideries of medieval and later Europe. Metal plates are sometimes applied, as in the case of a *fukusa* in the Museum (1309), where long silk tassels are fastened to such plates, which are engraved to represent chrysanthemum badges. Whole figures are often worked in silks and gold thread stitched to the ground, and moulded in relief over padding (see a *fukusa* (1310, Frontispiece)). Eyes are sometimes represented by small convex pieces of glass painted on the underside.

<sup>1</sup> Described on p. 44.



#### IV.—HANGING PICTURE-SCROLLS OR KAKEMONO.

THE name *kakemono* ("hanging objects") is given to pictures hung in the guest-room of a Japanese house. There are usually two recesses in the guest-room—the *tokonoma* and the *chigaidana*.<sup>1</sup> In the *tokonoma* there is a raised floor or *daïs*, and above this hangs the *kakemono*, either singly or in sets (there are seldom more than three to a set).<sup>2</sup> The details of the picture may be woven, or painted on silk or paper, and the picture itself mounted on paper or brocade, with a stick, often ivory-tipped, at the lower end, round which the picture can be rolled. Two strips of silk (*fūtai*) hang from the top. *Kakemono* are certainly of Chinese origin. The use of hanging-pictures, painted on silk and rolled round a stick attached to their lower end, is traceable in China as early as the 4th century A.D.<sup>3</sup> At what period they were introduced into Japan is unknown. But their use there is many centuries old. *Kakemono* are hung in Japanese temples as well as in private houses. Of the latter kind the Department of Textiles possesses several examples, all of them made in the 19th century. One of these (1430, Plate XXII.) shows a bird perched on a maple, with two others flitting about stems of chrysanthemums and other flowers. The pattern is in cut and uncut velvet. One example of a temple *kakemono*<sup>4</sup> is exhibited in Room 79; it dates from the 18th century (1431, Plate XXIII.).

<sup>1</sup> A complete Japanese guest-room, showing the *kakemono* hung in the *tokonoma*, is to be seen in the Bethnal Green Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Marcus B. Huish, *Japan and its Art*, p. 117, Plate 90 ("A Marriage Ceremony," after Toyokuni).

<sup>3</sup> Bushell, *Chinese Art*, Vol. II., p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 49.

## V.—SYMBOLISM AND LEGEND IN JAPANESE TEXTILE ART, AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE MUSEUM.

IN Japanese art, as in that of China, symbolism plays an important rôle. An intelligent appreciation of Japanese textiles involves some knowledge of at least the chief symbols with which the different fabrics are frequently woven or embroidered. Some groups of symbols, *e.g.*, the "Eight Buddhist Felicitous Emblems," which comprise the sacred wheel of the Buddha's doctrine ("the wheel of the excellent Law"), the conch shell (emblem of victory), the state umbrella (emblem of sovereignty), the canopy, the flower (usually the lotus), the pair of fishes (emblem of fertility), the vase, and the "Buddha's entrails," "endless knot," or "lucky diagram" (consisting of interlacing lines and signifying longevity), are borrowed from China (*see* 1223).<sup>1</sup>

The first in this group, the sacred eight-spoked wheel,<sup>2</sup> is a frequent pattern for Buddhist priests' vestments or for altar-covers (*see* 35). Other groups of symbols are peculiar to Japan. Of the latter, that known as the *Takaramono* is a great favourite, selections from which appear on several pieces in the Museum (*see* 34 (Plate V.) and 284).<sup>3</sup> The *takaramono*, 20 in all, are a number of precious objects associated with the *Shichi-fuku-jin*, or Seven Deities of Luck (Bishamon, Benzaiten, Daikoku, Hotei, Yebisu, Jurōjin and Fukurokuju). They are sometimes depicted as borne in the *Takara-bune*, or Treasure Ship; or else Hotei or Daikoku is seen carrying them in a bag. The *takaramono* consist of the following:—A merchant's weight (*fundō*), scholar's scrolls (*makimono*), rolls of brocade (*orimono*), an anchor (*ikari*), a "cash" device enclosing a conventional four-petalled "flower-lozenge" (*shippō no uchi no*

<sup>1</sup> *See* p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> The eight spokes represent the different stages of the "Noble Eightfold Path":—(1) "Right beliefs"; (2) "Right aspirations"; (3) "Right speech"; (4) "Right acts"; (5) "Right means of livelihood"; (6) "Right endeavour"; (7) "Right mindfulness"; and (8) "Right concentration."

<sup>3</sup> *See* p. 27.

*hanabishi*), branches of coral (*sangojū*), the sacred keys (*kagi*) of the godown or storehouse of the Gods, cloves (*chōji*), the mallet (*tsuchi*) of Daikoku, a thousand *riō* (a species of coin) in a box (*koban ni hako* or *senriōbako*), a copper coin (*zeni*) and a cowry shell (*kai*), the flaming jewel of the Buddhist Law (*hōju no tama*), sometimes replaced by lions chasing the jewel (*shishidama*) or by a stand supporting several jewels, the orange-like fruit (*tachibana*), a jar (*kotsubo*) containing coral, coins or precious goods, harpsichord bridges (*kotoji*), the flat Chinese fan (*uchiwa*, emblem of authority), the lucky rain-coat (*kakuremino*, a protection against demons), the hat of invisibility (*kakuregasa*), the inexhaustible purse (*kanebukuro*) and the *hagoromo* (feather robe of the *tennin*).

Heraldic badges (*mon*), associated with the Emperor or with famous aristocratic families, are often seen on Japanese textiles. One of the most important is the badge of the *kiri* tree (*Paulownia imperialis*), one form of which was borne by the Emperor, as well by some of his exalted subjects<sup>1</sup> (see 17, Plate III.). It consists of three overlapping leaves, from which rise three flower stalks of five, seven and five blossoms respectively. The chrysanthemum (*kiku*) is the national flower, and a conventionalisation of its blossom with thirty-two petals is, like the *kiri*, an imperial badge. The badge of the Tokugawa Shōguns (1602–1867)—a ring enclosing three heart-shaped leaves of the asarum (*aoi*), whose points converge towards the centre—appears on several pieces in the Museum (see 167 (3), a piece of *kinran*, in the Ninagawa and Von Siebold Collection). It is impossible here to consider further the extensive variety of floral and other badges which distinguish the great families of Japan. This account will be confined to those which figure on textiles in the Museum.

On a hanging of silk damask<sup>2</sup> (1224), dating from the 19th century, are embroidered the following badges, which in this case are used purely as ornaments :—(1) The feather-fan (*ha-uchiwa*), associated with temples of Kotohira.<sup>3</sup> Kotohira is a Shintō divinity who was identified by the propagandists of Buddhism in Japan with the Buddhist divinity Kompira (Sanskrit *Kumbhira*), hailing from India. Kompira is a god of gigantic stature, with a thousand heads and a thousand arms. In India he is personified by the crocodile, and in

<sup>1</sup> The Oda, Toyotomi, Ashikaga, Uyesugi and Hosokawa.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Ströhl, *Japanisches Wappenbuch*, p. 40.

Japan he has the tortoise for his attribute. (2) Three feather-fans (*ha-uchiwa*). (3) A pair of apricot-leaves (*giōyō*), borne by the *daimiō* family of Nabeshima (Hasuike and Ogi branches).<sup>1</sup>

A few Museum pieces (*e.g.*, 5)<sup>2</sup> are decorated with a peculiar diaper known as *Bishamon-kikkō*. It is made up of twelve-sided figures—an upright with two projections, all three terminating in a triangle—which appear in Japanese art on certain parts of the armour of Bishamon, one of the *Shichi-fuku-jin*, or Seven Deities of Luck. Hence the name. Bishamon is also one of the *Jū-ni-ō* (the Twelve *Dēva*<sup>3</sup> Kings). He is depicted in full armour, with a small shrine or pagoda in his right hand, and a lance in his left.

One very interesting set of devices, known as the *Genji-mon*, head the chapters of the *Genji Monogatari*, a famous Japanese romance, written in the year 1004 by a lady of the Court, Murasaki-shikibu. A silk brocade<sup>4</sup> in the Museum, 275 (Plate VIII.), is woven with four of these, *i.e.*—

(Chap. 18.) *Matsukaze* ("wind in the pines").

(Chap. 45.) *Shii no moto* ("under the *shii* tree").

(Chap. 6.) *Suyetsumu-hana* ("saffron flower").

(Chap. 8.) *Hana no yen* ("flower festival").

One little fragment of brocade (286)<sup>5</sup> displays several devices of a symbolical character. These are variations of the so-called "comma" motive, signifying good luck, which include the "three commas" (*mitsu-domoye*), which Raiden, the thunder-god, has marked on his drum, and the *mitsu-komochi-domoye* ("three pregnant commas," three large "commas" enclosing smaller ones). The "comma" motive is a development from the *in* and *yō* (Chinese *yin* and *yang*, the creative monad). *In* is the female principle in nature, and stands also for earth and darkness. *Yō* is the male principle, heaven and light. The *in* and *yō* are shown on the piece in question.

The Japanese are particularly successful in the portraiture of animal life, and animals frequently appear on their textile fabrics, as well as on their other artistic productions. The fauna of Japanese art consists of creatures belonging to the world of myth, besides those

<sup>1</sup> Ströhl, pp. 124 and 125.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Belonging to the pantheon of Indian Buddhism; *dēva* means a denizen of the heavenly regions.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 27.

belonging to the world of reality. Although they are often introduced merely to please the eye, all or most of them possess a symbolic value. Thus, lobsters are symbolical of honourable old age, their bent backs suggesting the infirmity of the greybeard (1273, Plate XXI.). Cranes, as with the Chinese, symbolise longevity, and, in Chinese fashion again, pairs of mandarin ducks convey the idea of conjugal fidelity (*see* 23, Plate III.).<sup>1</sup> The chief mythical animals which Japan has borrowed from China are the dragon (*riō* or *riū*), the so-called "phoenix" (*hōō*, corresponding to the Chinese *fêng-huang*), and the so-called "unicorn" (*kirin*, the counterpart of the Chinese *ch'i-lin*).

The dragon in the legendary lore of medieval Europe (*e.g.*, in the well-known story of St. George) is wholly a principle of evil and darkness and supernatural hate. But the dragon of the Far East is richer in its significations. The fearful and the horrible do not sum up the concepts for which it stands. Power and wonder, providence and wisdom, mystery and magical transformation are all involved in the idea of the dragon. There are many orders of dragons, such as the celestial dragons which guard the mansions of the gods, the dragons which produce storms (*see* 38, Plate VIII.),<sup>2</sup> the dragons which protect buried treasure, and, one of the chief, the yellow dragon which appeared to Fuh Hsi (Japanese Fukki), the mythical ancestor of the Chinese nation, and gave him a scroll inscribed with mystic characters as the sage was gazing on the Yang-tse River.

The dragon is a monster described as a mixture of camel, deer, bull, tiger and other animals, with a scale-covered body. The ordinary Japanese dragon has only three claws to each foot, although the imperial Chinese dragon, which has five claws, also appears in the art of Japan. Furthermore, the Japanese dragon has a longer and narrower head than the Chinese. The commonest representation of this creature shows him chasing flaming jewels amid clouds. The latter are fabled to be the metamorphosis of the dragon's breath. The flaming jewel (*tama*)—another Chinese motive—often stands for the great pearl of the Buddha's doctrine (the *mani* of the Indian and Tibetan Buddhists, as in the well-known formula *om mani padme hūm*, "Hail! jewel in the lotus, amen!"). It also conveys the idea of purity. Where, as on a frag-

<sup>1</sup> *See* p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *See* p. 19.



ment of a Chinese imperial robe belonging to the Museum, the dragon is seen grasping the jewel, the latter has a clear reference to Buddhism ; the imperial power, symbolised by the dragon, protecting the Dharma to which formerly it was adverse.<sup>1</sup> But the flaming jewels pursued by dragons—the tritest of Chinese art motives—are simply magic jewels bringing good luck.<sup>2</sup> The so-called “ phoenix ” (*hōō*) is, like the dragon, a creature of composite nature ; a long-tailed and gorgeously coloured bird, part pheasant, part peacock. It corresponds to the *fêng-huang* of the Chinese (*fêng* is the male and *huang* is the female), which “ is one of the four supernatural creatures of Chinese myth ; its feathers are red, azure, yellow, white and black, the five colours corresponding to the five principal virtues ; while the Chinese ideograms for uprightness, humanity, virtue, honesty and sincerity are impressed in various parts of its body ; its cries are symbolic, its appearance precedes the advent of virtuous rulers, and it has honoured with its visits the courts of several of the Chinese Emperors.”<sup>3</sup> When the *hōō* is associated with the *kiri* (*Paulownia*), the whole is symbolical of the imperial power (see 1222). The so-called “ unicorn ” (*kirin*) is another beast of mixed nature (see 272).<sup>4</sup> It has a deer’s body, a dragon’s or horse’s head, a horse’s legs and hoofs, and the tail of an ox or lion ; it also carries a single horn and is often surrounded with flames. There are, however, several hornless varieties.

In the example cited a *kirin* is seen walking on the sea ; above is the sun, amid clouds, marked with the character *hi* (“ sun ”) ; in front is a lucky sceptre (*niōi*). This piece has been woven for a Buddhist priest’s vestment or for an altar-cover, and dates from the 18th century. Like the *hōō*, the *kirin* is of Chinese origin (*ch’i-lin*, a compound name, of which *ch’i* stands for the male animal and *lin* for the female). Confucius (Japanese *Kōshi*) and his mother are both fabled to have seen this wonderful being, which is a paragon of virtue, harming none, and appears only during the reign of wise rulers as a lucky omen. Another creature, to which the name “ kylin ” is sometimes inaccurately applied, is the spaniel-like *shishi* or *karashishi* (“ lion ”), called in the West “ dog of Fo ” (Fo is the Chinese for Buddha). It is a Chinese importation

<sup>1</sup> Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art*, p. 592.

<sup>2</sup> *Oriental Ceramic Art*, p. 592.

<sup>3</sup> Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art*, p. 131.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 26.

and is associated with the Buddhist religion; it is frequently represented in art near waterfalls or peony-bushes (*see* 156 (1), a piece of *kinran*, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe). A creature which might, at first sight, be mistaken for the *kirin* is the *baku* ("tapir"). Three of the latter appear on a hanging of the 18th century (1276),<sup>1</sup> and one of them carries on its head the sacred jewel (*tama*) of the Buddhist Law. The *baku* has a long proboscis like an elephant's trunk, and a pair of tusks; it has also a hairy head sometimes provided with a horn, a scaly body, and a spiny backbone. This strange monster is invoked with the words "*baku kuraye*" ("devour, O *baku*"), and is said to feed upon men's bad dreams. The tortoise (*kame*) also figures in Japanese art as a symbolical animal, and conveys the idea of longevity. The "tortoise of a thousand years," known as the *minogame*, has features in common with the dragon, and is usually depicted with a long thick tail (*see* 1310, Frontispiece), said to begin growing when its owner is over 500 years old. It is supposed that the origin of this latter fancy lies in the fact that tortoises kept in ponds become covered with a vegetable parasitic growth recalling the *mino*, or rain-coat, of the peasants. Hence the name *minogame* ("rain-coat tortoise"). The *minogame* is sometimes shown carrying the *tama*, as on 1274.<sup>2</sup>

Allusion has been made already to a tapestry-woven vestment in the Museum<sup>3</sup> (910, Plate XIII.), which was worn by a Buddhist priest (probably of the Tendai sect, founded by Saichō in the 9th century). The pattern represents the sky of the "Pure Land" (*Jōdo*) or the Western Paradise of Amida.<sup>4</sup> Amida is the Japanese equivalent of the Sanscrit *Amitābha* ("Infinite Light"), a divinity made out of an abstraction, one of the five Celestial or *Dhyāni* Buddhas who figure so conspicuously in the so-called Northern Buddhism (the *Mahāyāna* or "Great Vehicle" school). The flying creatures there depicted are the parrot, the peacock, the crane, the "phoenix" (*hōō*), the *hiyokudori* (the two-headed bird emblematic of faithful love, embodying the spirits of Gompachi and Komurasaki<sup>5</sup>), and the *Gariō* or *Kariōbinga* (part bird, part

<sup>1</sup> *See* p. 37. The other creatures embroidered on this hanging are "phoenixes" (*hōō*) and "birds of Paradise" (*fūchō*).

<sup>2</sup> *See* p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *See* p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> *See* art. "Some illustrations of Buddhism from Japanese Pictures," by James Troup (*Japan Society: Transactions*, Vol. VIII., Plate V., between pp. 218 and 219).

<sup>5</sup> For the story of these ill-fated loves see Lord Redesdale, *Tales of Old Japan*, and Joly, *Legend in Japanese Art*.

woman, derived from one of the forms of the Hindu *Kinnara*,<sup>1</sup> a species of celestial choristers).

The Buddha is reported to have commanded his *bhikshu* ("mendicants") to clothe themselves in rags as a mark of their humility and unworldliness. The Southern Buddhist priesthood still dons the simple yellow robe indicative of its voluntary poverty. But in the Northern School a compromise has long been effected. In such countries as Japan the priests often wear vestments of rich silk brocades. To make them appear as rags the custom is followed of cutting these garments into several pieces, usually 48 (the traditional number of pieces in the Buddha's robe), and of then stitching them together. When a priest's vestment was tapestry-woven, the same end was attained in virtue of the mosaic effect of the *tsudzure*. Six squares appear on the vestments of Buddhist priests. They are known as *shiten* ("Four Heavens"), their number corresponding to the six Chinese characters for the words "Namu Amida Butsu" ("Hail! Amida Buddha!"). It was formerly the custom to consecrate the *shiten* at the altar before sewing them on.

In the case of the Museum specimen above described these squares are woven in and dyed red. Each bears the "three stars" (*mitsuboshi*), the badge of the Matsura family of Hirado (Hizen province).

A very interesting vestment<sup>2</sup> (271) of a Buddhist priest, which dates back about two centuries, was recently given to the Museum by Mr. W. B. Chamberlin.<sup>3</sup> The *shiten* are woven, in gilt paper strips, with figures of Buddhist divinities, including apparently the "Four Heavenly Kings" (*shi-tennō*); one of them, Bishamon (or Tamonten), with his halberd and pagoda, is clearly discernible. With the *shiten* the number of pieces in the vestment makes up the traditional 48.

Carp (*koi*) leaping waterfalls often figure in Japanese art as emblematic of perseverance, in allusion to the Chinese story of the sturgeon which swam up the Yellow River and, having crossed the rapids of *Lung Mén* ("Dragon Gate"), on the third day of the third month, became a dragon. On the boys' holiday (*tango no*

<sup>1</sup> John Griffiths, *Paintings in the Cave Temples of Ajantā*, Vol. I., Fig. 19, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Through the National Art-Collections Fund.

*sekku*, May 5th) the towns and villages of Japan are decorated with huge paper carp flying from poles, banner-fashion. "The idea is that as the carp swims up the river against the current, so will the sturdy boy, overcoming all obstacles, make his way in the world and rise to fame and fortune."<sup>1</sup> For an example of this motive see a *kimono*<sup>2</sup> (1272, Plate XX.), of embroidered silk crape, probably worn by an actor. Another robe of this class, with a similar subject for its pattern (1324), was recently given to the Museum by Mr. T. B. Clarke-Thornhill. The original owner was the famous Japanese actor Ichikawa Danjūrō, ninth of the name.

The myths and legends of the Japanese are comparable in variety and charm with those of ancient Greece. Their numerous artistic expressions show the hold they have gained over the imagination of the people. All lovers of the art of Japan are familiar with the *netsuke*, used for retaining in the girdle the cord from which hung pouches and other objects which a Japanese found it convenient to carry about his person; folklore made concrete no less to please the eye than to serve the purpose of utility. Whether in sculpture or painting, in lacquer, metalwork, or printed, woven and embroidered fabrics, the mythopœic impulse finds countless modes of realisation.

Our attention here must, necessarily, be confined to those stories and personages which are represented on textiles in the Museum.

On a small piece of brocade<sup>3</sup> (297, Plate V.), woven for a *nō* dancer's robe, which appears to date from the 18th century, there is a curious pattern representing cocks upon drum-heads. The allusion is to an old Chinese legend. In ancient times, it is said, a large drum was kept at the main gate of the imperial palace, and was beaten whenever the Emperor wished to call his soldiers together. But in the reign of the famous Yao the drum fell into disuse owing to the general peace, and fowls began to roost there, while those who had any grievance to redress would come and strike it in order to attract the attention of the officials. Thus a cock on a drum or a drum-head became an emblem of good government. This custom was introduced into Japan in the 7th

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Chamberlain, *Things Japanese*, art. "Children," p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 27.



century A.D. by the Emperor Kōtoku, who decreed that a box to receive petitions should be placed with the drum. His example was followed by the Shōguns of Kamakura.

On an embroidered velvet *fukūsa*<sup>1</sup> (1310, Frontispiece), belonging to the 19th century, the artist has cleverly portrayed the myth of the two aged spirits known as Jō and Uba. They appear standing at the foot of a pine tree, on the seashore; two cranes, with messages tied to their legs, are flying towards them. The shore is covered with pine needles, and upon it lie Jō's rake and Uba's broom; the sacred tortoise (*minogame*) crawls hard by. According to one account, Jō and Uba are the two admirals Sumiyoshi-dainiōjin and Suwa-dainiōjin, who commanded the gigantic fleet of the famous Empress Jingō (c. 200 A.D.). The more popular tradition, however, holds Jō to be the son of Izanagi, the Creator of Japan and, indeed, of the whole world, and Uba to be a maiden of Takasago, whom Jō fell in love with and married. Their span of life and wedded bliss was a long one, and they both died on the same day and at the same hour. Ever since their spirits abide in the old pine tree of Takasago, where Jō first saw his bride. But on moonlight nights they issue forth in human shape, and gather up pine needles on the scene of their former happiness.

Another myth, of wide popularity, hailing from China, is depicted on a stencilled silk picture (1036, Plate XV.). Here we see the Chinese hero Kuo Chū (Japanese Kwakkio), a great exemplar of filial piety as the Far East appreciates it, preparing to bury his baby, who is shown in the arms of his wife. The story runs that Kwakkio found himself too poor to support both his aged mother and his own offspring. There was then only one honourable course for him to pursue (taking the Chinese point of view) and that was to get rid of the child. He began to dig a grave for the luckless little one. But the gods pitied them and resolved to reward so noble a sacrifice. So they caused him to discover in the soil a pot inscribed with the words, "Heaven's gift to Kwakkio; let no one take it from him." He opened it; it was full of gold.

The Museum possesses a number of very interesting Japanese dolls (1640 to 1642) dressed in appropriate costume to illustrate different aspects of the social life of Japan. They are the gifts of Count Mutsu, C.V.O., in the name of his infant son Yonosuke. Special attention must here be drawn to a group of three, consisting

<sup>1</sup> See p. 37.



of a Buddhist priest<sup>1</sup> and a Samurai and his wife. These represent actors in one of the *nō* dramas, which were developed out of native religious dances under Buddhist auspices. It is entitled *Hachi no Ki* ("Pot-trees"), and treats of an episode of the Kamakura epoch (1192-1335). The Buddhist priest is Hōjō Tokiyori, *shikken* or Chief Minister of the Shōgun, and, to all intents and purposes, the real ruler of the Empire. The Hōjō family exercised authority from 1219 to 1334, during the period of the "Shadow Shōguns" (mere puppet rulers, even as were the Emperors themselves). Tokiyori resigned his post in 1256 and, like so many other Japanese rulers, entered the Buddhist priesthood, becoming a member of the Zen sect, in connection with the Saimiō-ji, a temple at Kamakura. He did not, however, entirely relinquish the responsibilities of government. Being a humane and enlightened man, he determined to travel in disguise about his dominions, in order to learn how his subjects fared. One day a terrible snowstorm drove him to take refuge in the house of a Samurai, Sano Genzayemon Tsuneyo, who had seen better times. In the course of conversation Tokiyori learned that his excellent host had been deprived of his estate by the treachery of a kinsman, in whom he had confided. Appeal to the Kamakura clan for redress had proved quite useless. But, despite the neglect he had suffered from his overlords, he still remained loyal, and, in proof of the fact, produced his suit of armour and his rusty halberd. Next morning, before Tokiyori left, Tsuneyo explained that, being so poor, he was unable to procure incense wherewith to perform the purification ceremonies, but, instead, chopped down his favourite dwarf trees, the plum, the pine and the bamboo, and burned them on the hearth. According to the *nō* drama, however, these trees were used to warm Tokiyori on the previous night. A year later the faithful Samurai received his reward. The Miura clan arose in arms, and, in response to the summons of the rulers, loyal warriors came to Kamakura from every part of the country. Tsuneyo arrived, as did others, long after the rebel forces had been crushed. He was miserably clad, and rode a scraggy steed, thus exciting much laughter. He was taken into the presence of Tokiyori, who recognised his former host, and magnanimously restored to him his father's estate and office, adding to it three domains, whose names resembled those of the pine, the bamboo and the plum.

Illustrated in Part II.

Among the hanging-pictures (*kakemono*) in the Department of Textiles is one,<sup>1</sup> for temple use, dating from the middle of the 18th century (1431, Plate XXIII.), which represents the 33 incarnations of Kwannon worshipped at the 33 Holy Places of Western Japan. Kwannon,<sup>2</sup> who is invoked everywhere in Japan as the Goddess of Mercy, is identical with the Chinese Kuan-yin. This latter appears to be a blending of two mythological figures. One of these is Avalôkitêṣvara ("the Lord who looks down from on high"), a Bodhisattva (Japanese *Bosatsu*, a being destined to become a Buddha in his next birth), one of a mystical triad which includes the Celestial or *Dhyâni* Buddha Amitâbha (Japanese *Amida*). The Dalai Lama is regarded by the Tibetans as his incarnation. Filled with compassion for all suffering beings, he is said to have visited the various hells on a mission of salvation to the damned. Like Avalôkitêṣvara, Kwannon too is reputed to have descended to the underworld. Her vast pity for the wretchedness there drew from her the cry "Amida Butsu!" when lo! a rain of lotuses began to fall; the realm of punishment was shaken to its depths and its prisoners set free. Yemma-ō, the Regent of Hell, afterwards sent the goddess on a lotus flower to Mount Fudaraku. The great vow of Amida, never to enjoy the peace of Nirvana before he had brought all life into the way of salvation, has also been attributed to Kuan-yin (or Kwannon) in the Buddhist mythology. The recital of this vow is one of the principal features of the liturgy in honour of the goddess as it is performed to-day in China.

The sex of Kwannon is due to a confusion of the worship of Avalôkitêṣvara with that of a deified daughter of a semi-legendary king of the Chou dynasty of China (B.C. 1122-256). This lady is said to have refused to marry the man of her father's choice, and to have been condemned to death in consequence. But the executioner's sword broke on her neck and she was saved.

On a tapestry-woven silk *fukusa* (Plate XXIV.), lent by Lieut.-Col. G. B. Croft Lyons, F.S.A., is depicted Urashimatarō riding on the back of a sacred tortoise (*minogame*). This fisher lad is one of the most popular figures in Japanese folklore. The story goes that once, at the end of a day of fruitless fishing in the sea, he succeeded in bringing out of the water a large tortoise. Compassion for the animal, however, induced him to put it back again. Next day he saw on the waves a wreck to which a beautiful maiden clung,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> In full, *Kwanzeon*.

Otohime by name. She declared that she was the daughter of the Dragon King, who dwelt in an island where the sun never died, and urged him to take her home. Urashimatarō yielded to Otohime's wish, and the two spent, as it seemed, some three happy years together as lovers in the Dragon King's realm. He there learned that his lady was none other than the tortoise he had saved. But Urashimatarō began to yearn for home, and Otohime was at last persuaded to part from her lover. On his departure she gave him a little black box (represented on the panel), charging him never to open it. When our hero got back to his native land, he was surprised to find what vast changes had taken place during his absence. A greybeard assured him that all the family of Urashimatarō were dead, and as for the lad himself, why, he had been drowned at sea four hundred years ago. Dazed by what he had heard, Urashimatarō found his way into the cemetery where all his kindred lay buried, and there beheld a monument to his own memory. He then opened the box Otohime had given him. A little smoke escaped from it, and Urashimatarō becoming, in an instant, a white-haired and toothless old man, fell to the ground dead, crushed by the weight of his four centuries.

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NOTE BY MR. A. J. KOOP ON THE  
PRONUNCIATION OF JAPANESE WORDS.

(1) The Vowels are to be pronounced as in Italian ; thus (approximately) :—

<i>a</i> as in <i>cart</i> .	<i>ō</i> as in <i>fort</i> .
<i>ai</i> „ „ <i>aisle</i> .	<i>o</i> „ „ <i>forever</i> .
<i>e</i> „ „ <i>get</i> .	<i>oi</i> „ „ <i>noise</i> .
<i>ei</i> „ „ <i>reign</i> .	<i>ū</i> „ „ <i>flute</i> .
<i>i</i> „ „ <i>machine</i> .	<i>u</i> „ „ <i>put</i> .

Other coupled vowels with the full force of each component, except that in *io*, *iō*, *iū*, the *i* is usually equal to consonantal *y* (and is so written by some). Final *u* is commonly clipped.

(2) The Consonants (including *ch* and *sh*) are to be pronounced as in English, noting that :—*g* is always hard (as in *get*, not as in *gem*), and is usually nasalised (as *ng-g*) between two vowels ; *s* is always a true *s*, not the *z* of *roses* ; *shi* is halfway between our “ *he* ” and “ *see*,” and similarly *fu* (*fū*) between the sounds heard in our *hook* and *foot* (*hoot* and *food*) ; full value is to be given to doubled consonants, as *kk*, *mm*, *nn*, *pp*, *ss*, and *tt*.

There is hardly any tonic accent in Japanese ; the voice should maintain an even tone, emphasis being laid only on long vowels (*ō* and *ū*).

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N.B.—With such exceptions as will be obvious, all words printed in *italics* are Japanese. Certain compound words have been specially hyphenated at their first mention, so as to indicate their construction and their relationship to the literal translations appended (within inverted commas).

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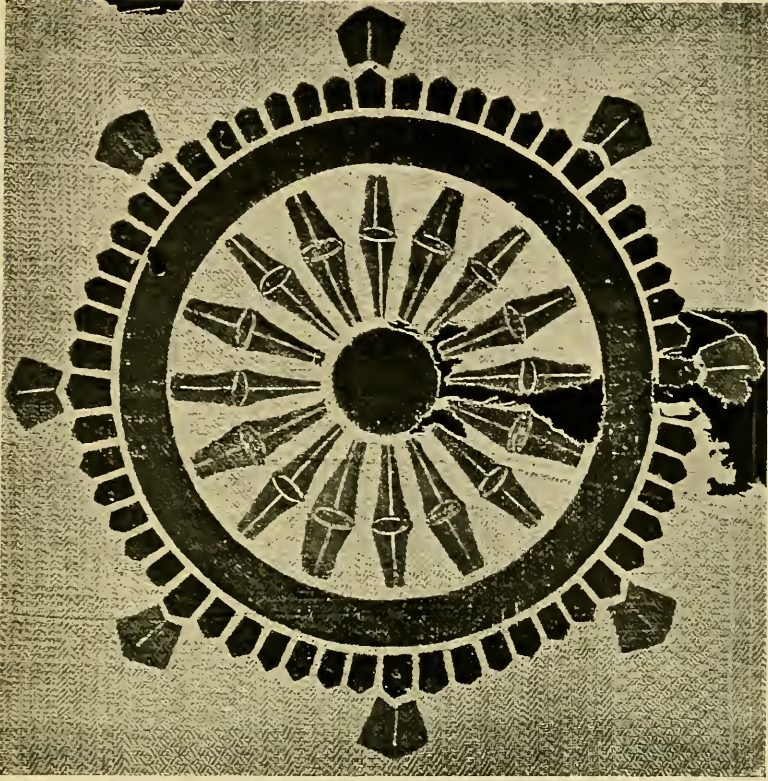
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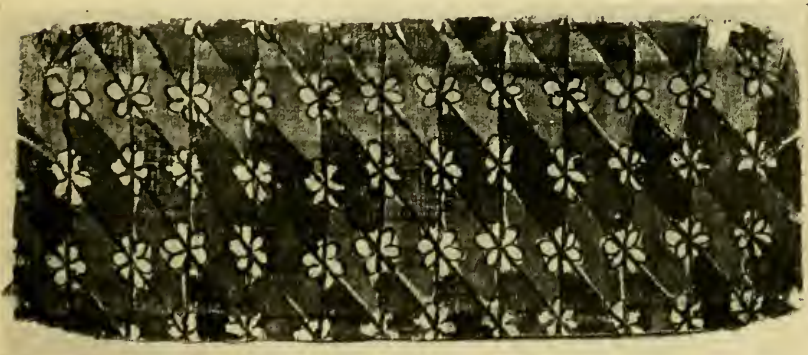


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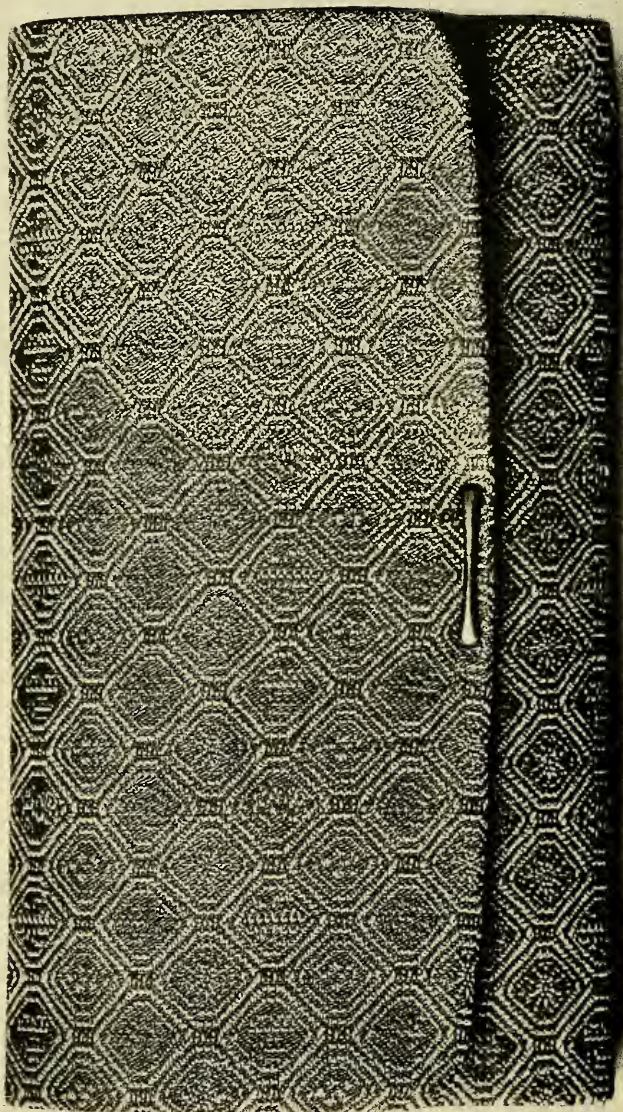


FRAGMENT OF *Aya*, stencilled with the Buddhist Sacred Wheel. Nara epoch (710-794); from the collection of the late Wilson Crewdson, Esq., F.S.A. (p. 6).



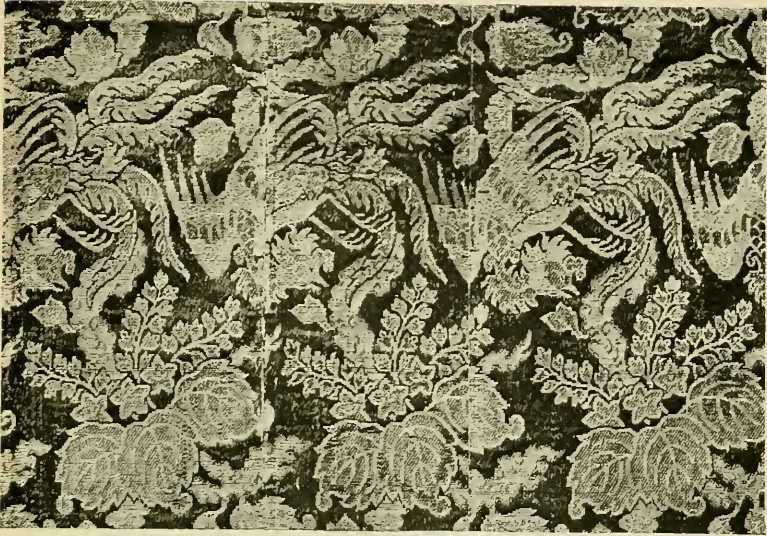
1063. PAINTED COTTON FABRIC (*Sarasa*). About 1500? (p. 33).

PLATE II.

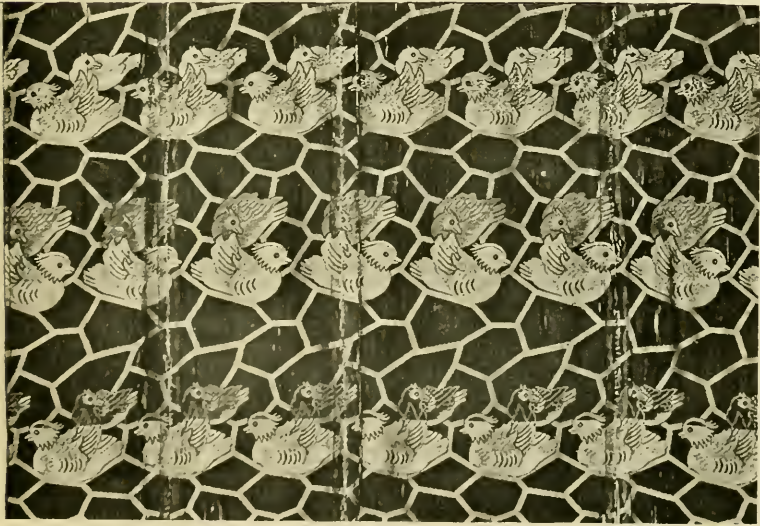


POCKET-BOOK, made out of a piece of silk brocade said to have formed part of the robe of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (*d.* 1598) ; from the collection of the late Wilson Crewdson, Esq. (p. 8).





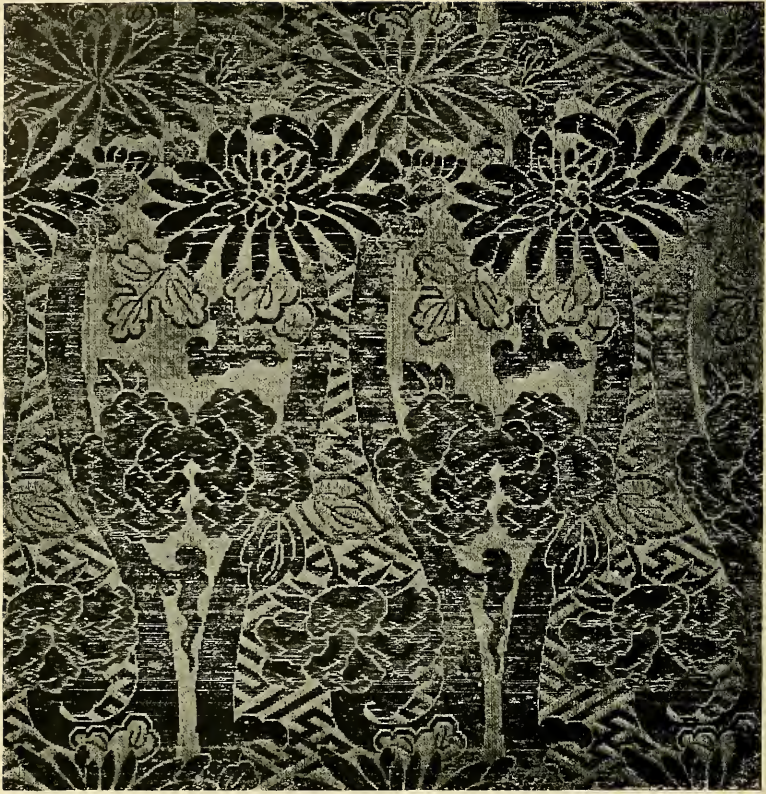
17. Part of a BUDDHIST PRIEST'S VESTMENT, of silk brocade. Late 17th century (p. 17).



23. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. 18th century (p. 18).



PLATE IV.

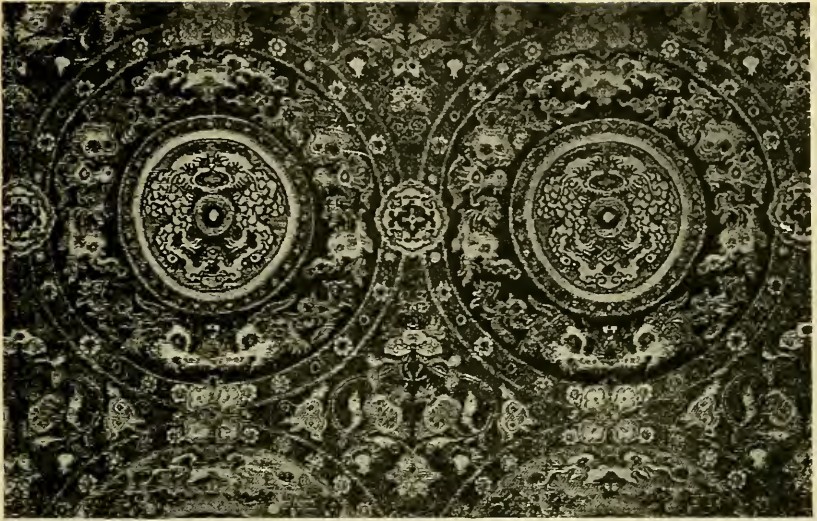


18. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. Late 17th or early 18th century (p. 17).



22. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe or for the dress of a lady of the Court. 18th century (p. 18).

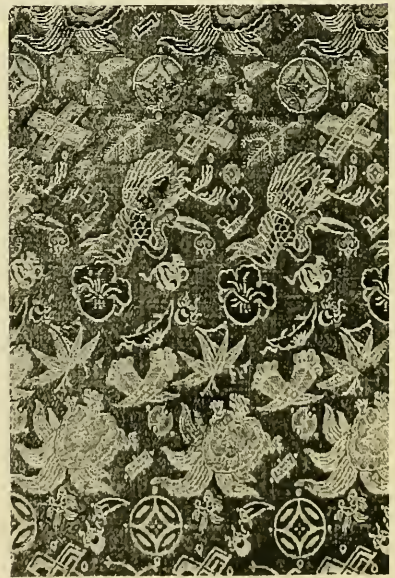




19. SILK BROCADE, woven for a Buddhist priest's vestment or for an altar-cover. Early 18th century (p. 17).



297. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. 18th century (p. 46).



34. SILK BROCADE, woven for a Buddhist priest's vestment or for an altar-cover. 18th century (p.39).

PLATE VI.

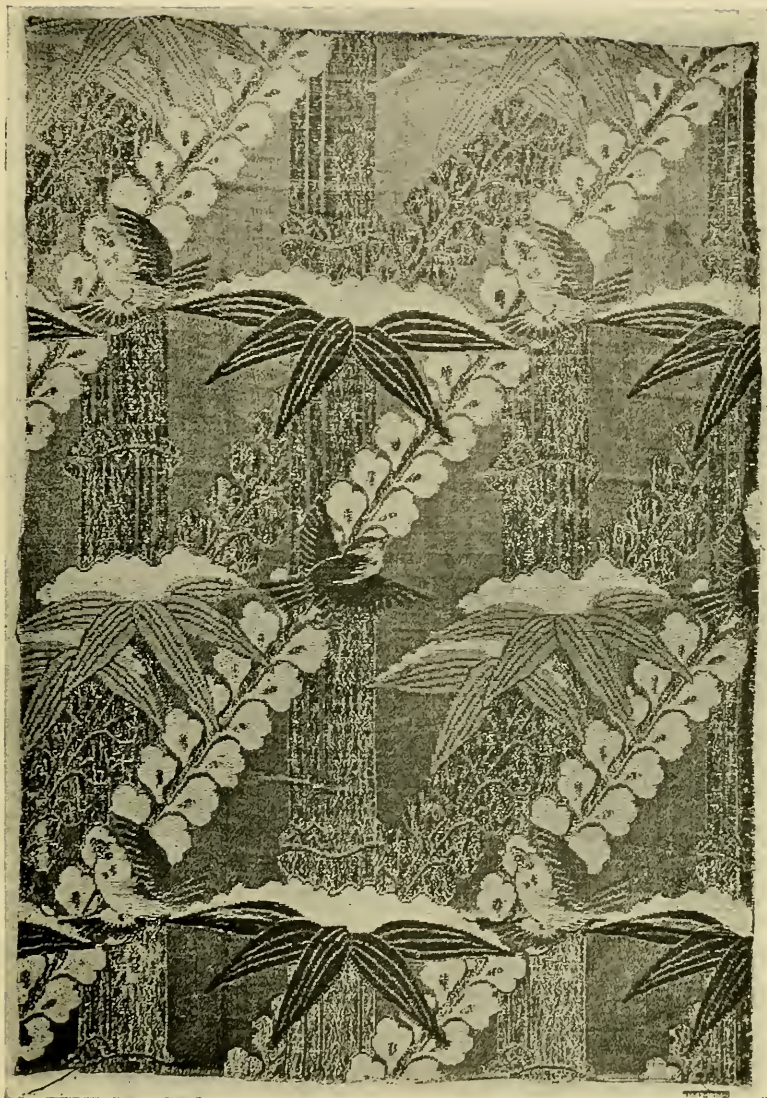


20. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. 18th century (p. 18).



166. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. Believed to date about 1805 (p. 18).





21. SILK BROCADE, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. 18th century (p. 18).

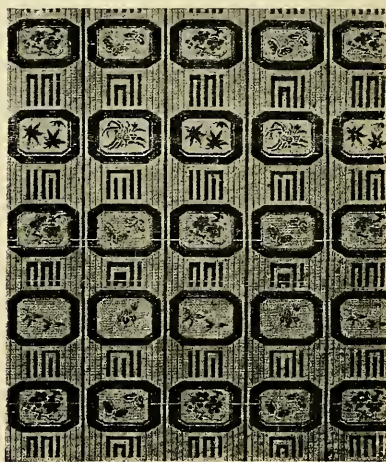
PLATE VIII.



328. SILK BROCADED DAMASK, woven for a *nō* dancer's robe. 18th century (p. 27).



38. PART OF A BUDDHIST PRIEST'S VESTMENT of silk brocade. 18th century (p. 19).



275. SILK BROCADE, woven for a lady's sash (*obi*). 18th century (p. 41).

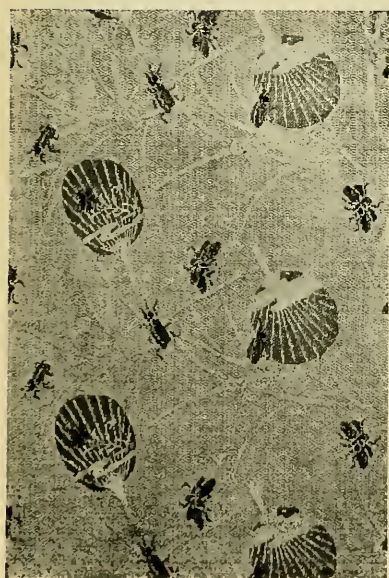




71.



73.



72.

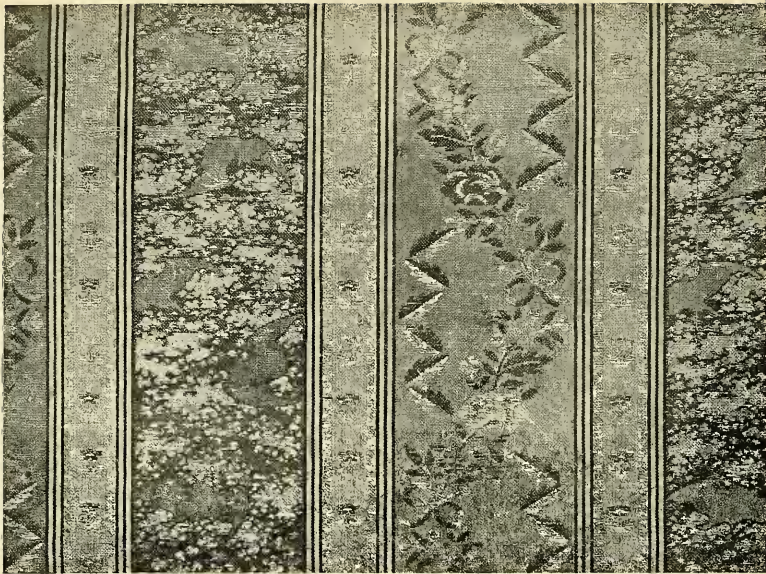


78.

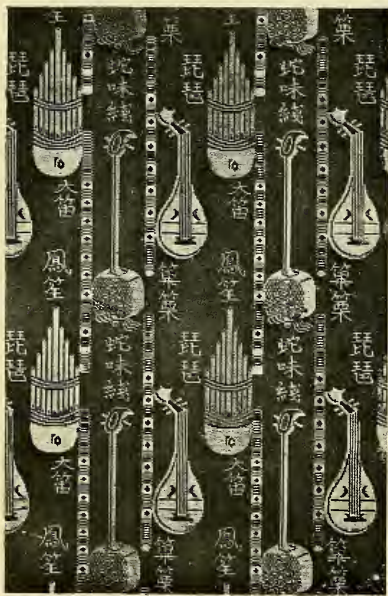
SILK BROCADES, woven for ladies' sashes (*obi*). First half of 19th century (pp. 19, 20).



PLATE X.



95.



97.



98.

SILK BROCADES, woven for pocket-books.  
(pp. 20, 21).

First half of 19th century



840. VELVET *Fukusa* (cover for a box in which a gift is delivered).  
19th century (p. 28).



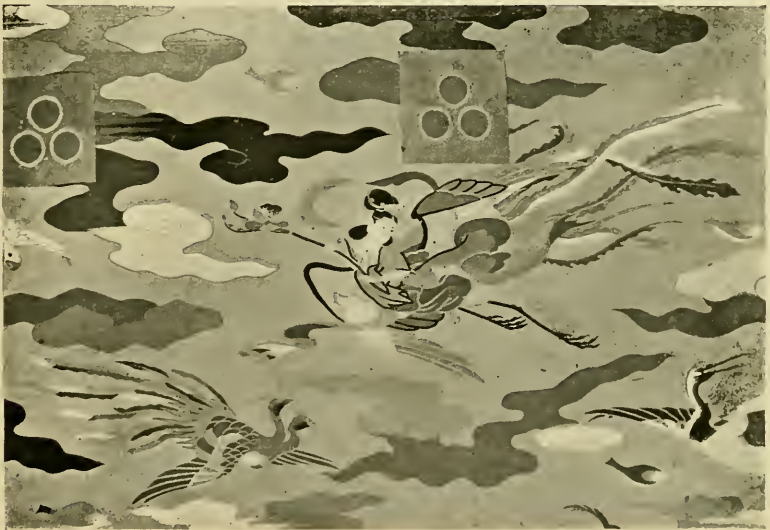
PLATE XII.



841. VELVET PANEL, showing some of the copper wires over which the silk pile is woven.  
19th century (p. 28).

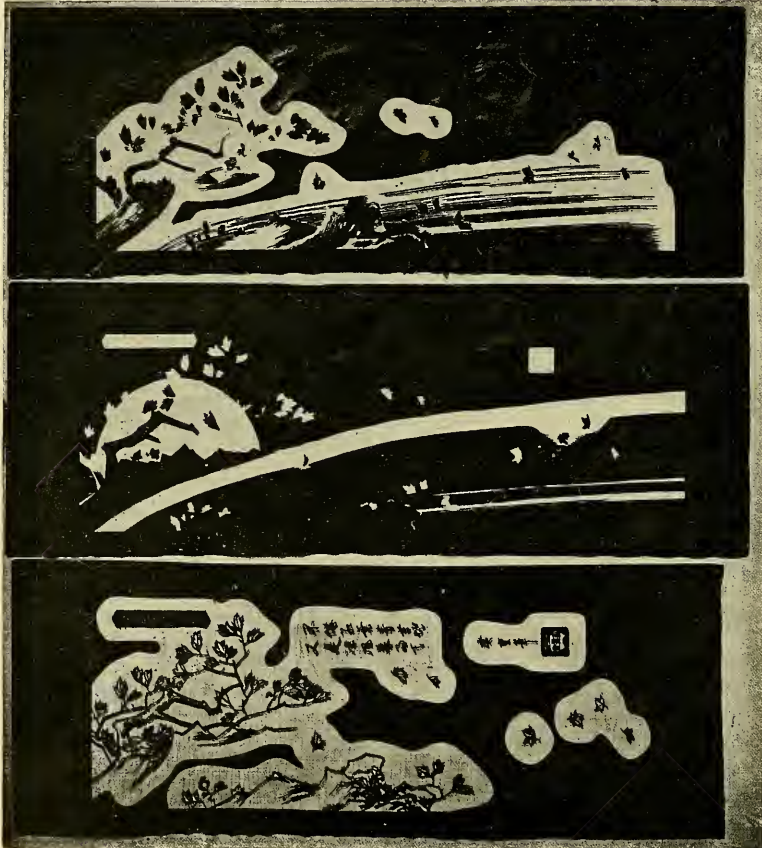


910. TAPESTRY-WOVEN SILK VESTMENT of a Buddhist priest, probably of the Tendai sect. Early 19th century (p. 44).



910. Detail of the above.

PLATE XIV.



1035. STENCILLED COTTON TOWEL.  
Modern Japanese (p. 32).

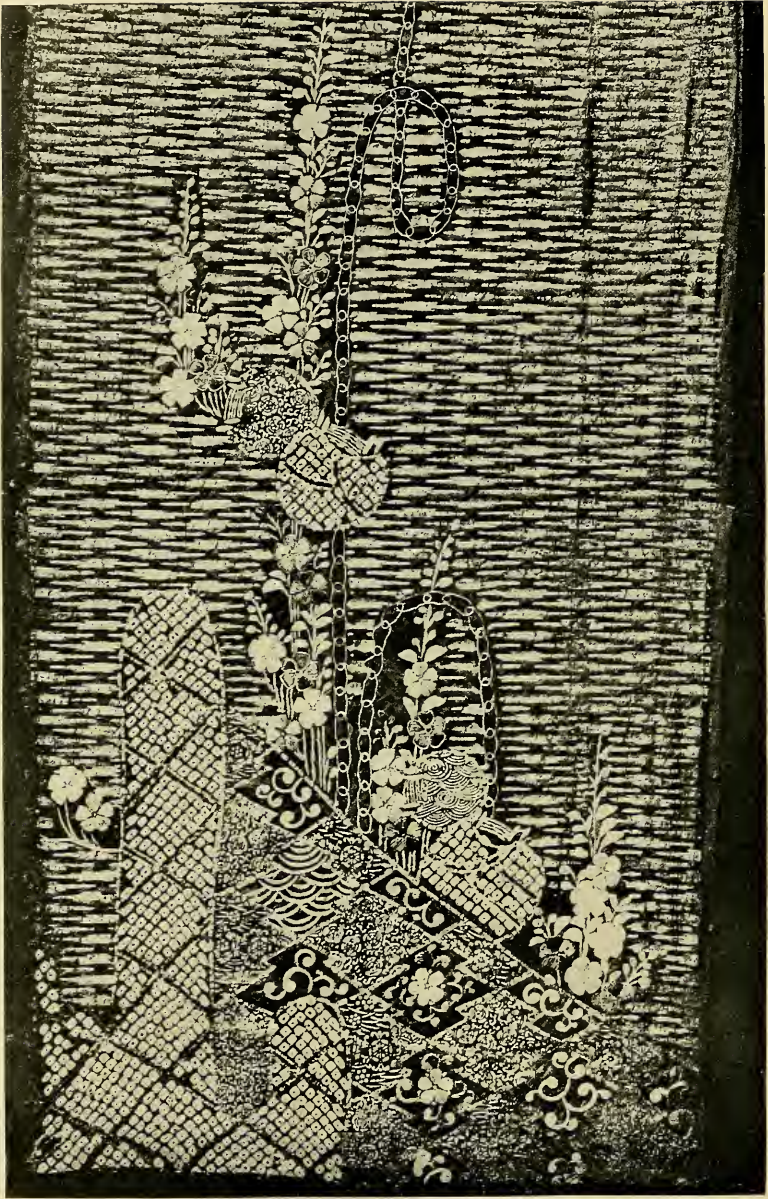
1011. Three Paper STENCIL-PLATES, for the adjoining Cotton Towel (1035).  
Modern Japanese (p. 32).





1036. STENCILLED SILK PANEL. "The Story of Kwakkio."  
19th century (p. 47).

PLATE XVI.



1200. EMBROIDERED SILK DAMASK, dyed by the "resist" process and partly printed in gold. Genroku period (1688-1703) (p. 17).



1225. WOMAN'S ROBE (*kimono*), of painted and embroidered silk, with powderings of gold dust. Late 18th or early 19th century (p. 35).



PLATE XVIII.



1226. LADY'S SASH (*obi*), of embroidered satin. 19th century  
(p. 35).



1265.. EMBROIDERED SATIN COVER (*fukusa*). Probably 18th  
century (p. 36).



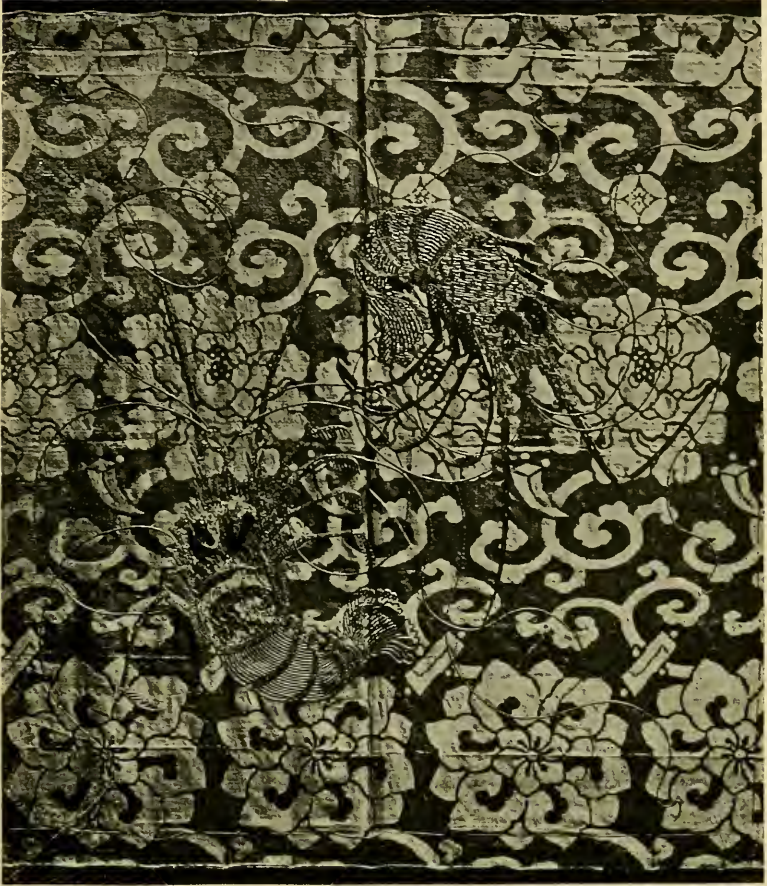
1247. EMBROIDERED SATIN COVER (*fukusa*), with tassels and mount.  
"Ōsaka Castle and Landscape." 19th century (p. 35).



PLATE XX.



1272. ROBE (*kimono*), of embroidered silk crape, probably worn by an actor. Late 18th or early 19th century (p. 46).



1273. COVER (*fukusa*), of embroidered silk damask. 19th century (p. 42).



PLATE XXII.



1430. HANGING PICTURE-SCROLL (*kakemono*), for domestic use.  
19th century (p. 38).



1431. HANGING PICTURE-SCROLL (*kakemono*), for temple use. "The 33 incarnations of Kwannon." Middle of 18th century.  
(p. 49).



PLATE XXIV.



TAPESTRY-WOVEN SILK COVER (*fukusa*). "Urashimatarō." Early 19th century ; the property of Lieut-Col. G. B. Croft Lyons, F.S.A. (p. 49).



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