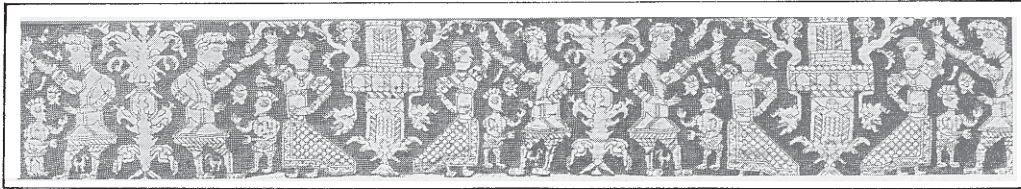


THE MENTOR · DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS
MAY 1, 1917



A CARICATURE IN LACE—ITALIAN, SIXTEENTH CENTURY
A strip used for curtain, valance, or counterpane

LACE AND LACE MAKING

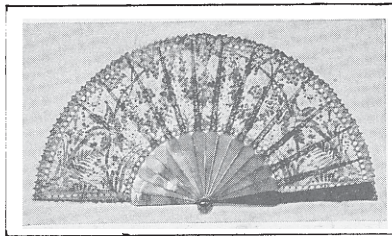
By ESTHER SINGLETON

MENTOR GRAVURES

VENETIAN RAISED POINT
Chalice Veil, 1650

POINT D'ALENÇON

VALENCIENNES, THREE
SPECIMENS
Eighteenth century



BLACK CHANTILLY FAN MOUNT
Nineteenth century

MENTOR GRAVURES

PILLOW AND BOBBINS

MECHLIN
Greatly magnified

COURT TRAIN OF IRISH
POINT
Made for Queen Mary
of England

“Wisdom with periwigs, with cassocks grace,
Courage with swords, gentility with lace.”—*Connoisseur*

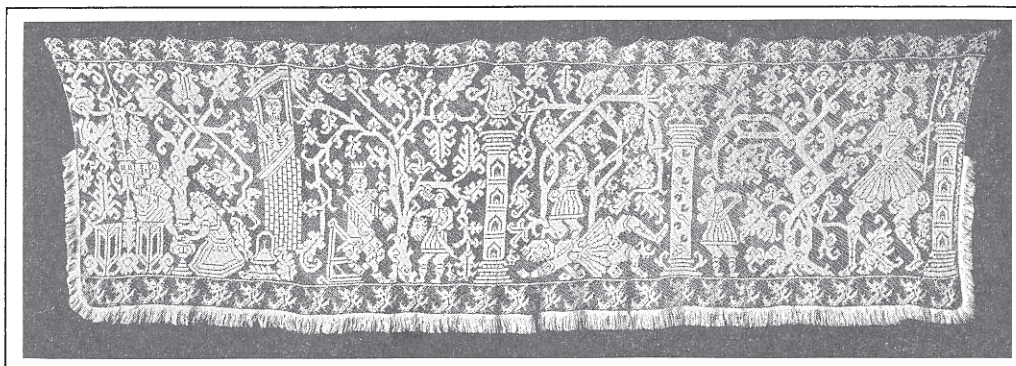
“To know the age and pedigrees
Of points of Flanders and Venice.”—*Hudibras*



LIKE old violins, old lace makes a direct appeal to the romantic fancy. But Venetian, Alençon, Brussels, Mechlin and Honiton carry us farther than a Stradivarius, a Guarnerius, or an Amati; for rich lace belongs to the class of heirlooms. Treasured from generation to generation, lace gains, in addition to its intrinsic beauty, a sort of atmosphere that makes the beholder think instinctively of the personages who owned it and of the brilliant scenes amid which it was worn.

Artistic lace, with designs of flowers, figures and scrolls upon a cobweb of threads, was first made in the sixteenth century. It reached perfection in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In common with many other beautiful arts, the home of lace-making was Italy. When the Sforza (sfort-sah) property was divided in 1493 the inventory of Beatrice d'Este (dess-te), Duchess of Milan (Este—a famous old princely Italian family), gives a list of fine laces that fell to her share. The first portraits in which lace occurs are of the early Florentine School; and to these we must go, as we do to inventories, sumptuary laws (*i. e.* laws regulating private expenditure) and contemporary documents, for knowledge of ancient lace.

LACE AND LACE MAKING



EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY GERMAN LACIS, OR DARNED NETTING
Representing the story of David and Goliath

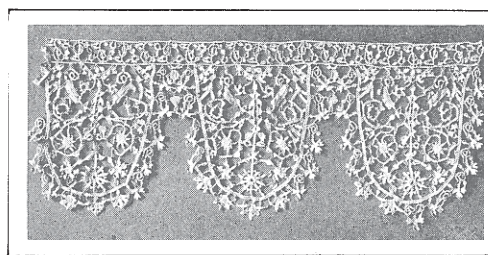
Lace appears in the old inventories of France and England, in company with braid and gimp, as *passament*, or *passement*. A descriptive adjective usually tells if it is made of gold, silver, silk, or linen threads. *Passament dentelé* (toothed, from the French *dent*, tooth) occurs in the inventory of Henri II of France (1547-1559); but the fine *dentelle* (dahn-tell) *de Florence*, which Marguerite, sister of François II, owned in 1545, brings us a little nearer to the French word for lace,—*dentelle*.

The word *lacis* (lah-see) was used by the poet, Skelton (1460-1529), to describe braid. His line is "The sampler to sew on, the lacis to embraid." It was a cord or braid. The word lace appears in the Bible; but the translators used the word to define braid; for the open-worked and decorative adornment that we call lace,* was described in the reign of James I as "purls," "points" and "cut-work."

The earliest open-worked lace is Reticella (ret-tee-chel'-lah), or Gotico (got'-tee-co). Needlepoint Guipure (gee-pure') is another name for it. It is stiff, with geometrical open-worked patterns and a spiky edge. We see it in nearly all the early Italian and Flemish portraits.

Guipure is applied to all large patterned laces with coarse grounds, and which have no *brides* (breed) (or joinings of threads from pattern to pattern) and no delicate *réseau* (ray-so, meaning network). In old days Guipure was used to define a gold, or silver, braid, worn only by the rich and on the livery of the king's servants. The "tape guipures" of Italy and Flanders were famous. Black silk guipure was made chiefly at Le Puy (leh pwee), France.

Early Reticellas were made of stiff threads, button-holed over and having little spiky knots at regular intervals. Patterns gradually became



ITALIAN POINT, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
Used for collars and cuffs, and to trim large ruffs

*Perhaps the first application of the word lace to describe that open-worked fabric of linen with inwrought or applied patterns occurs in Watreman's *Fardle Facions* (1555), which says "The men sat at home spinning and working of lace."

LACE AND LACE MAKING

more ornate: circles, wheels, triangles and so forth were systematically arranged, as anyone can see who examines the lace collars and cuffs in the portraits of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The home of this lace was the Ionian Islands, but its manufacture spread from Italy throughout Europe. "Cut-work," or drawn-thread work, was also a name for Reticella. Its effect is the same as the geometric needlepoint lace. "Cut-work" was made for three centuries, with few changes. The old patterns were handed down for generations. *Lacis* (lah-see), darned netting, or "spiderwork" is known today as *filet* (fee-lay). It was very popular in Italy. Siena was so famous for it that one of its names is "Siena Point." The pattern is simply darned with the needle upon a plain ground of coarse net. *Lacis* lent itself to all kinds of designs, from small squares with simple patterns to large ones with intricate pictures, religious or secular. *Lacis* was made in long strips, or in separate squares, and joined. It was much used for table-cloths, bed-hangings, and other household decoration.

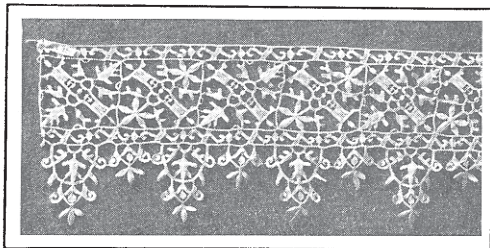
Catherine de' Medici (deh may'-dee-chee) had a bed draped with such squares. She kept her handmaidens busy making them. Her inventory gives 381 unmounted squares in one coffer and 533 in another.

Lacis seems to have been an old art before Vinciola (vin-chee-o'-la), a most celebrated designer, published his book of patterns in Venice in 1587.

Lacis was sometimes combined with Reticella, as is shown in the pattern-book of Isabella Catanea Parasole (1616).

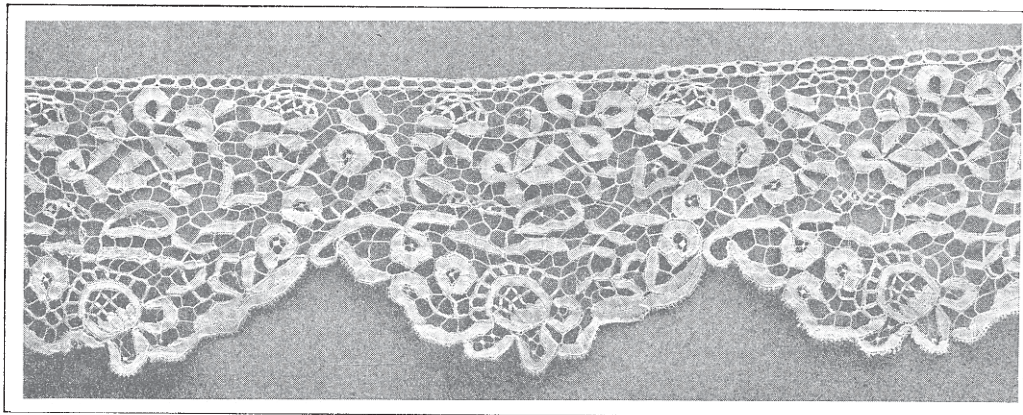
Whence Came Lace?

In the sixteenth century a new type of lace became popular, its elegance harmonizing with the splendid costumes of the Renaissance. The exquisite Point Lace, poetically



ITALIAN POINT, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The kind that appears as the collar in the portraits of Marie de' Medici

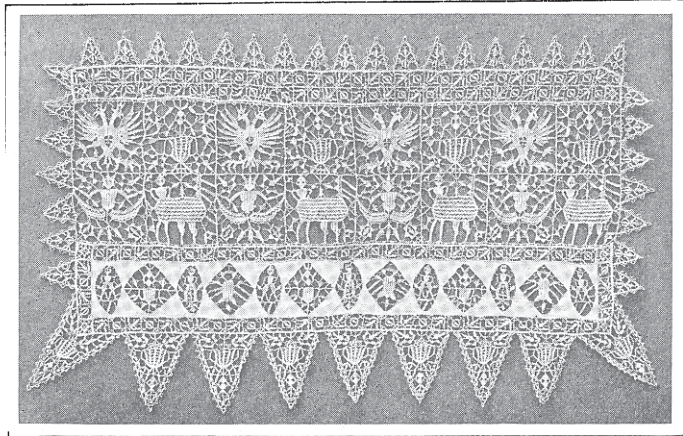


HONITON

Tradition says that the worker was paid as many shillings as would cover the lace

LACE AND LACE MAKING

called *Punto in aria* (stitch in the air), with its motives of graceful scrolls and lovely flowers, was developed in Venice. In early days its patterns show affinity with the arabesques of Persian ornament. Whence came this exquisite art, which Arachne* herself cannot imitate?



ITALIAN POINT
Made in the Tyrol about 1650

Antiquaries have sought in vain for its origin. Lace seems to

have been unknown to the Far East, and Egyptian discoveries yield nothing but drawn-work, cut-work and embroidery in the way of artistic manipulation of threads. The home of diaphanous lace is still a mystery.

But it was perfected in the city that "held the gorgeous East in fee." May we not believe that lace, like *intarsia* (or inlaid work of bone and ebony), damascened metal and richly-colored ceramics, also came from Eastern sources? Lace, moreover, may have been derived from the Saracens of Sicily, or from the Greeks of the Morea, the Ionian Islands or Constantinople. That the darned netting (*lacis*) has a Byzantine appearance nobody will deny.

Point Lace and Pillow Lace

There are only two kinds of hand-made lace: Point Lace and Pillow Lace. The first is made with the needle, and is called Needlepoint, or simply Point; the second is made with bobbins on a pillow, and is called Pillow Lace.

The name Pillow Lace is unfortunate, because lace of *all* kinds is supported on a pillow while being made, no matter whether the maker uses her needle, plies the bobbins, or simply knots the threads with her fingers.

Point Lace gets its name from the French *point* (pwan), a stitch. Its French name is *Point d'aiguille* (pwan dagwee), literally, the point of the needle—needlepoint, as we say. The name has been given to some laces to denote superiority of workmanship, as in the case of *Point d'Angleterre* (pwan dongletare), *Point de Valenciennes* (pwan deh val-lon'-see-enn), *Point de Malines* (pwan deh mah-leen), *Punto di Milano* (poon-toe dee mee-lah-no) and Honiton (hon-ee-ton) Point, which are not Point laces at all, but Pillow laces, as they are made with bobbins. This still further confuses the classification of lace.

In order to determine to which class any specimen belongs, the *toile* (twah-lay), solid part of the pattern, and the ground-work should both be examined through a magnifying glass. The ground is either a network of

*Arachne was, in Greek legend, a maiden who challenged the goddess Athene to a contest in weaving and was changed by Athene into a spider

LACE AND LACE MAKING

fine threads, called *réseau*; or it consists of slender threads, or ties, called *brides*, which connect the different parts of the patterns. The *brides* are frequently tipped here and there with little spikes, or knots, called *picots* (pee-co). The edge of the pattern is also sometimes decorated with these *picot* tips. In some laces the ground consists of both *réseau* and *brides*.

No matter how intricate the pattern and no matter from what country the specimen comes, there is but *one kind of stitch* in all varieties of Point Lace. This stitch is the familiar looped, or "button-hole" stitch.

In Point Lace the solid parts are always made of rows of looped stitches, closely worked, or loosely worked, with small open spaces left in the patterns. When *réseau* (network) is used for the background, the meshes are made of loosely looped stitches. Sometimes the needle is twisted twice in each stitch to keep the mesh open.

When *brides* are used they are made of one thread, or two threads, fastened across the patterns; and these *brides* are closely button-holed over. The *picot* ornamentation is also button-holed over.

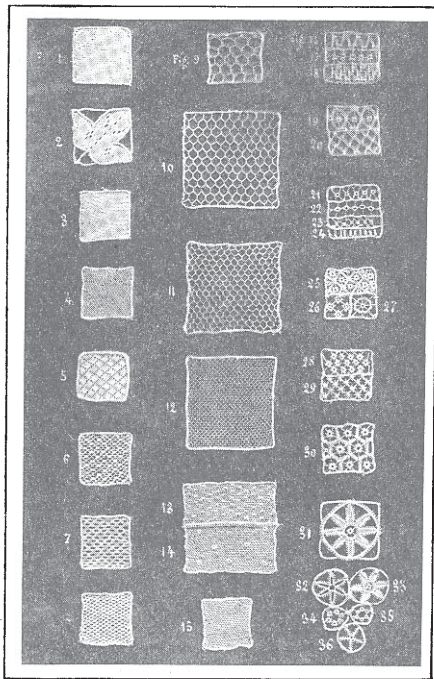
Pillow Lace (or, more properly, Bobbin Lace) is altogether different. The *toile* is composed of threads that cross each other, more or less at right angles, like the threads of woven materials. The *brides* consist of twisted, or plaited, threads and the *picots* of single loops.

Pillow Lace is divided into two classes: (1) The pattern is worked first on the pillow and the *réseau* (network) filled in afterwards. To this class belong *Punto di Milano*, Brussels Pillow (*Point d'Angleterre*) and Honiton. (2) The pattern and the *réseau* (network) are made in one piece on the pillow.

While Venice continued to make and export magnificent Point, Genoa and Milan did a large trade in Pillow Lace. A great deal of the lace that we see in the portraits of this period is the coarse and heavy Genoa Bobbin, with denticulate edges. The "wheat-grain"* ornamentation is a characteristic. This lace was suited for boot-tops, garters, shoe-roses, collars and cuffs and scarfs. It did not go out of fashion until 1660.

Centuries ago our English ancestors called Pillow Lace "Bone-lace" (Sir Thomas More went to his execution in a ruff trimmed with Bone-lace),

* This is also a characteristic of Maltese lace, as was natural, because Genoa workers were taken to Malta in 1833, to start the lace industry there.



LACE NET, OR RÉSEAU

Nos. 1, 2 and 3 are Venetian stitches. Nos. 4 to 15 are various kinds of nets. Nos. 16 to 36 are patterns—stars, circles, wheels, lattice work, etc., used for decorative fillings

LACE AND LACE MAKING

because the bobbins were made of bone. When we remember this, the line in "Twelfth Night":

"The spinsters and the knitters in the sun
And the free maids that weave their threads with bone."

gains in picturesqueness; and we see the lace-makers busy in the sunshine with their pillows and bobbins.

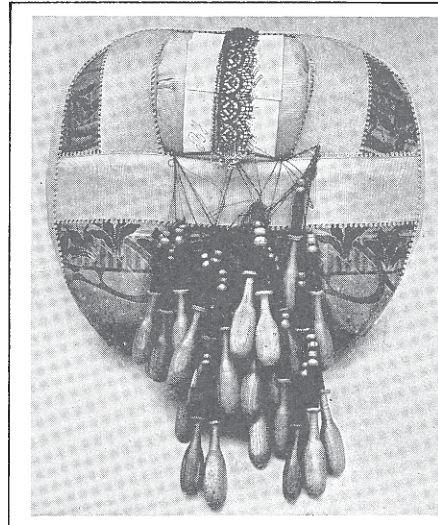
Lace in the Sixteenth Century

It was not until the sixteenth century that lace-making became a lay industry. In England it was long called "Nun's work." Pale sisters toiled over needles and bobbins in the convents with the same patience and eyes trained to minute vision that the monks used for their illuminated manuscripts. Throughout Europe lace was made in wealthy homes, and some women founded workshops and schools. The wife of the Doge Grimaldi, who set up a workshop in Venice and employed 130 women at her own expense, was not an exception.

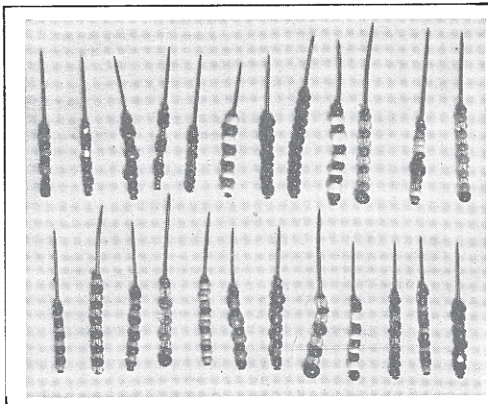
Wars, persecutions and conquests shifted people of all classes from country to country. The bloody sword of Alva sent thousands of Flemish refugees into England and France. In 1564 a colony of lace-makers settled in Honiton, Devonshire, bringing their patterns and methods with them. No wonder then that Honiton Point closely resembles an open kind of Belgian lace of which large "sprigs" are characteristic.

Flanders disputes with Italy the invention of both needlepoint and bobbin lace as hotly as she disputes the art of writing madrigals. But whether she stands first or not with regard to this invention, her lace-workers, scattered by the "Spanish Fury," taught the making of bobbin laces to every country of northern Europe. For instance, Barbara Uttmann, who introduced the making of bobbin lace into Germany, learned the work from a Fleming.

In England, the Fleming "Trolle Kant" became known as trolly lace, the trolly being a thick outlining cord, or *cordonnnet* (core-don'-nay). Trolly lace was quite expensive. It was much worn in the eighteenth century, and frequently figures in the advertisements in American newspapers.



PILLOW WITH BOBBINS
Showing on it a strip of Pillow Lace nearly completed



BEADED PINS
Used in outlining the pattern in Pillow Lace

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Brussels, Antwerp (with its pot of flowers) and Mechlin were all known and imitated in England in the sixteenth century. Belgium, at that time, claimed the lace of Lille (resembling Mechlin) and also that of Valenciennes, then in the province of Hainault (ay'-no). A great deal of fine lace went to Spain from Flanders; for, in the sixteenth century Flanders was a part of the Spanish domain. Charles V, a native of Ghent,* commanded lace making to be taught in all the Belgian schools. Preferring the Netherlands to the foreign country over which he ruled, he carried as much of their atmosphere as he could into Spain. Furniture-makers, engravers, painters, tapestry-weavers, lace-makers and other artisans were transported in large numbers. Spanish workers were in return sent to the Low Countries. Consequently there was an interchange of styles between Spain and the Netherlands.



VENETIAN ROSE POINT
The most complicated of laces

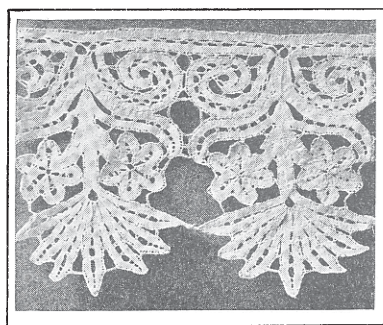
The Lace Industry in France

Catherine de' Medici set the fashion for lace in France. She brought in her suite from Florence F. Vinciola, who was appointed pattern-maker for laces and needlework to the court. He published a number of pattern books in Paris, chiefly for needlepoint and darned net. During the reign of Henri III (1574-1589) lace began to be more important, especially as an edging to the frilled ruffs that men and women both wore. In the last days of Henri IV (1589-1610) ruffs gave place to turned over collars of linen edged with lace; these were followed by small turned down collars made entirely of lace. Next came the tall fan-shaped "Medici Collar," brought from Italy by Marie de' Medici.

Pattern-books of importance were now published. Lace began to be used on everything; but, even so, the French trade was not large. Those who spent the most money for lace purchased "Venetian Points."

Cardinal Mazarin (maz'-za-rehn) tried to suppress the importation of foreign laces and to improve the home manufactures by introducing patterns from Italy. But it was Colbert (coll-bare), Louis XIV's prime minister, who made French lace an item of trade. He said: "Fashion should be to France what the mines of Peru were to Spain."

However, ten years before Colbert said this Le Puy (leh pwee) had become a center for lace-making, and the Duchesse de Longueville (doo-shess deh long-veel), Condé's sister, had brought lace-makers to



ITALIAN PILLOW (OR BOBBIN)
Seventeenth century. The so-called "tape" variety

* English pronunciation "gent," with the hard "g." French pronunciation "gahn," with the nasal "n."

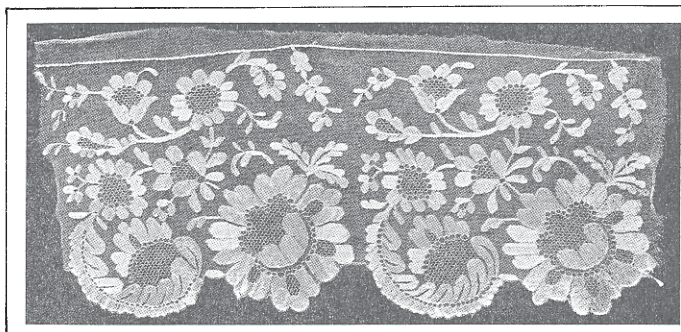
LACE AND LACE MAKING

Chantilly (shon-tee-yee). Colbert now established his famous school near Alençon, taught by lace-makers from Venice. Other workshops were founded in Le Quesnoy, Arras, Rheims, Paris, Sedan and Argentan.

Point d'Alençon
(pwan dal-lon'-sohn)
or "*Point de France*"

was at first an exact imitation of Venetian Point, but soon the clever French invented a beautiful *réseau* (network) of needlework, imitated from the bobbin network ground of Flemish lace. This was a novelty; for Point lace had never before been grounded on net. How human eyes and human fingers can produce this is a marvel, for an authority tells us:

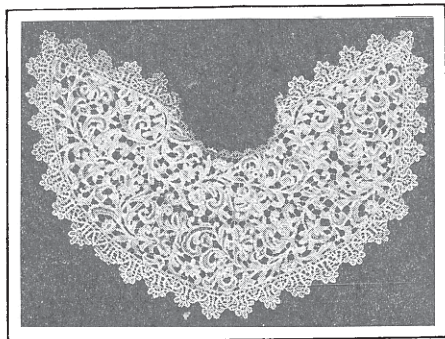
"The average size of a diagonal, taken from angle to angle, in an Alençon, or so-called Argentan, hexagon, is about one-sixth of an inch, and each side of the hexagon is about one-tenth of an inch. An idea of the minuteness of the work can be formed from the fact that a side of the hexagon would be overcast with some nine or ten button-hole stitches."



WHITE SILK SPANISH LACE
Nineteenth century

Fashions in Lace

Those who have made a study of old portraits, prints, and costume-plates, realize how much use has been made of lace at all periods. Lace was always considered by the fashionable world the most exquisite of adornments. It is not by accident, nor in satire, that an engraving called "The Prodigal Son," by Abraham Bosse, a celebrated French engraver of the seventeenth century, represents the richly dressed mother holding out to her repentant child a large collar trimmed with splendid lace. Any properly constituted "blood" of the period would have returned from the pigs and husks for such an inducement.



MILAN PILLOW (OR BOBBIN)
With many ornamental stitches

This was just the kind of collar that Frans Hals loved to paint with sure, swift strokes of his magic brush; and exactly such lace is seen in the portraits by Porbus, Coques, Rembrandt, Rubens and Van Dyck.

What a bewildering array of lace-trimmed articles and of furbelows and fineries made of lace comes to memory as we think of the "Fashion Parade" of the past! Here they come: great circular ruffs, collars and cuffs, falling collars,

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Medici ruffs, cravats, scarfs, garters, shoe-roses, lace-trimmed boots, shirts, handkerchiefs, masks, fans, caps, aprons, three-tiered "commodes," "Brussels-heads," lappets, falbalas, flounces, wrist-ruffles, berthes, barbes, shawls, parasols—in all styles and shapes, and of many patterns, textures and weaves. Where should we begin a short survey of artistic lace—where should we end?

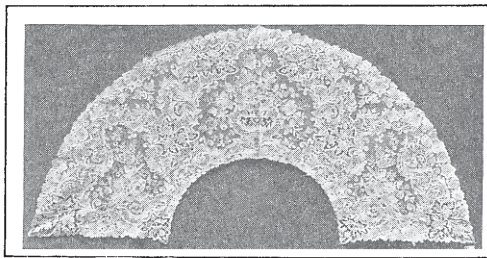
When we remember the hundreds of portraits in European galleries showing the subject holding in his, or her, hand a lace-trimmed handkerchief, the hand itself framed by a cuff of lace, or transparent lawn, lace-trimmed, we are fain to believe that the artists loved to paint lace as much as their sitters loved to wear it.

The enormous ruff tipped with lace that came into fashion about 1540, and which in England was called the "French ruff" and in France the "English monster," was edged in England with "Bone lace," much of which was made by the Flemish refugees in Dover and Honiton. These ruffs required much lace, but not so much as those that Queen Elizabeth wore. Twenty-five yards of Bone-lace were necessary to trim one of those huge filmy butterflies rising above her head. The Queen had a yellow neck, and the style helped her hide it. So she wore higher ruffs than anybody in the world except the Queen of Navarre; and she piled finery on them—jewels, pearls, lace and golden threads.* Her special taste

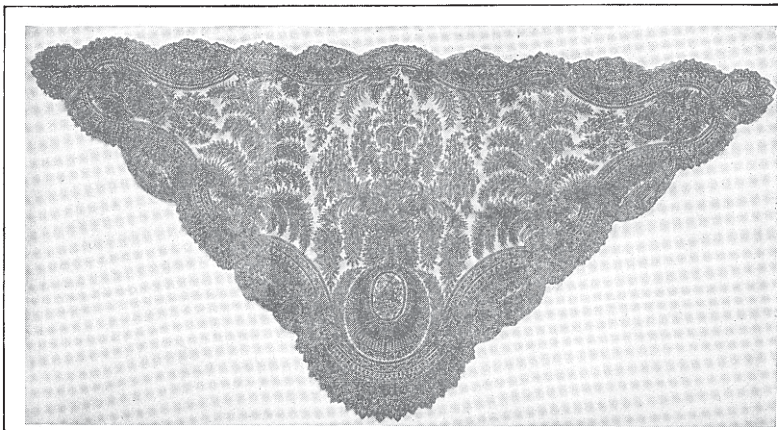
was for the laces of Flanders and the "cutworks" and "points" of Italy. Her court followed her taste, although much "Bone-lace" and Spanish lace were worn. The latter Katherine of Aragon had introduced.

Though the Puritans frowned on lace—we may read Stubbs' history to know how ferociously—it is interesting to remember that when Crom-

well's body lay in state it was draped with the most splendid Flemish Point. In the reign of Charles II, the English court wore lace in profusion. Gallants even filled their wide boot-tops with rich ruffles, Cinq-Mars (sank-mahr), who died in



BRUSSELS POINT FAN MOUNT
Nineteenth century. Showing floral designs



BLACK CHANTILLY LACE SHAWL

The kind our grandmothers used to draw through a wedding-ring to prove its delicacy

*See Mentor No. 124 for a gravure picture of Queen Elizabeth in the court costume here referred to.

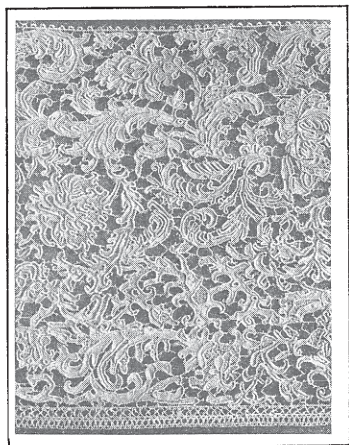
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1642, left three hundred lace-trimmed boots. The demand for Flemish Point in England occasioned smuggling on a large scale, and Parliament, wishing to protect English lace, passed an act prohibiting all importations. But the wealthy English would have their rich Flemish lace; and to supply them the merchants bought lace in Belgium, smuggled it into England and sold it as "Point d'Angleterre," or "English Point." Under that name it often went to France. This is corroborated by the Venetian ambassador to the English court, who wrote home in 1695: "Venetian Point is no longer in fashion; but that called English Point, which you know is not made here, but in Flanders, and only bears the name English Point to distinguish it from the others."

This lace was Brussels Point. However, a good deal of "English Point" (which is not Point but Pillow) was made at Honiton by the descendants of Alva's refugees, in "sprigs" and patterns resembling the kind of Belgian lace we now call *Duchesse* (also a Pillow Lace).

At this period Louis XIV was proudly buying Alençon and Argentan. At the King's fête at Marly (1679) when the ladies retired at sunset to dress for the ball, each found in her room a dress trimmed with exquisite Point. To the Siamese ambassadors the King gave in 1685 cravats and ruffles of "French Point."

William and Mary, of England, who seem to have run every mania into the ground, were as wildly excited over lace as over china. The Queen's lace bill for one year was £1,918 (\$9,590). William's was three times as much. This was the age of lace ruffles, lappets, commodes, and the loosely twisted Steenkirks that were named from the battle of Steenkirk (1692). Queen Anne's list of laces mentions Brussels and Mechlin. Every gentleman now had at least two Point Lace cravats; but the fair ladies, though fond of their lace, cared still more for china, for, if we may believe Addison, "The women exchanged their Flanders Point for punch bowls and mandarins."



VENETIAN RAISED POINT



MECHLIN

The pattern and network are made at the same time on the pillow

Nevertheless, the belles filled their long "pagoda sleeves" with Mechlin, Brussels and Honiton, and the beaux concealed love letters in their "weeping ruffles." If we may credit the satirists, lace was worn in "High Life Below Stairs"; butlers, they say, refused to carve the "Roast Beef of Old England" for

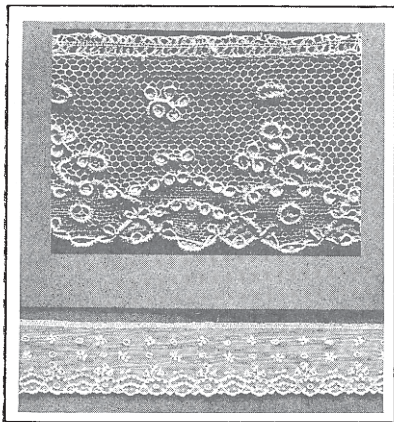
LACE AND LACE MAKING

fear of spoiling the ruffles they, too, wore at their wrists. But if ruffles descended, aprons came up in favor. They were soon dismissed again, for Beau Nash tore off the Duchess of Queensbury's apron at Bath, which cost two hundred guineas (\$1,000) and was of the richest Point, exclaiming as he did so that "none but Abigails appeared in white aprons."

In the days of Louis XV France subjected lace to strict etiquette. There were "summer" laces and "winter" laces. The lovely soft "blonde" came in fashion in 1745 and increased in popularity when Marie Antoinette appeared in the French Court. She used it for the fichu (fee-shoo) of which she was so fond.

The French Revolution killed lace for a time, and many lace-makers were guillotined because of their association with aristocratic dress.

In 1789 the States General, in arranging the costume of the *Tiers état* (tee-yares zay-tah), ordered the nobility to wear a lace cravat. Napo-



POINT D'ALENÇON
The chain pattern outlining the scallops

leon, who was a great lover of lace, made the wearing of the Alençon and Brussels obligatory at Court. He gave many orders for lace with new patterns in which the Bonaparte bees were generally present. In the nineteenth century England began to patronize her own industries. Queen Adelaide had a splendid dress of Honiton. Queen Victoria followed her example, and had her wedding dress, which cost £1,000 (\$5,000), made of "Honiton sprigs."

In 1840 there was a rage for Chantilly black lace shawls, veils and parasol covers. Our great-grandmothers were able to buy importations in the New York shops. Again, in the middle of the century, the

Empress Eugénie made lace popular. As was natural, she favored her own Spanish lace, and loved the deep flounces that one still sees in Spain. The most splendid lace dress of the period became hers in 1859. This was of *Point d'Alençon*. Napoleon III bought it for 200,000 francs (\$40,000). In later years the Empress gave it to Pope Leo XIII.

Eugénie also made black lace popular again; and the well-dressed Parisians, Londoners and Americans all had their black lace shawls, barbes, parasols, fans and "sacques."

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

A HISTORY OF LACE *By Mrs. E. Bury Paliser*
Revised by M. Jourdain and Alice Dryden
HAND-MADE LACE *By Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson*
OLD LACE *By M. Jourdain*
EMBROIDERY AND LACE *By Ernest Lefebure*

THE LACE DICTIONARY *By C. R. Clifford*
POINT AND PILLOW LACE *By A. M. S.*
ANTICHE TRINE ITALIANE *By Elisa Ricci*
SEVEN CENTURIES OF LACE
By Mrs. John Hungerford Pollen

* * * Information concerning the above books and articles may be had on application to the Editor

T H E O P E N L E T T E R

"DEAR EDITOR: The Mentors are so delightful—and so tantalizing. For instance, in the 'Precious Gems'—which is a gem in itself—there is a Thibetan Holy Picture made of gems. On the back of this picture is a description of the Peacock Throne. And, again, there is a picture of Queen Elizabeth in her court costume. I would like a full description of this costume, and of the jewels she wears. In most cases in *The Mentor*, the 'monograph' on the back of a gravure picture describes the subject of the picture. Why do you not always do so? Please tell me about the Holy Picture, and especially its size. I know that you think size is very 'material' and has little to do with art, but I like to know and I am very 'material.' Even the grim world of *Shades* will lose its terrors for me if I may 'make and measure it.'"—*Louisa Brent*.

As a rule we print on the back of a gravure picture a description of that particular subject, but it is not possible to do so in every case. There are many interesting and beautiful pictures about which very little is known—there are others that are sufficiently explained in their titles. That picture of Queen Elizabeth is an interesting one, but no descriptive matter concerning the costume can be found. The title, however, makes clear what it is. The Thibetan Holy Picture is a beautiful curiosity—a sacred picture composed entirely of gems. That fact is stated in the title, and that is about all there is to say concerning it.

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There is another answer to the question. We frequently have important subjects that demand special treatment in these monographs, and *no pictures to go with them*. Our "Gem" number would not have been complete without the story of the famous Diamond Necklace—or without an account of the Peacock Throne. But there are no authentic pictures of these two subjects. So we print these stories on the backs of pictures that have self-explanatory titles, and about which there is no descriptive matter. We link two things together—an important story that has no picture, and an interesting picture that has no descriptive story—and we give our readers the benefit of both. The essential thing is to give *Mentor* readers the greatest amount of interesting information possible within the limits of each number.

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Our correspondent asks—rather apologetically—for the size of the Holy Picture. Don't apologize. If you are really inter-

ested in knowing it, we are glad to tell you. The picture is 14½ x 12¼ inches. We give the dimensions of pictures where there is a good and sufficient reason for doing so. We stated the dimensions of the original pictures in the case of the gravure reproductions of *Miniatures in Mentor* No. 123. This was done because the size of a *Miniature* is one of its interesting features. In most cases the size of a painting is neither important nor interesting. It certainly has little to do with its art value. In the case of a good picture, size does not count, and in the case of a poor picture, the bigger it is the greater the offense.

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Just a word about *Mentor* Service. I don't think that some of our readers appreciate what it really means. We get many letters daily from people asking questions on subjects in the various fields of knowledge, and we have a staff of no less than twelve who devote time specially to replying to these inquiries. If we printed in *The Mentor* the responses of interest that we supply in one week, the material would fill fifty *Mentors*. Those that take advantage of this service value it. "I want to express my appreciation of the comprehensive manner in which you answered me," writes one of our members. "I had no idea that you took so much trouble. I think it would be well to call attention to the fact that *The Mentor* Service is a great time-saver. There is so much that the 'man of the street' has no time to read. Most people would prefer to write to *The Mentor* and have you dig out of the mine of the world's knowledge just what they want to know. It saves them time and trouble."

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Why not try *The Mentor* Service—you who have not written to us? If you want to know further about subjects covered in *The Mentor*, or want to have a question answered in the various fields of knowledge, or want assistance in a course of reading, or a program for a reading club, write to us. We have helped others, and we can help you.

W. D. Moffat
EDITOR

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