

## THE IRISH PAPAL JUBILEE LACE.



LAST June the Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops of Ireland determined to offer, as their gift to Leo XIII. on the occasion of his Jubilee—fifty years having elapsed since his ordination—a unique “set” of Irish laces. An altar-fall or trimming for the altar-cloth of his private chapel, and lace suitable for the Pope’s rochet, were selected as the objects to be worked; and a prize was offered for competition amongst those pupils at Schools of Art and art classes in Ireland who could produce original designs suitable for the occasion. Seventeen competed, with the result that the pupils of the branch class at the Convent of Poor Clares, Kenmare, under the instruction of Mr. Brenan, R.H.A., head master of the Cork School of Art, secured the first prize; Miss Emily Barney, a student of the Metropolitan School of Art, Dublin, took the second; and Miss Emily Anderson, a pupil of the Cork School of Art, the third prize.

The Kenmare design, in point of artistic com-

while it suggested an extraordinary number of different lace stitches, requiring skilful and delicate workmanship, being used with good effect. The design was unanimously accepted by the bishops, and was sent to the Presentation Convent, Youghal, to be worked in the flat needle-point, for which the women and girls trained in the convent-school there are famous. It is a pretty sight to go through the grounds of this picturesque convent, and enter the large, comfortable work-room, where, by degrees, as they finish their home duties, the workers drop in, take up their wonted places and their lace, after a kindly greeting from the “good Sister,” who shows herself almost as much interested in their home circle—whether Pat has work or Bridget got over her cold—as in the lace. I have seen three generations working in one of these convent work-rooms—grandmother, mother, and daughter—each showing the other her work with the greatest pride. In the needle-point made here no braid or net is introduced. Every stitch is made by hand; the thread employed is of the very finest flax. The work is kept beautifully clean, by being covered up according as it is made.

In the altar-fall, the motives and emblems chosen are those appropriate to the Blessed Sacrament only.



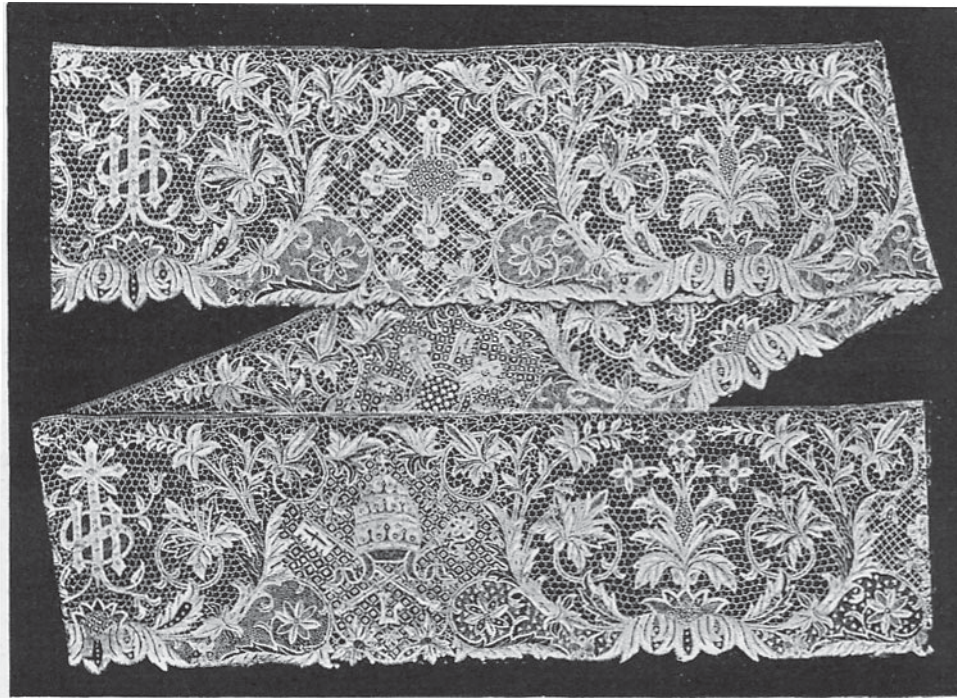
CUFF OF NEEDLE-POINT LACE FOR AN ALB OR ROCHET.

pleteness, surpassed the others in the beauty of its curves and the great variety of leaves and flowers,

The passion-flower and vine are displayed; the trefoil encloses the sacred monogram “I.H.S.,” for the centre

of the altar. On either side is found the chalice, and further on the  $\Delta$ , the emblem of the Trinity, the famous dogma taught by St. Patrick, and illustrated by the shamrock. The workers have carried out

ployment. There is besides a great deal of artistic talent available in the community, and their well-executed designs worthily second and encourage the labour of the workers. New Ross is a new town



BORDER OF NEEDLE-POINT LACE FOR AN ALB OR ROCHET.

*(Made from a Design by a Member of the Community of Poor Clares, Kenmare, Co. Kerry, by Lace-makers working under the supervision of the Presentation Convent, Youghal, Co. Cork. Presented by the Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland as a Jubilee Offering to His Holiness the Pope.)*

the design with much success; and in the number and rendering of the different fillings which serve as the grounds upon which to display the different emblems, have proved their ability to rank amongst the best needle-point workers anywhere. The treatment of the rochet design is more conventional, and as this vestment is intended for the present use of the Pope, the Papal emblems occupy a prominent place. We find there the tiara, the cross keys, and brazier, as well as the cross and the "I.H.S."

The cobweb texture of certain portions of the laces have elicited the admiration of some of our most fastidious lace-connoisseurs. Indeed, both in beauty of design and of rendering into lace, the Irish Catholic hierarchy may be proud of their gift, which will hold its own among all the treasures that have poured into the Vatican.

Flat and raised needle-point are also made in Ireland at the Convent Lace Schools of Kenmare and New Ross. The former convent is most picturesquely situated in the wilds of Kerry, midway between Killarney and Glengariff. The industry is an immense boon to the poor of the locality, and many come there from distant parts to seek em-

ployment in the county of Wexford, but, although it is prettily situated, it presents few attractions to the tourist. It is, nevertheless, admirably adapted for a lace centre, there being a very large female population, and no women's industries established there as yet beyond lace-making. The Sisters of the Carmelite Convent there have undertaken the supervision of the lace and crochet made in the locality, and very good specimens of both can be produced through them. Their copies of Venetian point and other raised laces are admirable.

It is to be hoped, as the altar-fall and rochet I have described prove that the sister-isle can and does produce as good and as artistic lace as can be found elsewhere, that English ladies will give a helping hand to the poor Irish lace-workers, and not so exclusively patronise French and Belgian productions as they have hitherto been accustomed to do. Statistics demonstrate that over one million's worth of foreign hand-made lace is imported each year into Great Britain. Half that sum expended in the struggling lace centres of Ireland would bring comfort and plenty to the homes of these poor but skilful people.

MARY POWER LALOR.