

some incidents of Scripture and church history, are similarly framed in architectural surroundings and decorate altar frontals. Indeed this figure subject embroidery may be said to stand in relation to decorative needlework, as fine 15th and 16th century Flemish tapestry hangings with their wealth of figure compositions illustrating religious, mythical, poetical, and historical incidents, do to tapestry-making generally. In the later of these figure subjects, whether done in embroidery or in tapestry weaving, the compositions are depicted with less of that earlier formality of treatment which conducts so directly to pure decorative effect.

A more realistic treatment succeeds the formality and leads to pictorial results with subtleties of rounded forms and aerial perspectives. An example of

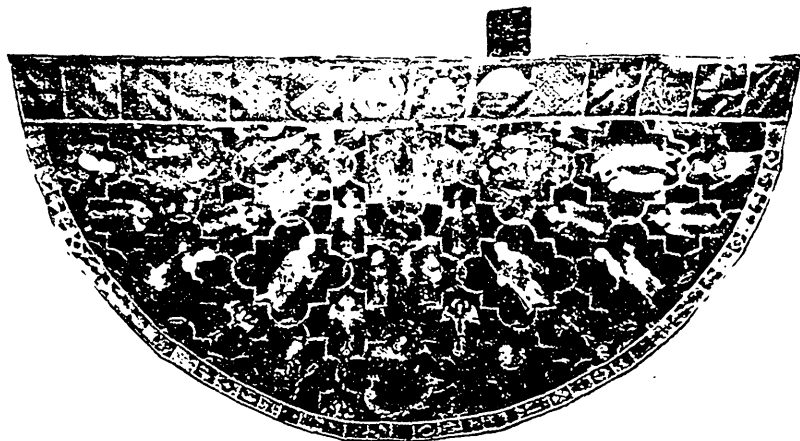


FIG. 203. COPE OF ENGLISH EMBROIDERY IN COLORED SILKS, KNOWN AS THE "SVON COPE." MADE IN THE 13TH CENTURY.

this realistic treatment is given in Fig. 205, which is taken from a panel of mixed needlework and painting upon white satin. Here we have Santa Chiara, attended by two nuns, exposing the Sacred Host at the gateway of her convent of San Damiano at Assisi, and so repelling an attack of Saracen warriors, who are falling back on each side of the gateway. The faces and hands of the various figures are painted with water in tempera or body colors; the lips, eyes, hair, and the contour of the figures being embroidered with very delicate colored silks in short and split stitches. The costumes for the most part are worked in long and short stitches taken in regular series. The leading lines of the folds are marked with gold or silver cord stitched down; and some of the high lights on the draperies are picked out with gold and silver threads. The masonry about the gateway is of gold thread "couched"; whilst the sky and outer wall of the convent are of blue, white, and cream colored silks, worked in long

*B. & A. WASH SILKS ARE THE BEST IN THE WORLD.*