

of warmth which a coverlet naturally is intended to arouse. Similar considerations may govern the ordering of the decorations to be wrought on to a wall hanging: remembering of course that here we have to deal with something which must always hang vertically, with the intention of clothing a wall, a window, or a doorway. All this sort of philosophy appears to be deducible from a comparative analysis of the better types of old embroidery. That there are countless instances of how it may have been discarded merely argues in favor of hastily formed and capricious taste for effect without conviction or common sense as to its *raison d'être*, which is a condition unlikely to result in producing something which shall possess the elements of enduring gratification.

In tracing styles of ornamental decoration in old embroideries we notice a recurrence of persistence of particular treatments which crystallize as it were into conventions. That for instance of Greek decorative work about 6th century B. C. is notable for formal simplicity in the more frequently used ornamental devices. Many of them are devoid of direct imitation of actual things, and even when in others a likeness to actual things is suggested, as of natural leaves, plants, and so forth, the way in which the device is expressed indicates that the Greek designer thought more the beauty arising from lines and shapes that contrasted harmoniously in their repetition, than of a precise imitation of plant growth and its ever changing form. Roman taste inclined to much more elaboration in



FIG. 125. FRAGMENT OF GREEK CHAIN STITCH EMBROIDERY IN FLAX THREAD ON A WOOLLED MATERIAL.

ornamental device than the Greek, and frequently, too, exhibited a direct leaning to imitating natural effects. With the Byzantines there is copiousness of formal devices often suggestive of actual things, closely fitting together within the spaces and surfaces

selected for the display of such ornamentation. But as a rule this copiousness is well controlled by orderly arrangement. The preference for such order is traceable to a conspicuous degree in almost all Oriental ornamentations and notably that of Mohammedan peoples. Byzantine ornament is the outcome of the infusion of Syrian into Roman taste, towards the 4th century A.D., and about five centuries later it becomes still further influenced by Saracenic taste. With the Italian Renaissance designers of another five hundred years later we have a style of ornamentation that has, in its aim for beauty of form and line, a kinship with that of the Greeks; at the same time, however, it has a strong inclination towards the imitation of nature; French ornament of the 17th and 18th centuries is for the most part composed of details

*EXPERIENCED EMBROIDERERS USE ONLY B. & A. WASH SILKS*