



LACE MAKING IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL PART II. BY M. JOURDAIN

THE Spaniards are said, in 1634, to have derived a great part of their laces from the Île de France, while the French on their part preferred those of Flanders.* "That the lace import was considered excessive is evident by the tariff of 1667; the import duty of twenty-five reals per pound on lace was augmented to two hundred and fifty reals." †

Later, in the eighteenth century, Spain acted again on Lord Verulam's policy that foreign superfluities should be prohibited—for, by so doing, you either banish them or gain the manufacture—in the sumptuary law of 1723, which "has taken away all pretence for importing all sorts of point and lace of white and black silk which are not the manufactures of our kingdom." This sumptuary law was, as is generally the case, evaded, and there are constant notices towards the middle of the eighteenth century of seizures of vessels ‡ bound from St. Malo to Cadiz, freighted with the contraband gold and silver lace; and the author of the *Apendice a la Educacion Popular* writes that "all the fine qualities (of lace) come from foreign lands, and the greater varieties of coarser ones."

The lace known for certain to be of Spanish production is a coarse pillow guipure, both of white thread and also of gold and silver. This is a loose fabric made of three "cordonnets," the centre one being the coarsest, tied together with finer threads running in and out across them, with "brides" to connect them and keep the pattern in shape.

Swinburne,* writing of a visit to Spain, mentions a curious kind of black bobbin-lace: "The women in the little hamlets were busy with their bobbins making black lace, some of which, the coarser kind, is spun out of the leaf of the aloe (called by the Spaniards *Pita*). It is curious but of little use, for it grows mucilaginous with washing." Mataro, † in Catalonia, according to Townsend, "made much lace" in the eighteenth century; and at Barcelona, ‡ in the house of industry, "the women and children are employed in making lace. The product of this labour is contemptible, being at the rate only of one penny each per day, should we allow, which cannot be allowed in Spain, three hundred working days."

"There are no large manufactories, and the trade is in the hands of women and children, who make it on their own account and as they please," writes the Comte Alp. de Laborde.§ Gold and silver lace was also made at Barcelona, and at Talavera || (where was also a manufacture of gold and silver cloth), de la Reyna, Valencia, and Seville. When the prosperity of Spain was waning through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, attempts were made to develop manufactories, and manufactories of tapestry and gold thread were especially encouraged in Madrid. Madrid is mentioned by Larruga, in 1788, as having lately set up a manufacture of gold and silver lace, and in 1760 a manufacture of silk and thread lace was also established there. "This industry also existed at Granatula Manzanares, and other villages in La Mancha. At Zamora, lace and blonde were made in private houses." Cabanillas ¶ writes that at Novelda a third part of the inhabitants

* Marquis de la Gombardière, 1634, Nouveau Règlement Général des Finances, etc.

† Mrs. Palliser.

‡ The "Eagle," French vessel taken by Captain Carr in 1745, bore cases to the value of £150,000 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1745).

* *Travels through Spain in the years 1775 and 1776*, by Henry Swinburne, Esq.

† Townsend's *Journey through Spain in the years 1786 and 1787*.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Itinéraire de L'Espagne*.

|| In a flourishing condition in 1801. *Statistical Travels through Portugal*, H. F. Link, 1801.

¶ Madrid, 1797.

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SPANISH BLONDE WHITE SILK DARNING UPON MACHINE NET (MUCH REDUCED)

made lace, and that "more than 2,000 among women and children worked at this industry, and the natives themselves hawked their wares about the country."*

At the present day there are only two kinds of lace made in Spain, the *encaje de Almagro*—which is made by children of six and seven years old—and the *encaje de blonda*, blonde, both black and white (whose patterns are almost entirely imitations from

the French), for the national feminine toilette the mantilla, which is made in Catalonia, in many of the villages along the sea coast, especially in the city of Barcelona, where there is a silk spinning manufactory, whose products are especially used for the native blondes.

The lace is made on long pillows stuffed with straw, quite hard, and covered with yellow or bright blue linen. The lace is worked on a cardboard pattern, and with *fuseaux* like the French torchon lace.

* Senor Juan F. Riano, *The Industrial Arts in Spain—Lace*, 1879.



PART OF A PARCHMENT PATTERN WITH NEEDLE-POINT LACE IN PROGRESS PORTUGUESE OR VENETIAN *Circa 1650*
THE SCROLLS AND FLOWERS ARE ALMOST FINISHED

Lace Making in Spain and Portugal

Lace in Portugal has approximately the same history as in Spain. Portuguese dresses and equipages in the early part of the eighteenth century were as extravagant as those of the Spanish grandees, and Lord Tyrawly, writing from Lisbon to the Duke of Montague, describes his meeting with the Patriarch, on his way to court in his litter "which was of crimson velvet, laid all over with gold lace; followed by his body coach of the same. He had ten led horses richly caparisoned, and attended by six and thirty footmen in crimson velvet clothes, finely laced with gold, every servant having a laced cravat and ruffles,

"induced to visit the church for the purpose of viewing this magnificent sacrifice or renunciation of female ornament" writes of the image "as habited from head to foot in the finest lace." He also describes his visit in 1772 to the talented minister the Marquis de Pombal's manufactures of silk, of lace, of ivory and many others "carried on under his auspices, and which he had founded after the disaster of the earthquake of 1755.*

As in Spain, lace was largely used in trimming coffins. At Burgos, writes Jane Leek, "There seems to be an unusual number of undertakers' shops in



PIECE OF PARCHMENT A PIECE OF NEEDLE-POINT LACE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

with red silk stockings."* The sumptuary laws of 1749, however, put an end to all such luxury among the laity; and even those who hawked such wares as laces in the streets were ordered to quit the town of Lisbon.†

The wife of the Prince of Asturias (Barbara, sister of Joseph of Portugal) before she quitted Lisbon in 1729, made a solemn offer in the church of the *Madre di Dios* in the suburbs, to the Virgin, of the rich dress, laces, and valuable jewels which she had worn at the ceremony of her espousals. Wraxall,

the town. The coffins are generally white, pink, or blue, and trimmed with white or gold lace. This is the only branch of trade in which much competition is apparent."†

Very few specimens of Portuguese lace have been established or brought to England. A most interesting antique specimen of lace, said to be Portuguese, in the possession of Mr. Arthur Blackborne, portrays the story of Judith and Holofernes. This piece is about a yard and three-quarters long, and is in thirteen small panels with a figure in each. It is curious to note the difference between the dress of

* *MSS. of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensbury*, vol. i., Hist. MSS. Comm.

† "Ornaments such as gold and silver lace are not allowed to be worn on the garments of the Portuguese" (*Fairholt*).

* Wraxall's *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 48.

† *Iberian Sketches*, by Jane Leek, 1884.



STRIP OF PARCHMENT WITH NEEDLE-POINT LACE IN PROGRESS SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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Judith and her mother Abra, and even the joints in the armour of the men may be plainly distinguished. Along the top of the panel is an inscription in Portuguese, which in English reads: "Abra, Judith, and Holofernes, and how Judith killed him by night while he was sleeping, and placed the head in the tower." One figure illustrated wears wide trunk-hose and rosettes on his shoes. The date is *circa* 1590; but although the Portuguese inscription upon the upper border might suggest a Portuguese origin, the work is believed to be Italian, made for a Portuguese. It is supposed to be part of a decoration of a bed.

"The Portuguese for the last two hundred years have made no figure in the arts of design, though the beautiful Portuguese repoussé work of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the old Portuguese point lace certify to latent faculties of a high order,"* writes Oswald Crawford.

The modern laces of Portugal and Madeira closely resemble those of Spain; the wider for flounces are of silk; much narrow lace is made after the manner

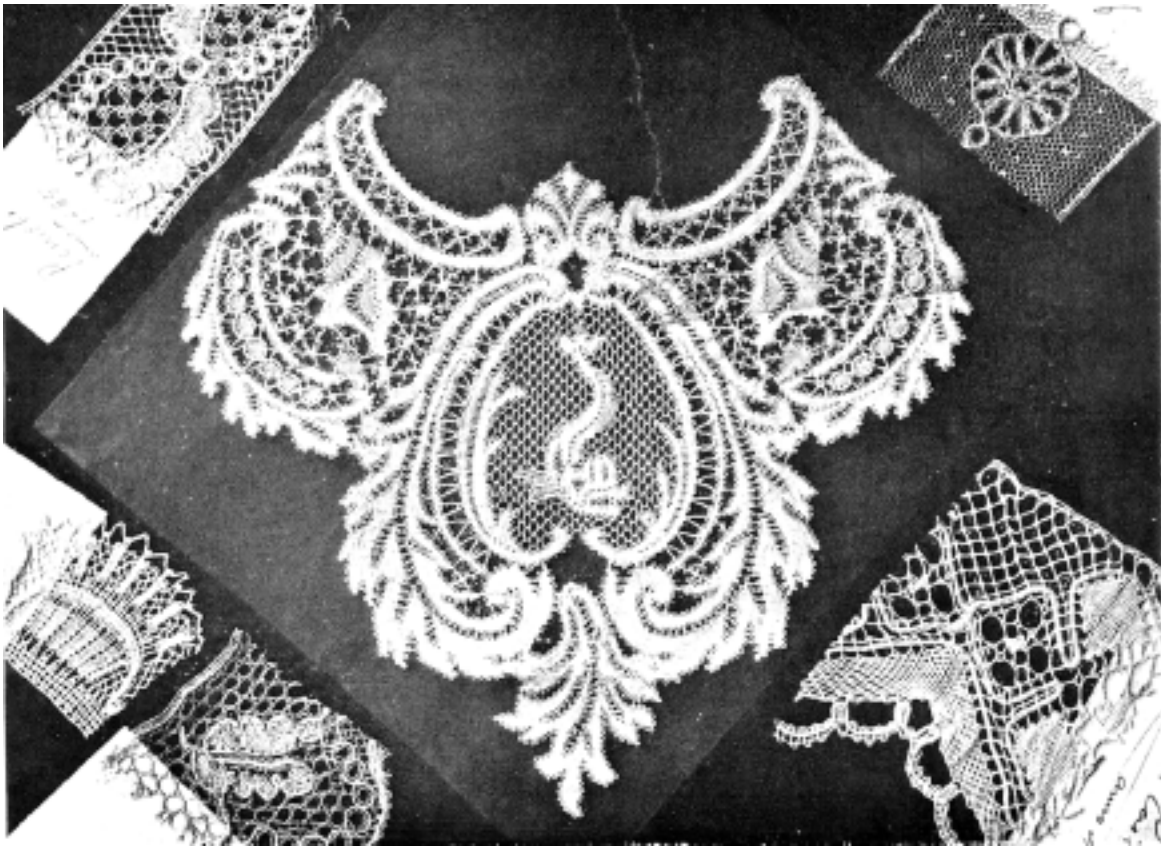
of Mechlin. Both Spain and Portugal enjoy a certain reputation for their imitation Chantilly lace.

A considerable quantity of coarse white lace, very effective in pattern, was formerly made in Lisbon and the environs; this was chiefly exported via Cadiz to South America.* Both black and white is made in Peniche, north of Lisbon, one of the few present centres in the country for pillow-lace where children of four years of age are sent to the lace school, where, seated at their *almofadas* (pillows) proportioned to their height, they soon learn to manage the bobbins with great address and dexterity.

The places in Portugal where the lace industry is chiefly exercised are, besides Peniche, Vianna do Cartello, Setubal, a village in Algarve called Faro, and Lisbon, where a lace depôt has lately been instituted under the direction of Dona Maria Bordallo Pinheiro, who is responsible for the excellent and original designs of the school, which she forms "to harmonize with the general idea of the architecture throughout the country."

* *Travels in Portugal*, John Latouche (O. Crawford).

* Mrs. Palliser.



MODERN PORTUGUESE LACE (PENICHE)