EMBROIDERY.

NUMEROUS as are the subjects treated on in this work, there are few which furnish a more pleasing occupation than Embroidery. To this art our readers are indebted for some of the most elegant articles of dress. It may, also, afford them opportunities of displaying their taste and ingenuity; and offers a graceful occupation, and an inexhaustible source of laudable and innocent amusement.

This art may be traced to the most distant periods of antiquity. Coloured Embroidery and Tapestry were, according to Pliny, known, in very remote ages, among the Jews and Babylonians.

The manufacture of Tapestry in France, was introduced under the auspices of Henry the Fourth; and that kingdom may boast of having once possessed the most magnificent establishment of the kind that ever existed: we allude to the Hotel Royal des Gobelins, which a French dyer, of the name of Giles Gobelin, early in the sixteenth century, erected for the purpose of carrying on his business, near a rivulet, which ran through the suburbs of St. Marcel, in Paris. In the water of this rivulet he discovered certain qualities, which he supposed would be beneficial in the prosecution of his improvement on the mode of dyeing red. His undertaking appeared to be so absurd, that the building was called Gobelin's Folly; but, eventually, he produced so splendid a scarlet, that he grew into high repute as a dyer; and he and his family continued to carry on the business in the same place, until about the year 1667; when the building was purchased by the French government, and Tapestry, on an immense scale, was manufactured there for a considerable period. The establishment is still kept up, but has long been a mere shadow of its former greatness.

A slight sketch of the mode in which Tapestry was woven in this great manufactory, may not be altogether uninteresting. Artists of eminence were employed to design and paint in water-colours, on stiff card, or pasteboard, patterns, called cartons, or cartoons, of the full size of the subjects intended to be woven. The carton was covered with perpendicular and horizontal black lines; its surface thus presenting a series of squares, corresponding with those formed by the upright and cross threads of Tapestry. The workman counted the number of squares in each colour on the carton, as a guide to the number of stitches, or threads, to be inserted in worsteds, or silks, of the respective colours, in the Tapestry; looms, both perpendicular and horizontal were employed, similar in general principle to those in which carpets and hearth-rugs are woven at the present day. Threads, called the warp, were stitched the long way of the intended piece; and alternately elevated and depressed by machinery, for the purpose of introducing between them the silks, or worsteds, intended to form the pattern, and which were collected, by the side of the workman, wound on reels, and inserted in the warp by means of a stick, called the flute, corresponding with a weaver's shuttle. The Tapestry being thus woven in breadths, when joined or fine-drawn together, formed one grand subject, frequently large enough to cover all the sides of a splendid apartment.

The manufacture of the loom-woven Tapestry originated in Embroidery with the needle, and presented a precisely similar appearance; being merely an extension of the art by means of machinery.

White Embroidery comprises the art of working flowers, and other ornamental designs, on muslin, for dresses, or their trimmings; capes, collars, handkerchiefs, &c.

There are two sorts of cotton proper for this work; that which is most generally used, because it washes the best, is the dull cotton; sometimes called the Trafalgar, or Indian. The other sort is the glazed, or English cotton, and is only proper to be used on thin muslin; although it looks infinitely the more beautiful of the two, previously to its being washed, yet that operation destroys its beauty, and removes all its gloss; nor is it so smooth and pleasant to use as the other. Patterns for working may be purchased at most of the fancy-shops; but ladies possessing a taste for drawing, may design their own subjects, by making sketches on paper, in pencil, and afterwards going over them again with ink. A pattern may be copied, by placing a thin piece of paper over the original and tracing it through against a window. The outline of a subject already worked, if of a thick, rich description, may be obtained by laying the muslin on a table, placing a piece of white paper over it, and rubbing the paper with a nutmeg, partly grated: this outline may, afterwards, be perfected with a pen.

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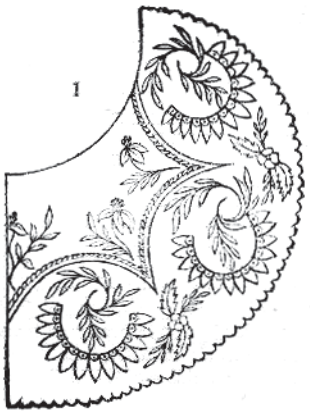

The paper pattern for a running design of flowers, foliage, &c. should be from twelve to eighteen inches long, in proportion to its breadth, and shifted along the muslin as the work proceeds. As this sort of pattern is liable to be soon damaged, it is advisable to strengthen it by a lining of cambric muslin. The pattern for a cape of a dress is usually of the size of the intended cape; but a sketch of one-half of the pattern (Fig. 1) may be made to answer the purpose equally well, by retracing the design on the other side of the paper, against a window, and when half the cape is worked, turning the pattern over to the other side; in this case the half-pattern must terminate exactly at the middle, or half of the work. The muslin, cambric-muslin, or French cambric, intended to be worked, must be smoothly and evenly tacked on the pattern, so as to prevent its getting out of place; the stems, and external edges of leaves, flowers, or ornaments, must then be traced, by running them round with cotton (Fig. 2): great care should be taken to preserve their shape and form accurately, as a fault in this stage of the work is not easily remedied afterwards. In working the bottom of a dress, flounce, cape, or collar, the edge of the pattern, which is usually a running scallop, a series of scallops, forming larger ones, a vandyke, or a chain, should be done first. The best and strongest way of working this part, is in the stitch used for button-hole work.

2

Lace-making, though formerly practised by ladies, having now become so important a branch of European manufacture as to furnish employment for many thousands of females, to give proper practical instructions would be useless; we have, therefore, only aimed at conveying such information as would afford our young friends a general idea of the process.

The stalks, leading to leaves, or flowers having been run round as directed must next be sewn over tolerably thick. Where it appears desirable to thicken a stem, or any other part of the outline, a piece of the cotton should be laid along the running thread, and both be sewn over together. Leaves, or flowers, are worked in what is called satin-stitch (from the length of the stitches resembling the threads in satin): but great care should be taken that the stitches do not lie over each other, but are evenly ranged side by side. Flowers, or stars, worked in fine worsted, or crewel, of various colours, may be used, with very good effect, in satin-stitch. The work should be slightly press-

ed with the finger, now and then, to assist in keeping it in shape.

Round eyelet holes, or oval ones, in a circle, like a star, or the head of a flower, are sometimes introduced. These are first run round; then a very little bit of the muslin is cut out in the shape of the intended hole, but much smaller, and sewn thickly round; the needle being run through the centre, and passed under the running thread (Fig. 3.) A leaf, or the head of a flower, is formed, occasionally, by placing a piece of thread-net on the muslin, then running it round in the pattern required, and covering the running thread in button-hole stitch, or thick sewing: the outer part of the thread net is then cut off with fine-pointed scissors; and the muslin, under the net, cut out in the same way, when removed from the paper pattern.

3

The middle of a flower is sometimes ornamented by the introduction of very beautiful open work, in imitation of antique Lace; but the various kinds of stitch requisite, and the mode of using them, are so complex and intricate, that a practical description is scarcely possible; and nothing but personal instruction can properly convey a perfect knowledge of their application. We shall, however, endeavour to illustrate the subject, by an engraving of a fancy sprig of leaves and flowers, in the style of rich Antique Lace Embroidery, and attempt to convey a general idea of a few of the stitches used; of which, sixteen distinct kinds are comprised in this pattern (Fig. 4.) Several portions of the leaves and flowers are shown on a larger scale, with references to the various stitches of which they are composed.

4

The stalk is composed of rows of eyelet holes, which are an agreeable variation from the usual mode of sewing stems. The running-thread, which first formed the outline, is withdrawn; and the slight marks left in the muslin, serve as a guide for further operations. Four threads of the muslin are taken on the needle, and sewn over three times; the needle being passed through the same places each time, and the four threads drawn tightly together.—The next four threads, higher on the line, are then taken up and sewn over, as the last, thus, a series of bars is formed—the thread passing, alternately, on the right side, and on the left, from one bar to another: care must be taken to keep it at the side, and not to let it run across the apertures. Having proceeded the intended length of the stalk, the sides of the holes must be sewn down: the needle being passed through each aperture three times, including, within the sewing, the alternate threads before mentioned as running between the bars.

The outline of the leaves, in feather-stitch (Fig. 5), being run round, each separate leaf is done with fine glazed cotton, in an elongated button-hole stitch, from the centre vein to its outer edge, the stitch being gradually shortened towards the points; the threads of muslin will thus be divided in a line up the middle, which must be filled up in glover's-stitch; this resembles the button-hole stitch, except that each stitch is taken a little higher up than the preceding one.

5

The outer edge, and the outline of the separate parts of the leaf, (Fig. 6.) comprising a variety of stitches, are run round: the right hand edge of the leaf is composed, alternately, of feather-stitch, and a pattern worked, with glazed cotton, in double button hole stitch, when two stitches are taken, side by side: then an equal space is left, and two more are taken; and thus to the end. The next row is formed by placing similar stitches under the alternate spaces left above, taking in, each time, the threads which run between each pair of stitches. The parts (opposite *a*) are done in half herring-bone stitch, the cross way of the muslin; four threads being taken on the needle at a time. In forming the second, and the succeeding rows, the needle passes through the lower side of the first row of apertures.—The ground (*b*) is composed of a series of lines, each formed by drawing together, and sewing over very closely with fine thread, six threads of the muslin. Square spots are formed in the spaces, by sewing, in glazed cotton, over eight of the cross threads; passing the needle, alternately, over the first four, and under the second four. The large rosette (*c*) is worked in feather-stitch. All the other stitches used in this leaf are described in the succeeding flowers.

6

The cup (*a*) of the fancy flowers, (Fig. 7.) is done in feather-stitch.—The centre is a series of eyelet holes, formed by passing the needle twice through the same hole; then repeating the same process at the distance of four threads; and so, in succession, to the end of the row. The second row is formed at the spaces between the holes of the first row, with four threads between each, as before, so that the holes of each row are perfected in the following row.—The part (*b*) is done in half-herring-bone stitch, leaving four threads of the muslin between each row; (*c*) is formed by drawing together and sewing over tightly, four threads of the muslin between each row; (*d*) is worked in double-button-hole stitch; (*e*) is the same as the centre, with spots in satin-stitch.

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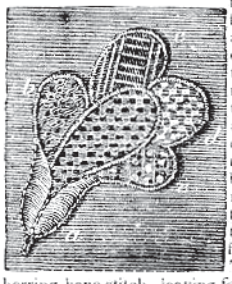

Pictoral, or Coloured Embroidery, is similar in some respects, to the ancient Tapestry, although it is generally worked on a smaller scale, and is rather different in practice. It comprehends the admired productions of the needle in coloured Embroidery, with worsteds and silks of various hues, and is applied to the imitation of paintings; comprising all the varieties of landscape, groups of animals, historical subjects, fruits, flowers, birds, shells, &c. Its effect is very brilliant if it be well executed, and judgment and taste be displayed in the selection of the various shades of colour; it is, in fact, "the soul and sentiment of the art."

The fine twisted worsted, called crewel, and both twisted and floss silks, are employed in coloured Embroidery.

Silk is principally used for flowers, birds and butterflies, and is worked on a silk or satin ground. The latter is by far the richest in appearance; and nothing, in this art, can have a more splendid effect than a well-arranged group of flowers, embroidered in twisted silks on black satin. A talent for painting is of material advantage in this delightful pursuit; the variety and delicacy of the tints giving ample scope to the genius of the embroideress.

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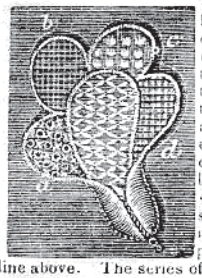

The centre of the fancy flower (Fig. 8), is in half-herring-bone stitch, worked in glazed cotton. The small eyelet holes (*a*) are formed by taking up two threads of muslin all round; by the sides of them is a stitch like the cross-stitch in marking, and a short stitch passes over each end of the thread, forming the cross; then follows another eyelet hole and a cross, and the subsequent rows are done in a similar manner: the eyelet holes in each line being invariably placed under the crosses of the line above. The series of holes (*b*) is formed by sewing over four threads in a cross direction of the muslin, then passing to the next four, and thus till the line is finished; the following rows are done in the same manner, until all the space is filled; the holes are then sewn over in a similar way, but in the contrary direction. At (*c*) six cross-threads of the muslin are drawn together by passing the needle underneath, from one side to the other, and then in contrary directions, thus forming a little spot. The part (*d*) is formed by sewing over four threads of the straight way of the muslin, and leaving four threads between each stitch; the same line is sewn back again, so as to form a cross over the top.

These stitches are susceptible of an endless variety of changes, by introducing spots, bars, or cross lines, in satin-stitch; and in the half herring bone stitch, by changing the direction of the threads, or leaving spaces, as fancy may dictate. The use of glazed cotton, instead of fine thread, will also give a very different effect to the same stitch. The edge of each flower, and of each compartment of a flower, is to be sewn closely over with glazed cotton. It is not expected that these imitations of Antique Lace-work should be practised on the extended scale here described: the separate stitches may, however, be introduced, as taste may direct, to fill up the centres of modern flowers, or fancy leaves.

Muslin, worked with glazed cotton, was formerly called Dresden-work, but is now known by the name of Moravian, from its production having formed the principal employment of a religious sect, called the Moravian Sisters, which originated in Germany, and some of whose establishments exist in this country: the shops, in London, called Moravian-warehouses, were, originally, opened for the sale of their work; though they are now become ordinary depots for the various kinds of Fancy Embroidery, produced by the immense numbers of young females, who, in that country, derive their maintenance from this art.

Strips of work intended for insertion in plain muslin, or lace, should have a row of hem-stitch on each side, which is thus produced:—A margin of the muslin is left on the sides of the pattern, sufficiently broad to wrap over the finger; at a few threads distant from the work, on each side, threads are drawn out to the width of a narrow hem; and three or four threads, which cross the space thus formed, are taken upon the needle (beginning at one side of the space), and sewn over, with very fine cotton, about three times, when the thread will have reached the other side; at which point three or four more of the cross-threads are to be added, and the whole sewn twice over, so as to tie the six or eight together at that side: the last number taken up must be then sewn over three times, as the first; by this time the thread will have reached the side from which it first proceeded; fresh threads are then

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added, and tied, each time, at the sides, as before; and so on, from side to side, to the end. Three or four threads are to be taken at a time, according to the width of the space formed by drawing the threads out. The whole hem-stitch, when completed, forms a sort of zig-zag (Fig. 9). The muslin is joined, by its outer margin, to whatever article of dress it is intended to adorn.

Another species of hem-stitch is called Veining, and is introduced to give the same appearance as the regular hem-stitch, in curved, or other positions, which would not

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admit of drawing the threads out (Fig. 10). It is done on the angular direction, or bias of the muslin, by sewing over two threads of the muslin one way, then taking up two threads of the contrary way, tying them together at one side, as directed in the straight hem stitch; then sewing over the latter two threads twice; after crossing to the opposite side, two more are sewn over; and so in continuity, according to the direction required.

Embroidery in Chenille is usually done on white Gros de Naples, or white lutestring, for producing representations of groups of flowers in their natural colours, principally for pictures. Chenille is a fine silk poil, or nap, twisted spirally round a thread, for purposes such as we are now describing, and round a fine wire when used in making artificial flowers; and has derived its name from its slightly caterpillar-like appearance. The silk on which it is to be worked, must be strained in the middle of a frame, similar to that used in Worsted-work. A coloured copy is requisite, from which a light outline sketch should be made in pencil on the silk. Chenille of all the requisite shades having been provided, it is attached to the silk, not by passing through, after the manner of Worsted Embroidery, but by sewing, or tacking down, as the nap would be much injured by being drawn through the silk. A fine needle, and silk of the same shade as the Chenille to be attached, having been provided, the stalk of the flower is to be commenced by confining to the silk ground the end of the Chenille, with a small stitch of similarly coloured silk, and which will be concealed in the poil. The Chenille is then to be carried along the stalk, according to the sketch, tacking it in a similar way at intervals; the stalk may be of one, two, or three rows, according to the thickness required. A leaf, if large, is formed by passing the Chenille from the centre vein towards one edge, in a bias direction, backwards and forwards, laying the rows closely together, and confining them at the turnings and at the centre; the other side is done in a similar manner. For a small leaf, or bud, the Chenille may be passed across the whole breadth of it, and may be turned over itself where necessary. The flowers are to be formed of Chenille in the tints of the coloured pattern, and attached in the various directions which may seem most accordant to their shape.

When it is desired to quit any colour, the end of the Chenille is secured by passing a fine silk loop over it, threaded in a needle, and drawing the end of the Chenille through the silk with the loop; it is then cut off, and the poil will prevent its slipping back. To produce the effect of shading, or blending one tint into another, the Chenille must be set wide, the ends must terminate by being drawn through, as before described, instead of turning again, and the next colour is to be introduced between.

Cambric pocket-handkerchiefs are generally ornamented with a row of hem-stitch, bordered by a broad hem, or with the outer edges scalloped, and a small pattern embroidered in each scallop. It is fashionable to have the

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corners embellished with a fancy sprig, and, frequently, with a different pattern in each. Embroidered initials and crests, in one corner, have a very beautiful effect. They are usually surrounded by a wreath of laurel, or some fancy device, in which the leaves and stem are worked in satin-stitch, relieved by a row of eyelet holes. In working the letters, which are also in satin-stitch, great care and delicacy are required to preserve their proper shape, by lengthening or shortening the stitches, so as to correspond with the varying breadth of the written characters in the pattern. A coronet, or crest, may be worked in satin-stitch, varied with eyelet holes, or any other appropriate stitch, according to the subject. [Fig. 11.]

The making of lace is not now among the pursuits of ladies; it will, therefore, be unnecessary to enter into its details. In a previous part of this article, however, we have given such general information on the subject, as will, probably, have proved interesting. The only branch of lace-

work which seems to come within our plan, is embroidery on net, in imitation of Brussels point-lace, which, for veils, dresses, or their trimmings, is very beautiful in its effect, and perhaps, exceeds in delicacy every other branch of white embroidery.

Embroidery on net is performed by placing a piece of French cambric, of a size proportioned to the subject,

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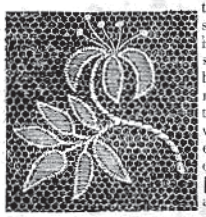

over the net, and the paper pattern under both. Then the design (of which each particular leaf, or sprig, ought to be very small, though the clusters should be large) must be run twice round with cotton, the running thread sewn over pretty closely with rather finer cotton, and the external edges of the cambric cut neatly and closely off.—[Fig. 12.] In designing a veil, a small running pattern, worked quite at the edge, is proper; and, when completed, a pearling, which is a species of lace edging, to be had at the lace-shops, should be sewn round the outside, to give it a finish. On the lower part of the veil, within the running border, there should be a handsome pattern worked across. This style is very easy of execution, and is an excellent imitation of what it is intended to represent.

Lace Work.—Net is worked by running the outline

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of leaves and flowers with glazed cotton, darning inside the running with fine cotton, doubled, and filling up the centre of the flower with half herring-bone stitch, from one side to the other. [Fig. 13.] Instead of darning within the flower, chain-stitch is sometimes introduced; and is thus performed:—Having secured the cotton, one thread of the net is taken up, and the cotton being held down by the left thumb, the first stitch is taken, as in button-hole work, leaving a loop, through which the needle is passed, to form a second stitch or loop, and so on, after

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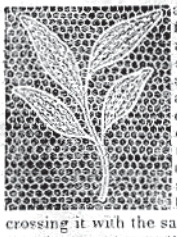

the manner of a chain; until, having arrived at the extremity of a leaf or flower, the cotton is turned round and worked back, until the whole space is covered. [Fig. 14.] An agreeable variety may be introduced among the flowers, by filling up their centres in a stitch formed by sewing over two threads across the space; then leaving one row of threads, and taking up the next two, until the interior is completely occupied. This kind of stitch may be varied by crossing it with the same stitch. Small clusters of spots, or net, are very pretty; each is formed by passing the needle backwards and forwards through one mesh, and,

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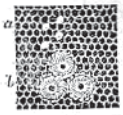

alternately, over and under two of the threads, forming that mesh, which are opposite to each other. [Fig. 15, *a*.] Sprigs, or branches, formed by eyelet holes, either singly along a stem, or in clusters of three, afford a pleasing variation. [Fig. 15. *b*.] The eyelet holes are worked in button-hole stitch; one mesh of the net being left open for the centre.

Book-muslin is sometimes worked into net, by placing it under the net, and both over a paper pattern; the outline is then run round: the running is either sewn over, or worked in button-hole stitch, and the external edge of the muslin cut off. This mode is not confined to small patterns, as the cambric net which is intended to resemble Brussels point-lace.

In Spitzbergen, says professor Willdenow, there are 30 plants; in Lapland 534; in Iceland 553; in Sweden 1299; in the marquisate of Bradensburg 2080; in Piedmont 280; on the coast of Coromandel 4000; as many on the island of Jamaica; in Madagascar above 5000.