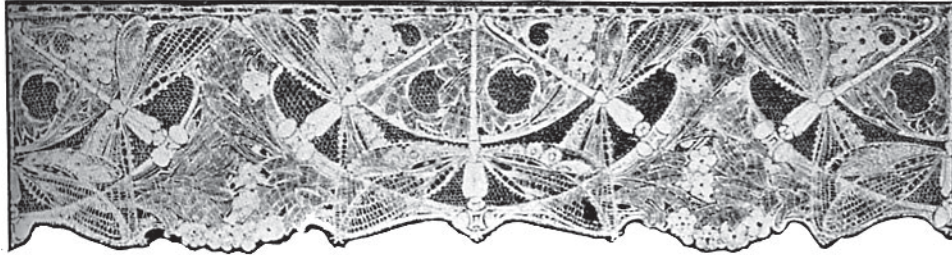


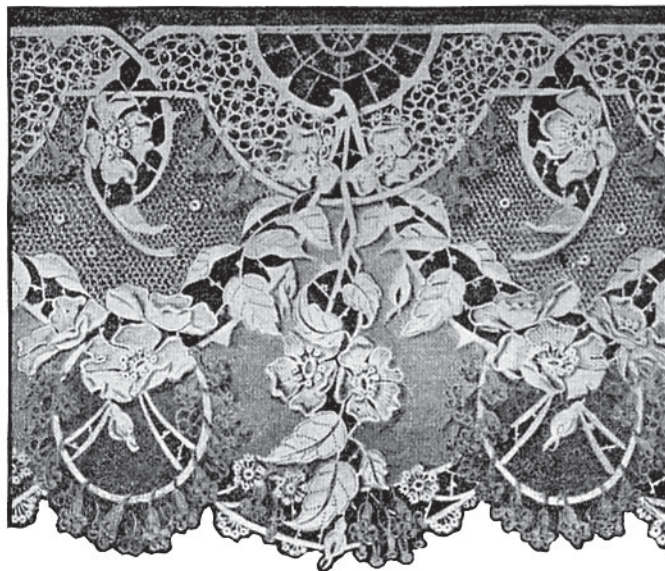
FRENCH NEW ART LACE



MODERN France is a country where they take light things seriously and serious things lightly. Funeral tokens are of bright colored beads, and there are national convocations for the improvement of lace making. There is an epigram for a fatal duel and a poem for a new "point" in lace. It is astonishing how long a country will swing along in the wheels of tradition. There is a strange narcotic quality in custom. For centuries, one design, or "point" has stood for the utmost possibilities of beauty of lace making in a certain section of France or Italy or Ireland. This has not argued lack of originality of beauty among the lace makers; but placid acceptance of tradition, observable even in most highly intelligent nations in weightier matters than feminine ornamentation.

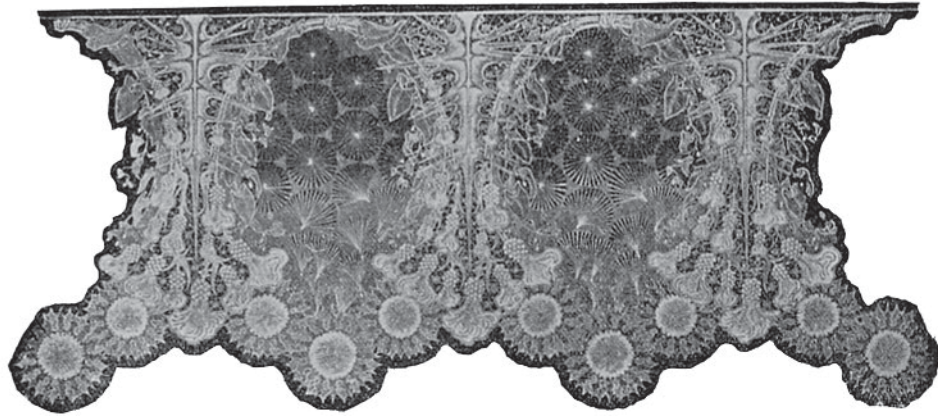
France is less academic about tradition than most Continental countries, not because France is more progressive, but because she is more easily bored. Sheer novelty interests the Frenchman and in his search for it he is constantly jumping out of grooves and finding new ways, achieving new and interesting successes in science and in the fine and industrial arts.

If France did not start the revolt against academic art that brought out the



Mlle L. Saint-Martin

VOLANT À L'AIGUILLE



Mlle M. Gelliaume

VOLANT. (SECOND PRIZE)

Secession movement, she at least has been instrumental in inoculating every branch of artistic endeavor with the New Art inspiration. "If we are to decorate our homes with new art pictures and carvings, why not our persons with New Art jewelry and laces?" The French *art nouveau* jewelry has been the craze all over the world for a number of years; the French new art lace, "*La Dentelle de France*"—the lace of France, as it is technically called,—is just coming into notice through a recent convocation of lace makers, who are formed into a national association, the "*Comité de la Dentelle de France*." At the first annual convention of the *Concours*, which took place this past season, the exhibit consisted of three-hundred and fifty designs, contributed by one hundred and ten exhibitors, both men and women.

The entire object of this lace association is to develop new "points" in lace. To awaken a fresh interest in lace making, "to save this art so widely beautiful, and to convert it into a national industry

with a future as magnificent as its past,"—so the first lace association stated its purpose to the lace artists; and the exhibition, although the very beginning of the movement for "Secession Lace," carried a variety of new "points" and a modern impressionistic feeling that was remarkable, considering how short a time it is since lace was bound thread and mesh in tradition.

The new points were all in the most modern spirit, a part of the movement toward simple, natural expressions of life in art, of flowers and butterflies and birds and bees, a suggestion of outdoor life, of the beauty of the fields and forests, of Provence gardens in spring and Versailles on warm flowering days, lace that was full of interest of subject and yet marvelous in elaborate technique, for these very simple rural motifs require the most intricate arrangements of patterns and adjustments of fine threads.

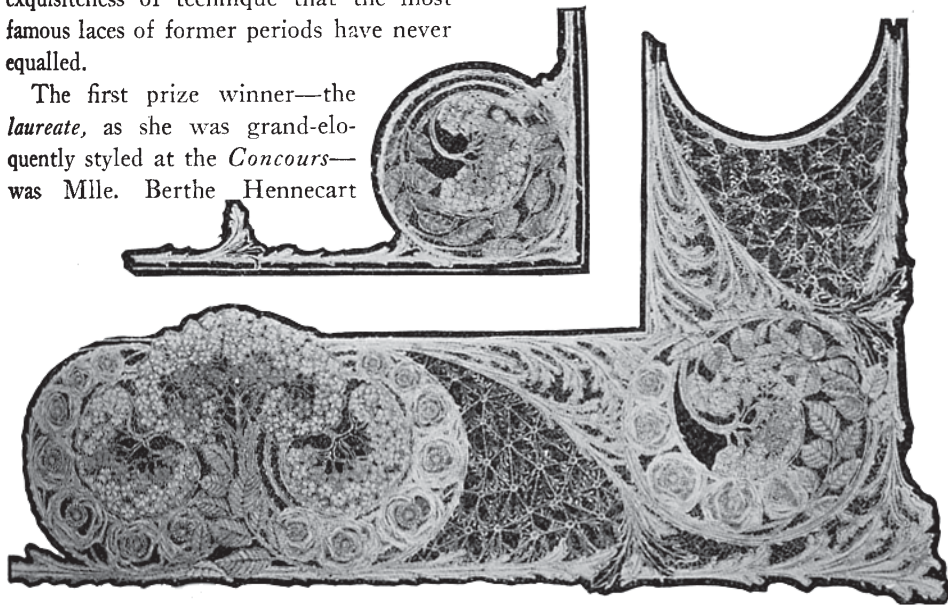
The value of this New Art lace was so almost incalculable and the new "points" so numerous that the jury found it most

difficult to award the prizes. Among the artists to decide the award were many names famous to the Secession Art Movement. M. M. Eugene Carriere, Lalique, Laurent, Pagès, Béquet, and Leférure, men who are all vastly interested in this renaissance of French lace making and who would fain see every renaissance conducted on impressionistic lines.

Every variety of useful lace objects were exhibited at the *Concours*, fans, handkerchiefs, umbrellas, berthas, collars, cuffs, trimming bands, flounces and delicate pieces of webbing for interior decorations, such as curtains, scarfs, tea-table corners; and in the designs, a flower or leaf spray or butterflies fluttering up to the fragrant honey casks, in every instance most noticeable was the return to nature for inspiration, with a natural expression and an exquisiteness of technique that the most famous laces of former periods have never equalled.

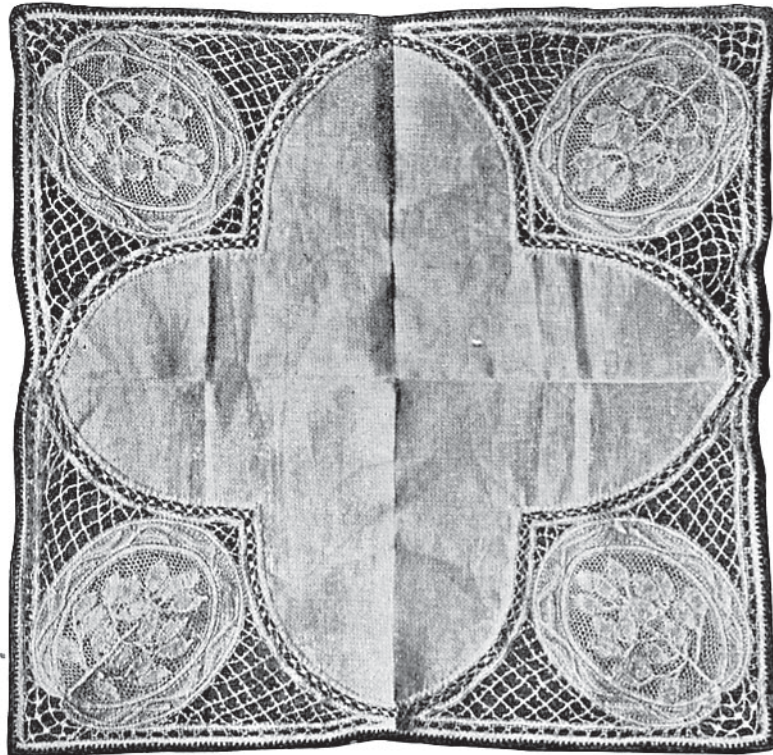
The first prize winner—the *laureate*, as she was grand-eloquently styled at the *Concours*—was Mlle. Berthe Hennecart

of the Ecole d'art Boissy-d'Anglas. She presented a corner of a tea cloth, of the most intricate and elaborate design of the style of Colbert but entirely New Art in inspiration and execution. Full-blown roses formed showy wheels or *volutes* and these were bordered with garlands of small flowers held together with a shower of leaves. The mesh was a fine whirl of cobweb, dew spangled; a lace durable with all its richness, a masterpiece of luxury, and woven for centuries' use. Mlle. Marchandiere exhibited three designs, and secured the sixth prize with a flower collar, a most realistic presentation of wind-blown iris, the stems and leaves forming the body of the mesh and the flower sprays blossoming out into a showy, curving border. The second prize was captured by Mlle. Bunoust, the



Mlle B. Hennecart

BORDURE DE NAPPE À THÉ (FIRST PRIZE)



A. Jacquin

MONCHOIR

fourth went to M. Paul Roblin for a novel Secession lace fan.

Although the lace motifs that were prize winners, were of rare beauty and novelty of design many of the unrecognized exhibits were beautiful enough to present as an inspiration for a revival of lace making in any land. A handkerchief showing her methods of working, was exhibited by Mlle. d' Epinay. The design was scattered sprays of small leaves flowering out in bunches of tiny blossoms at the corners, the mesh a delicate transparent web. Occasionally a Japanese effect was introduced, especially in the

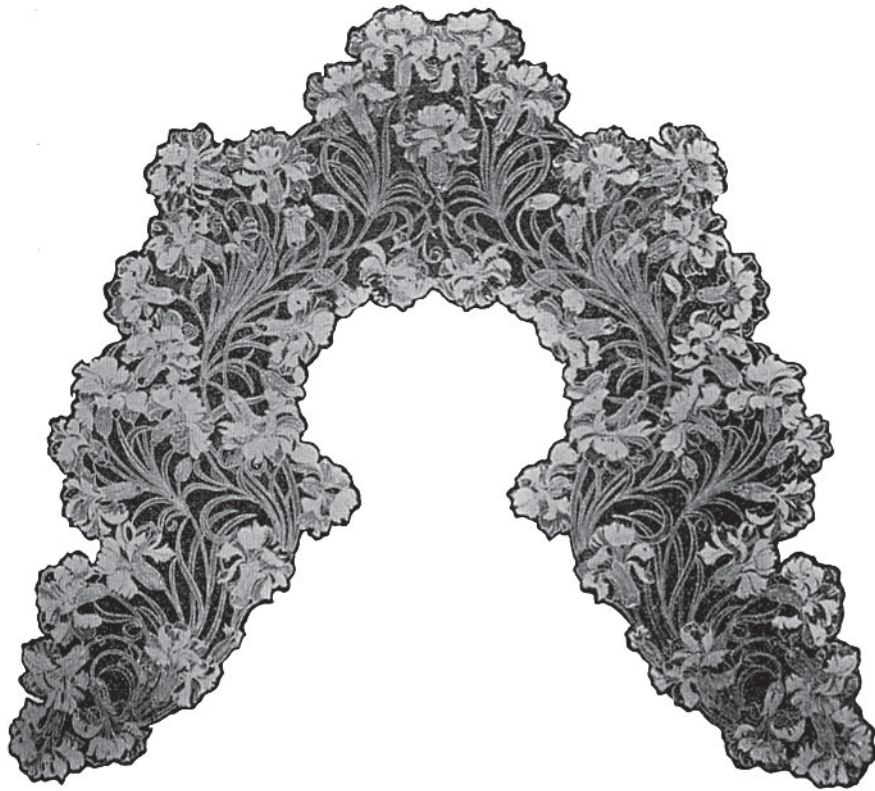
lace to be used for home ornamentation, flights of birds, clusters of small fruits, and tiny pagodas appearing in the motifs of tea spreads and curtains, and in parasols and in long scarfs.

There are apparently no limitations to the novelty and individuality that is welcomed in the new *Dentelle de France*. Although there is the distinct tendency toward nature, there is no set route for following the tendency. You cannot recognize *Dentelle de France* by any one stitch or motif as you can old Bruxelles or Venise or Chantilly; but you can identify it as belonging to the modern feeling

OUR HOME DEPARTMENT

about beautiful decoration, the feeling that relates all beauty as closely as possible to nature. So successful was the first *Concours de la Dentelle de France* that it has been decided to have a yearly nation-

al exhibition devoted to the interest of the New Art expression in lace making and to an effort toward making France once more the greatest lace producing country in the world.



Mlle. L. Marchandise

COL À L'AIGUILLE