

priateness than such far-fetched comparisons generally possess. Besides his poetical works, Emanuel wrote commentaries on several of the books of the Old Testament Scriptures, some of which exist only in manuscript. He was also the author of a work on Hebrew grammar and criticism.

EMBALMING (Greek, *βάλαμον*, balsam; German, *einbalsamiren*; French, *embaumement*), the art of preparing dead bodies, chiefly by the use of medicaments, in order to preserve them from putrefaction and the attacks of insects. The ancient Egyptians carried the art to great perfection, and embalmed not only human beings, but cats, crocodiles, ichneumons, and other sacred animals. It has been suggested that the origin of embalming in Egypt is to be traced to a want of fuel for the purpose of cremation, to the inadvisability or at some times impossibility of burial in a soil annually disturbed by the inundation of the Nile, and to the necessity, for sanitary reasons, of preventing the decomposition of the bodies of the dead when placed in open sepulchres. As, however, the corpses of the embalmed must have constituted but a small proportion of the aggregate mass of animal matter daily to be disposed of, the above explanation is far from satisfactory; and it may be questioned whether embalming, together with the greater number of the Egyptian doctrines concerning a future life, may not have entirely originated in superstition or sentiment concerning the dead. According to Prescott, it was a belief in a resurrection of the body that led the ancient Peruvians to preserve the air-dried corpses of their dead with so much solicitude (see *Conquest of Peru*, bk. i. chap. iii.). Prichard (*Egyptian Mythology*, p. 200) holds it as probable that the views with which the Egyptians embalmed bodies were "akin to those which rendered the Greeks and Romans so anxious to perform the usual rites of sepulture to their departed warriors, namely, . . . that these solemnities expedited the journey of the soul to the appointed region, where it was to receive judgment for its former deeds, and to have its future doom fixed accordingly." It has been supposed by some that the discovery of the preservation of bodies interred in saline soils may have been the immediate origin of embalming in Egypt. In that country certain classes of the community were specially appointed for the practice of the art. Joseph, we are told in Gen. 1 2, "commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father." Herodotus (ii. 86) gives an account of three of the methods of embalming followed by the Egyptians. The most expensive of these, which cost a talent of silver (£243, 15s), was as follows. The brains were in part removed through the nostrils by means of a bent iron implement, and in part by the injection of drugs. The intestines having been drawn out through an incision in the left side, the abdomen was cleansed with palm-wine, and filled with myrrh, cassia, and other materials, and the opening was sewed up. This done, the body was steeped seventy days in a solution of litron or natron.¹ Diodorus (i. 91) relates that the cutter (*παρασχίστης*) appointed to make the incision in the flank for the removal of the intestines, as soon as he had performed his office, was pursued with stones and curses by those about him, it being held by the Egyptians a detestable thing to commit any violence or inflict a wound on the body. After the steeping, the body was washed, and handed over to the swathers, a peculiar class of the lowest order of priests, called by Plutarch *cholchytæ*, by whom it was bandaged in gummied cloth; it was then ready for the coffin. Mummies thus prepared were considered to represent Osiris. In another method of embalming, costing twenty-two minæ (about £90), the abdomen was injected with

¹ Neutral carbonate of sodium, Na₂CO₃, found at the natron lakes in the Libyan desert, and at El Hegg, in Upper Egypt.

"cedar-tree pitch" (*κεδρία*), which, as it would seem from Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, xvi. 21), was the liquid distillate of the pitch-pine. This is stated by Herodotus to have had a corrosive and solvent action on the viscera. After injection the body was steeped a certain number of days in natron; the contents of the abdomen were allowed to escape; and the process was then complete. The preparation of the bodies of the poorest consisted simply in placing them in natron for seventy days, after a previous rinsing of the abdomen with "syrmaea." The material principally used in the costlier modes of embalming appears to have been asphalt; wax was more rarely employed. In some cases embalming seems to have been effected by immersing the body in a bath of molten bitumen. Tanning also was resorted to. Occasionally the viscera, after treatment, were in part or wholly replaced in the body, together with wax figures of the four genii of Amenti. More commonly they were embalmed in a mixture of sand and asphalt, and buried in vases, or *canopi*, placed near the mummy, the abdomen being filled with chips and sawdust of cedar and a small quantity of natron. In one jar were placed the stomach and large intestine; in another, the small intestines; in a third, the lungs and heart; in a fourth, the gall-bladder and liver. Porphyry (*De Abstinentia*, iv. 10) mentions a custom of inclosing the intestines in a box, and consigning them to the Nile, after a prayer uttered by one of the embalmers, but his statement is regarded by Sir J. G. Wilkinson as unworthy of belief. The body of Nero's wife Poppæa, contrary to the usage of the Romans, was not burnt, but, as customary among other nations with the bodies of potentates, was honoured with embalmment (see Tacitus, *Annal.*, xvi. 6). The body of Alexander the Great is said to have been embalmed with honey (Stattius, *Sylv.*, iii. 2, 117), and the same material was used to preserve the corpse of Agesipolis I. during its conveyance to Sparta for burial. Herodotus states (iii. 24) that the Ethiopians, in embalming, dried the body, rubbed it with gypsum (or chalk), and, having painted it, placed it in a block of some transparent substance. The Guanches, the aborigines of the Canaries, employed a mode of embalming similar to that of the Egyptians, filling the hollow caused by the removal of the viscera with salt and an absorbent vegetable powder (see Bory de Saint-Vincent, *Essais sur les Îles Fortunées*, 1803, p. 495). Embalming was still in vogue among the Egyptians in the time of St Augustine, who says that they termed mummies *gabbare* (*Serm.* 120, cap. 12). In modern times numerous methods of embalming have been practised. By William Hunter essential oils, alcohol, cinnabar, camphor, saltpetre, and pitch or rosin were employed, and the final desiccation of the body was effected by means of roasted gypsum placed in its coffin. Boudet embalmed with tan, salt, asphalt, and Peruvian bark, camphor, cinnamon, and other aromatics, and corrosive sublimate. The last-mentioned drug, the chloride and sulphate of zinc, the acetate and sulphate of aluminium, and creasote and carbolic acid have all been recommended by various modern embalmers.

See MUMMY; Louis Penicher, *Traité des Embaumements*, Paris, 1669; S. Blancard, *Anatomia Reformata, et de Balsamatione nova methodus*, Lugd. Bat. 1695; Thomas Greenhill, *The Art of Embalming*, Lond. 1705; J. N. Marjolin, *Manuel d'Anatomie*, Paris, 1810; Pettigrew, *History of Mummies*, Lond. 1834; Gannal, *Traité d'Embaumements*, Paris, 1838; 2nd ed. 1841; Magnus, *Das Einbalsamiren der Leichen*, Brunsw., 1839; Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. ii. p. 141.

EMBANKMENT is an engineering term used to denote any large heap of materials collected together by artificial means. Embankments are constructed for carrying roads or railways across valleys. They are also employed for protecting land from the encroachments of river floods, and on a larger scale, in low-lying countries, as a defence

against the inroads of the sea. Embankments are also the main features in almost all schemes of water-works, being used for impounding water for supply of towns or compensation to mills. See IRRIGATION and WATER-WORKS.

EMBER DAYS AND EMBER WEEKS, the four seasons set apart by the Western Church for special prayer and fasting, and the ordination of clergy, known in the mediæval church as *quatuor tempora*, or *jejunia quatuor temporum*. The Ember weeks are the complete weeks next following Holy Cross Day (September 14), St Lucy's Day (December 13), the first Sunday in Lent, and Whitsun Day. The Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays of these weeks are the Ember days distinctively, the following Sundays being the days of ordination. These dates are given in the following memorial distich with a frank indifference to quantity and metre—

Vult Crux, Lucia, Cinis, Charismata dia
Quod det vota pia quartæ sequens feria.

The word *Ember* is of uncertain derivation. We may at once dismiss, as founded only on an accidental similarity of sound, that from the "embers" or ashes erroneously assumed to have been used at these seasons in token of humiliation. Other more probable derivations are from the Anglo-Saxon *ymb-ren*, a circuit or revolution (from *ymb*, around, and *rennen*, to run); or by process of agglutination and phonetic decay, from the Latin *quatuor tempora*. Those who advocate this latter derivation appeal to the analogous forms by which these seasons are designated in some of the Teutonic languages, e.g.—German, *quatember*, Dutch, *quatertemper*; Danish, *kvatember*; Swedish, *tamper-dagar*. But the occurrence of the Anglo-Saxon compounds *ymbren-tid*, *ymbren-wican*, *ymbren-faestan*, *ymbren-dagas*, for Ember tide, weeks, fasts, days, favours the former derivation, which is also confirmed by the use of the word *imbren* in the Acts of the council of Ænham, 1009 A.D. ("jejunia quatuor tempora quæ *imbren* vocant"). It corresponds also with Pope Leo the Great's definition, "jejunia ecclesiastica per totius anni circulum distributa."

The observance of the Ember days is confined to the Western Church, and had its origin as an ecclesiastical ordinance in Rome. They were probably at first merely the fasts preparatory to the three great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. A fourth was subsequently added, for the sake of symmetry, to make them correspond with the four seasons, and they became known as the *jejunium vernum, æstivum, autumnale, and hiemale*, so that, to quote Pope Leo's words, "the law of abstinence might apply to every season of the year." An earlier mention of these fasts, as four in number—the first known—is in the writings of Philastrius, bishop of Brescia, in the middle of the 4th century. He also connects them with the great Christian festivals (*De Hæres.*, 119). In Leo's time, 440–461 A.D., Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday were already the days of special observance. From Rome the Ember days gradually spread through the whole of Western Christendom. Uniformity of practice, however, in this particular was of somewhat slow growth. Neither in Gaul nor Spain do they seem to have been generally recognized much before the 8th century. Their introduction into Britain appears to have been earlier, dating from Augustine, 597 A.D., acting under the authority of Gregory the Great. The general period of the four fasts being roughly fixed, the precise date appears to have varied considerably, and in some cases to have lost its connection with the festivals altogether. The *Ordo Romanus* fixes the spring fast in the first week of March (then the first month); the summer fast in the second week of June; the autumnal fast in the third week of September; and the winter fast in the complete week next before Christmas eve. Other regulations pre-

vailed in different countries, until the inconveniences arising from the want of uniformity led to the rule now observed being laid down under Pope Urban II. as the law of the church, in the councils of Placentia and Clermont, 1095 A.D.

The present rule which fixes the ordination of clergy in the Ember weeks cannot be traced further back than the time of Pope Gelasius, 492–496 A.D. In the early ages of the church ordinations took place at any season of the year whenever necessity required. Gelasius is stated by ritual writers to have been the first who limited them to these particular times, the special solemnity of the season being in all probability the cause of the selection. The rule once introduced commended itself to the mind of the church, and its observance spread. We find it laid down in the pontificate of Archbishop Egbert of York, 732–766 A.D., and referred to as a canonical rule in a capitulary of Charles the Great, and it was finally established as a law of the church in the pontificate of Gregory VII., c. 1085.

Authorities: Muratori, *Dissert. de Jejun. Quat. Temp.*, c. vii., anecdot. tom. ii. p. 262; Bingham, *Antiq. of the Christ. Church*, bk. iv. chap. vi. § 6, bk. xxi. chap. ii. § 1–7; Binterim, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. v. part 2, pp. 133 ff.; Augusti, *Handbuch der Christlich. Archæol.*, vol. i. p. 465, iii. 486. (E. V.)

EMBEZZLEMENT, in English law, is a peculiar form of theft which is distinguished from the ordinary crime in two points:—(1) It is committed by a person who is in the position of clerk or servant to the owner of the property stolen; and (2) the property when stolen is in the possession of such clerk or servant. The definition of embezzlement as a special form of theft arose out of the difficulties caused by the legal doctrine that to constitute larceny the property must be taken out of the possession of the owner. Servants and others were thus able to steal with impunity goods entrusted to them by their masters. The statute 21 Henry VIII. c. 7 was passed to meet this case; and it enacted that it should be felony in servants to convert to their own use caskets, jewels, money, goods, or chattels delivered to them by their masters. "This Act," says Sir J. F. Stephen (*General View of the Criminal Law of England*), "assisted by certain subtleties according to which the possession of the servant was taken under particular circumstances to be the possession of the master, so that the servant by converting the goods to his own use took them out of his own possession *qua* servant (which was his master's possession) and put them into his own possession *qua* thief (which was a felony), was considered sufficient for practical purposes for more than 200 years." In 1799, a clerk who had converted to his own use a cheque paid across the counter to him by a customer of his master was held to be not guilty of felony; and in the same year the Act 39 Geo. III. c. 85 was passed, which, meeting the difficulty in such cases, enacted that if any clerk or servant, or any person employed as clerk or servant, should, by virtue of such employment, receive or take into his possession any money, bonds, bills, &c., for or in the name or on account of his employers, and should fraudulently embezzle the same, every such offender should be deemed to have stolen the same. The same definition is substantially repeated in a Consolidation Act passed in 1827 (7 and 8 Geo. IV. c. 29). Numberless difficulties of interpretation arose under these Acts, e.g., as to the meaning of "clerk or servant," as to the difference between theft and embezzlement, &c. The law now in force, or the Larceny Act, 24 and 25 Vict. c. 96, defines the offence thus (section 68):—"Whosoever, being a clerk or servant, or being employed for the purpose or in the capacity of a clerk or servant, shall fraudulently embezzle any chattel, money, or valuable security which shall be delivered to or received or taken into possession by him for or in the name or on the account of his master or employer, or any part thereof, shall be deemed to have

feloniously stolen the same from his master or employer, although such chattel, money, or security was not received into the possession of such master or employer otherwise than by the actual possession of his clerk, servant, or other person so employed, and being convicted thereof shall be liable, at the discretion of the court, to be kept in penal servitude for any time not exceeding fourteen years, and not less than three (now five) years." To constitute the offence thus described three things must concur:—(1) The offender must be a clerk or servant; (2) he must receive into his possession some chattel on behalf of his master; and (3) he must fraudulently embezzle the same. A clerk or servant has been defined to be a person bound either by an express contract of service or by conduct implying such a contract to obey the orders and submit to the control of his master in the transaction of the business which it is his duty as such clerk or servant to transact. (*Stephen's Digest of the Criminal Law*, Art. 309.) The Larceny Act also describes similar offences on the part of persons, not being clerks or servants, to which the name embezzlement is not uncommonly applied, e.g., the fraudulent conversion by bankers, merchants, brokers, attorneys, or other agents, of money or securities or goods intrusted to them. This offence is a misdemeanour punishable by penal servitude for any term not exceeding seven nor less than five years. So also trustees fraudulently disposing of trust property, and directors of companies fraudulently appropriating the company's property or keeping fraudulent accounts, or wilfully destroying books or publishing fraudulent statements, are misdemeanours punishable in the same way.

EMBLEMENTS, in English law, means the growing crops which belong to the tenant of an estate of uncertain duration, which has unexpectedly determined without any fault of his own. "It is derived from the French *emblavence de bled* (corn sprung or put up above ground), and strictly signifies the growing crops of sown land; but the doctrine of emblements extends not only to corn sown, but to roots planted and other annual artificial profits" (*Woodfall on Landlord and Tenant*). If the estate, although of uncertain duration, is determined by the tenant's own acts, the right to emblements does not arise. By 14 and 15 Vict. c. 25, a tenant at rack-rent, whose lease has determined by the death or cession of estate of a landlord entitled only for life, or for any other uncertain interest, shall, instead of emblements, be entitled to hold the lands until the expiration of the current year of his tenancy.

EMBOSSING is the art of producing raised portions or patterns on the surface of metal, leather, textile fabrics, cardboard, paper, and similar substances. Strictly the term is applicable only to raised impressions produced by means of engraved dies or plates brought forcibly to bear on the material to be embossed, by various means, according to the nature of the substance acted on. Thus raised patterns produced by carving, chiselling, casting, and chasing or hammering are excluded from the range of embossed work. Embossing supplies a convenient and expeditious medium for producing elegant ornamental effects in many distinct industries; and especially in its relations to paper and cardboard its applications are varied and important. Crests, monograms, addresses, &c., are embossed on paper and envelopes from dies (see DIE-SINKING) set in small hand-screw presses, a force or counter-die being prepared in leather faced with a coating of gutta-percha. The dies to be used for plain embossing are generally cut deeper than those intended to be used with colours. Colour embossing is done in two ways—the first and ordinary kind that in which the ink is applied to the raised portion of the design. The colour in this case is spread on the die with a brush, and the whole surface is carefully cleaned, leaving only ink in the depressed parts of the engraving. In the second

variety—called cameo embossing—the colour is applied to the flat parts of the design by means of a small printing roller, and the letters or design in relief is left uncoloured. In embossing large ornamental designs, engraved plates or electrotypes therefrom are employed, the force or counter-part being composed of mill-board faced with gutta-percha. In working these, powerful screw-presses, in principle like coining or medal-striking presses, are employed. Embossing also is most extensively practised for ornamental purposes in the art of bookbinding. The blocked ornaments on cloth covers for books, and the blocking or imitation tooling on the cheaper kinds of leather work, are effected by means of powerful embossing or arming presses. (See BOOKBINDING.) For impressing embossed patterns on wall papers, textiles of various kinds, and felt, cylinders of copper, engraved with the patterns to be raised, are employed, and these are mounted in calender frames, in which they press against rollers having a yielding surface, or so constructed that depressions in the engraved cylinders fit into corresponding elevations in those against which they press. The operations of embossing and colour-printing are also sometimes effected together in a modification of the ordinary cylinder printing machine used in calico-printing, in which it is only necessary to introduce suitably engraved cylinders. For many purposes the embossing rollers must be maintained at a high temperature while in operation; and they are heated either by steam, by gas jets, or by the introduction of red-hot irons within them. The stamped or struck ornaments in sheet metal, used especially in connection with the brass and Britannia metal trades, are obtained by a process of embossing—hard steel dies with forces or counter-parts of soft metal being used in their production (see BRASS). A kind of embossed ornament is formed on the surface of soft wood by first compressing and consequently sinking the parts intended to be embossed, then planing the whole surface level, after which, when the wood is placed in water, the previously depressed portion swells up and rises to its original level. Thus an embossed pattern is produced which may be subsequently sharpened and finished by the ordinary process of carving.

EMBROIDERY¹ is the art of working with the needle flowers, fruits, human and animal forms upon wool, silk, linen, or other woven texture. That it is of the greatest antiquity we have the testimony of Moses and Homer, and it takes precedence of painting, as the earliest method of representing figures and ornaments was by needle-work traced upon canvas. From the earliest times it served to decorate the sacerdotal vestments and other objects applied to ecclesiastical use, and queens deemed it an honour to occupy their leisure hours in delineating with the needle the achievements of their heroes. The Jews are supposed to have derived their skill in needle-work from the Egyptians, with whom the art of embroidery was general; they produced figured cloths by the needle and the loom, and practised the art of introducing gold thread or wire into their work. Amasis, king of Egypt, sent to the Minerva of Lindus a linen corslet with figures interwoven and embroidered with gold and wool; and, to judge from a passage in Ezekiel, they even embroidered the sails of their galleys which they exported to Tyre: "Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail." Embroidery and tapestry are often confounded; the distinction should be clearly understood. Embroidery is worked upon a woven texture having both warp and woof, whereas tapestry is wrought in a loom upon a warp stretched along its frame, but has no warp thrown across by the shuttle; the weft is done with short threads variously coloured and put in by a kind of needle.

¹ French, *bord*, *bordure*; Anglo-Saxon, *bord*—the edge or margin of anything, because embroidery was chiefly exercised upon the edge or border of vestments.

The book of Exodus describes how the curtains of the tabernacle were embroidered by hand, and the garments of Aaron and his sons were wrought in needle-work. Aholiab, the chief embroiderer, is specially appointed to assist in the work of decoration. In celebrating the triumph of Sisera, his mother is made to say that he has a "prey of divers colours of needle-work on both sides," evidently meaning that the stuff was wrought on both sides alike, a style of embroidery exhibiting a degree of patience and skill only practised by the nations of the East.

Homer makes constant allusion to embroidery. Penelope (to say nothing for her immortal web) throws over Ulysses on his departure for Troy an embroidered garment of gold on which she had depicted incidents of the chase. Helen is described as sitting apart, engaged in working a gorgeous suit upon which she had portrayed the wars of Troy; and Andromache was embroidering flowers of various hues upon a purple cloth when the cries of the people without informed her of the tragic end of Hector. In Greece the art was held in the greatest honour, and its invention ascribed to Minerva, and prompt was her punishment of the luckless Arachne for daring to doubt her supremacy in the art. The maidens who took part in the procession of the Panathenæa embroidered the veil or peplum, upon which the deeds of the goddess were worked in embroidery and gold.

Phrygia became celebrated for the beauty of its needle-work. The "toga picta" ornamented with Phrygian embroidery was worn by the Roman generals at their triumphs, and by their consuls when they celebrated the games—hence embroidery itself in Latin is styled "Phrygian," and the Romans knew it under no other name.

Babylon was no less renowned for its embroideries, and maintained its reputation up to the first century of the Christian era. Josephus tells us that the veils given by Herod for the temple were of Babylonian workmanship,—the women excelling, says Apollonius, in executing designs of varied colours. The Sidonian women brought by Paris to Troy embroidered veils of such rich embroidery that Hecuba deemed them worthy of being presented as an offering to Minerva; and Lucan speaks with enthusiasm of the magnificent Sidonian veil worn by Cleopatra at the feast she gave Caesar after the death of Pompey. The embroidered robe of Servius Tullius was ornamented all over with the image of the goddess Fortune, to whom he ascribed his success, and to whom he built several temples. Tarquin the elder first appeared at Rome in a robe embroidered all over with gold, and Cicero describes Damocles as reclining on his bed with a coverlet of magnificent embroidery.

Passing to the first ages of the Christian era, we find the pontifical ornaments, the tissues that decorated the altars, and the curtains of the churches all worked with the holy images; and in the 5th century the art of weaving stuffs and enriching them with embroidery was carried to the highest degree of perfection. The whole history of the church was embroidered on the toga of a Christian senator; and Anastasius, who has left a description of ornaments of this kind given by popes and emperors to the churches from the 4th to the 9th century, has even recorded the subjects of these embroideries, which are executed in gold and silver thread upon silk stuffs of the most brilliant colours, producing a wonderful effect. "Opus plumarium" was then the general term for embroidery, and so given because stitches were laid down lengthwise and so put together that they seemed to overlap one another like the feathers in the plumage of a bird. Not inaptly, therefore, was this style called feather-stitch, in contradistinction to cross-stitch. Pope Paschal (5th century), a great admirer of needle-work, made many splendid donations to the church. On one of his vestments were portrayed the Wise

Virgins, miraculously worked; on another a peacock, in all the gorgeous and changing colours of its plumage, on an amber ground.

In mediæval times, spinning and embroidery were the occupation of women of all ranks, from the palace to the cloister, and a sharp rivalry existed in the production of sacerdotal vestments and ornaments. So early as the 6th century, St Césaire, bishop of Arles, forbade the nuns under his rule from embroidering robes adorned with paintings, flowers, and precious stones. This prohibition, however, was not of a general character. Near Ely, an Anglo-Saxon lady brought together a number of girls who produced admirable embroidery for the benefit of the monastery; and in the 7th century, St Eustadiol, abbess of Bourges, made sacred vestments and decorated the altar with works by herself and her community. A century later, two sisters, abbesses of Valentina, in Belgium, became famous for their excellence in all feminine pursuits, and imposed embroidery work upon the inmates of their convent as a protection from idleness, the most dangerous of all evils.

At the beginning of the 9th century, ladies of rank are to be found engaged in embroidery. St Viborade, living at St Gall, adorned beautiful coverings for the sacred books of that monastery, it being then the custom to wrap in silk and carry on a linen cloth the Gospels used for the offices of the church; and the same abbey received from Hadwiga, daughter of Henry duke of Swabia, chasubles and ornaments embroidered by the hand of that princess. Judith of Bavaria, mother of Charles the Bald, was also a skilful embroideress. When Harold, king of Denmark, came to be baptized at Ingelheim with all his family, the empress Judith, who stood sponsor for the queen, presented her with a robe enriched by herself with gold and precious stones. In the 10th century, Queen Adhelais, wife of Hugh Capet, presented to the church of St Martin at Tours, and another to the abbey of St Denis, two chasubles of different designs but of wonderful workmanship.

Long before the Conquest English ladies were much skilled with the needle. The beautiful "opus Anglicum" was produced under the Anglo-Saxons, and so highly was it valued that we find (800) Deubar, bishop of Durham, granting the lease of a farm of 200 acres for life to the embroideress Eanswitha for the charge of scouring, repairing, and renewing the embroidered vestments of the priests. In the 7th century, St Ethelreda, queen and first abbess of Ely, presented to St Cuthbert a stole and maniple marvellously embroidered and embellished with gold and precious stones. The four daughters of Edward the Elder are all praised for their needles' skill; and in the 10th century, Ælfeda, a high-born Saxon lady, gave to the church at Ely a curtain on which she had wrought in needle-work the deeds of daring of her husband Brithnoth, who was slain by the Danes. Later on, Emma, wife of Canute, enriched the same minister with costly stuffs, of which one at least had been embroidered all over with orfrays by the queen herself, and embellished with gold and gems disposed with such art and profusion as could not be matched at that time in all England.

The excellence of the English work was maintained as time went on, a proof of which is found in an anecdote related by Matthew of Paris:—"About this time" (1246), he tells us, "the Lord Pope (Innocent IV.), having observed that the ecclesiastical ornaments of some Englishmen, such as choristers' copes and mitres, were embroidered in gold thread after a very desirable fashion, asked where these works were made, and received in answer, in England. 'Then,' said the Pope, 'England is surely a garden of delights for us. It is truly a never-failing spring, and there, where many things abound, much may be extorted.'