lace, a diamond mesh, formed of two threads plated to a pillar. 3. Alençon lace, also called brisa, a hexagon mesh of two threads twisted similarly to Buckingham lace, and considered the most inferior of any chemins-trade lace. 6. Alençon point-d'damage, formed of two threads to a pillar, with octagonal and square meshes alternately. In the portraits painted by Verelle during the reign of Charles I. (Fig. 488), and also in those painted afterwards by Sir Peter Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller, and others, the lace represented is Brussels point, in which the network is made on the cushion with bobbin, and the pattern worked into the net with the needle. About 1577, a new ground was attempted by the lace-makers of Buckingham, which quickly superseded all others; this was the point-ground, which had, it is believed, been imported from the Netherlands. From the first appearance of this ground the origin of the modern pillow-lace trade must be dated. It was not, however, till the beginning of the present century that the most striking improvements were made. After 1812, at Honiton, the manufacture had arrived at that perfection, so tasteful in design and delicate in workmanship, that the best specimens of Brussels lace did not excel it. During the war between France and England, rolls of Honiton lace were sold in London at from 20 to 100 guineas. After that time, however, the efforts of the lace-makers of machinery began to be felt; and gradually the pillow-lace trade sank into insignificance. Lace is said to have been manufactured by machinery as early as 1786, by a stocking-wearer of Nottingham, named Hamond. Various other attempts in the same direction were made about the same time, and a few years afterwards the machine for making worsted lace was invented. The invention of this machine has been attributed to four persons. 1. The Hon. Mr. Claxton, of Edmonton, near London; 2. Mr. Archdeacon, of Nottingham; 3. Mr. Moore, of Honiton; 4. Mr. Moorfields, London; and Mr. Moore, of Nottingham. By these machines, lace of an inferior kind was produced in large quantities, and Nottingham became the centre of the trade. In importance, however, it was soon far eclipsed by the bobbin-net manufacture. In 1820, Mr. Beilby, of Honiton, took out a patent for a machine for making bobbin-net lace. This invention caused a complete revolution in the manufacture of the fabric. From that time, the machine became the object of frequent improvement, and was worked by steam-power in 1876. Lace became a general article of consumption, and that which had been sold at £5 a yard fell to 40 cts. The quality of bobbin-net lace depends upon the smallness of the meshes, their equality in size, and the regularity with which their hexagonal shape is displayed. At the present time its manufacture is largely carried on in Honiton. Bobbin-net lace may be said to surpass every other branch of human industry in the complex ingenuity of its machinery.  

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Lace, n. [Fr. point de lace, lace, brisé, lacé, lac; Sp. cana] (Manuf.) Properly signifying a network of gold, silver, silk, or cotton threads, forming a transparent texture. The origin of this delicate fabric is not known, but it appears to have been worn by the Grecian and Roman ladies. At Venice it was early in use, and it is said that Marie de Médicis was the first to introduce it into France from Italy. In England, from a prohibition, in 1463, of the importation of foreign lace, the manufacture would seem to have been established there prior to that date. But as pins, which are required in lace-making, were not used till the 16th century, the lace produced must have been of a coarse kind. The original manufacture was called pillow or bobbin lace, and was usually made of thread or silk, woven into netting with hexagonal, octagonal, &c., meshes. Afterwards it was ornamented with a thicker thread, called gimp, so interwoven with the meshes as to form flowers, or curled designs. Lace of this kind was made on a hard-stuffed pillow or cushion, covered with parchment, on which the pattern was drawn. Each thread was wound upon a bobbin, and, to form the meshes, pins were stuck in the cushion, and the threads woven or twisted round them (Fig. 1492). The spots for the insertion of the pins were indicated by the pattern, and also showed the place for the insertion of the clump. As many as from 50 to 60 bobbins are required for each inch of breadth, and only one yard can be made at a time. A piece of lace, 1 inch wide, with 50 threads per inch, will have 25 meshes in the breadth, or 60 meshes in each square inch of length, or 22,000 meshes in the yard. The most celebrated laces are: 1. Brussels lace, a hexagon mesh, the most valuable, which is divided into two classes: a. Brussels ground, which is made of flax threads, and Brussels groundwork, which is made of silk. The pattern is worked separately in both these cases, and set off by the needle.