

# *Lace* *Its Origin* *and* *History*

*Samuel L. Goldenberg*



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BY  
SAMUEL L. GOLDENBERG.



BARBARA UTTMANN, A. D. 1561.

“I have here only a nosegay of culled flowers,  
and have brought nothing of my own but the  
thread that ties them together.”—*Montaigne*.

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**T**HE task of the author of this work has not been an attempt to brush the dust of ages from the early history of lace in the hope of contributing to the world's store of knowledge on the subject. His purpose, rather, has been to present to those whose relation to lace is primarily a commercial one a compendium that may, perchance, in times of doubt, serve as a practical guide.

Though this plan has been adhered to as closely as possible, the history of lace is so interwoven with life's comedies and tragedies, extending back over five centuries, that there must be, here and there in the following pages, a reminiscent tinge of this association.

Lace is, in fact, so indelibly associated with the chalets perched high on mountain tops, with little cottages in the valleys of the Appenines and Pyrenees, with sequestered convents in provincial France, with the raiment of men and women whose names loom large in the history of the world, and the futile as well as the successful efforts of inventors to relieve tired eyes and weary fingers, that, no matter how one attempts to treat the subject, it must be colored now and again with the hues of many peoples of many periods.

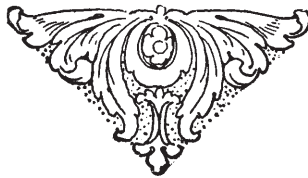
The author, in avowing his purpose to give this work a practical cast, does not wish to be understood as minimizing the importance of any of the standard works compiled by those whose years of study and research among ancient volumes and musty manuscripts in many tongues

have been a labor of love. Rather would he pay the meed of tribute to those who have preserved to posterity the facts bearing upon the early history of lace, which have been garnered with such great care.

Nevertheless, most of these works, necessarily voluminous and replete with detail, are more for the connoisseur or dilettante than for the busy man of affairs upon whom the practical aspect of lace, quite dissociated from the romance in which it is steeped, always forces itself.

It is for men of this type, and with no little misgiving, and a full appreciation of how far short of his ideal the volume must be, that the author has undertaken the compilation of this work.

SAMUEL L. GOLDENBERG.



# LACE:

## Its Origin and History.

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**W**HEN, where and how lace had its origin no one will pretend to say. There is a general agreement, however, that lace, as the term is understood to-day, is a comparatively modern product, it being impossible to identify any of the antique specimens preserved from the ravages of time as belonging to a period further back than the early part of the sixteenth century.

True it is that there are specimens of woven fabrics of a lacelike character which were undoubtedly made at an earlier date, but most of the authorities who have delved deep into the subject are of opinion that lace probably does not antedate A. D. 1500.

A perusal of the available records in many tongues fails to make clear just where lace was first made. Spain, Italy, Belgium, France and Germany have all claimed the honor, and each has been able to present a great deal of testimony in support of its contention; but the records of early times are so meagre and indefinite that it is impossible to bestow the coveted honor for the discovery of the art upon any one nation.

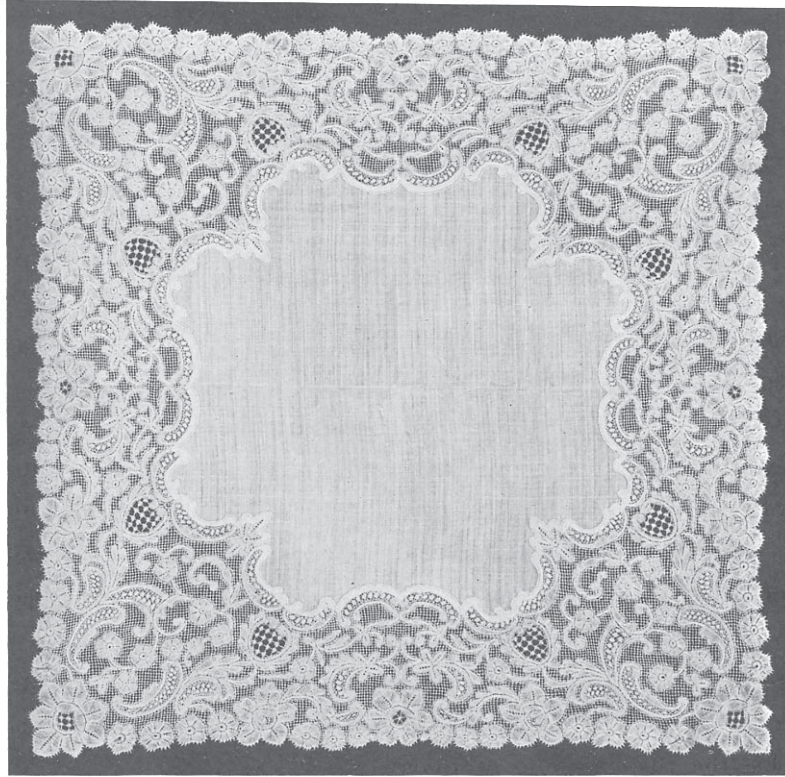
The instrument that is responsible for lace is the needle, but the earliest forms of lace were not the woven fabric that we know to-day, but rather cutwork, which, as far as we have any authentic records, was first practiced by the nuns in the convents of central and southern Europe.) This work was sometimes characterized as nun's work, and was designed almost exclusively for altar decorations and the robes of prelates, though it was also regarded as the insignia of rank and station. Some of the specimens of this work, still preserved in museums, show that the early workers possessed a skill in the art never excelled. Of course, with the progress of time, designs have become more ornate and intricate, but many of the old patterns still survive, and doubtless will continue to survive, till the end of recorded time.

The desire to elaborate the edges of plain fabrics, whether of linen or heavier material, was an entirely natural impulse to get away from the harsh simplicity of the times. To this desire must be ascribed the beginning of the mammoth lace industry of to-day.

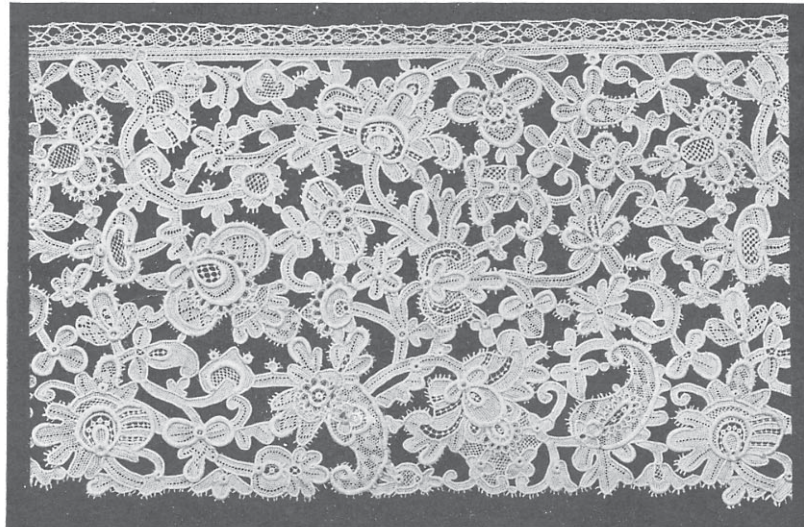
One authority says that coeval with these styles of decoration was drawnwork, in which the weft and warp threads of plain linen were drawn out, thus forming a square of network made secure by a stitch at each intersection. The design was afterward embroidered, frequently with colors.

Perhaps, all things considered, the lace industry received its greatest impetus during the period known in history as the Renaissance, when Europe, emerging from the severe and formal garb of the Medieval Age, began to bedeck itself in the most graceful and beautiful manner.

A number of methods were employed in the production of the lace of that brilliant period, the simplest of which consisted of forming the design independently of the foundation. Threads spreading at even distances from a common center served as a framework for others which were united in squares, triangles, rosettes and other figures



**Real Flemish Point.**



**Real Point de Venise.**



worked over with the buttonhole stitch, forming in some portions open-work, in others solid embroidery. This was, in fact, the first needle-made lace, and doubtless its origin is due to the Venetians.

Through constant practice the art was developed to a very high state by the nuns, who taught their methods to the pupils of the convents, through whom the knowledge passed to the peasantry, and thus became an important industry. Perhaps, however, the development of the lace industry at this period was due more to the spread of the methods by which it was done—through books more than in any other manner—for it must be remembered that contemporaneously with the development of the industry the art of printing was in its first bloom.

As one traces the growth of lacemaking from the earliest times he is impressed with the sharp advance made at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when laceworkers, having practically exhausted the designs possible by the then known methods, invented *passementerie*, which were known as *passements*. These, speaking broadly, much resemble the *passementerie* of to-day.

They were made of stout linen thread in imitation of high relief work of the needle point, a thick thread being introduced to mark the salient points of the pattern. Thus the term *guipure* was applied to the thread lace with *guipure* reliefs, and the designation has since remained to all laces without grounds, in which the patterns are united by brides.

In the beginning lace was made by two entirely distinct processes, in commenting upon which we can do no better than to quote the words of Cole, which are particularly lucid and concise. He says: "It is remarkable that lacemaking should have sprung up or been invented at about the same period of time by two entirely distinct processes without relationship or evolution between them, and that the people of the countries wherein either of the inventions was made were not only

unknown to each other, but apparently neither had any knowledge of the processes of lacemaking employed in the other country.”

One of these processes is the employment of the needle and the single thread, wherein the work was perfected mesh by mesh, each mesh being completed as the work progressed.

The other process was by the use of many threads at once, each one attached to bobbins, for the purpose only of separating them, the meshes being made by twisting the threads a greater or less number of times. When each mesh is only partially completed the thread is carried on to the next, and so on, from side to side, the entire width of the fabric.

Felkin, in his history of embroidery and lace, says that when pillow lace was invented—about the middle of the sixteenth century—the various kinds of point lace then in use had reached a high state of perfection. Some early writers after much laborious investigation assert that pillow lace was first made in Flanders. In later years it has been almost universally attributed to Barbara, wife of Christopher Uttman; she was then dwelling with her husband at the Castle of St. Annaburg, Belgium, 1561. From the castle, where she taught the peasantry as in a school, it soon spread over the country, and women and girls of the district, finding that the making of lace was more profitable than their former employment of embroidering veils according to the Italian practice, adopted the Uttman method. No trace of this mode of making lace (by use of pillow and bobbins) can be found before this date; hence the presumption that these were the time and place of the invention of bobbin lace. Barbara Uttman died in 1575. That she was the true inventress is recorded on her tomb.

It will be seen from the foregoing that one process had its origin in Italy, and the other its origin in Belgium, though, if we accept Felkin's statement, we must accord to Italy the first honor, for he says

distinctly that the Belgian peasantry gave up making lace according to the Italian method to adopt the process invented by Barbara Uttman; consequently, the Italian method must have been first. The present writer disclaims any intention to dispose of this moot question, and is only led to the above observation by reason of the high standing which Felkin's work has attained.

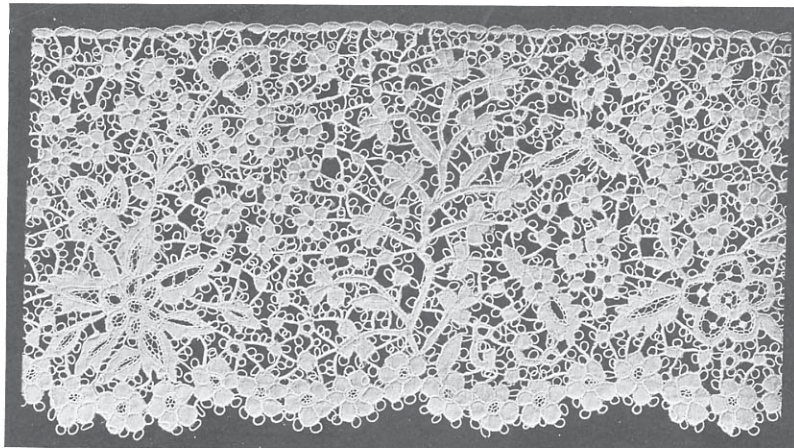
There are two broad divisions of lace—namely, hand-made lace and machine-made lace. In the world of commerce to-day the latter-named product, which is but a child of the former, is vastly the more important. This for the reason that hand-made lace, which is produced with such arduous toil, skill and patience, is beyond the purse of the million, and is and ever must be considered as one of the luxuries.

True, some of the simpler forms of hand-made lace are produced with relatively great facility, and the price is correspondingly cheap, as compared with the delicate, finely wrought designs, that it sometimes takes years to produce. Nor is this the sole reason for the popularity of machine-made laces, for to such perfection has the mechanical art of lacemaking attained that it is practically impossible, even for experts, to detect the difference between lace made by the deft, cunning fingers of lady or maid from the lace made possible by modern machinery.

In hand-made lace the two principal classes are the needle-point and bobbin, or pillow-made, lace. Needle-point lace is worked upon loose threads laid upon a previously drawn pattern, but which have no point of contact with one another and no coherency until the needle-work binds them together. This work is done with a needle and single thread. As we have said, the pattern is first drawn, usually upon parchment; a piece of heavy linen is stitched to the parchment for the purpose of holding it straight; then threads to the number of two, three, four, or more, are laid along the many lines of the pattern, and sewed lightly down through parchment and linen. The entire figure is then



Real Duchesse and Point Gaze.



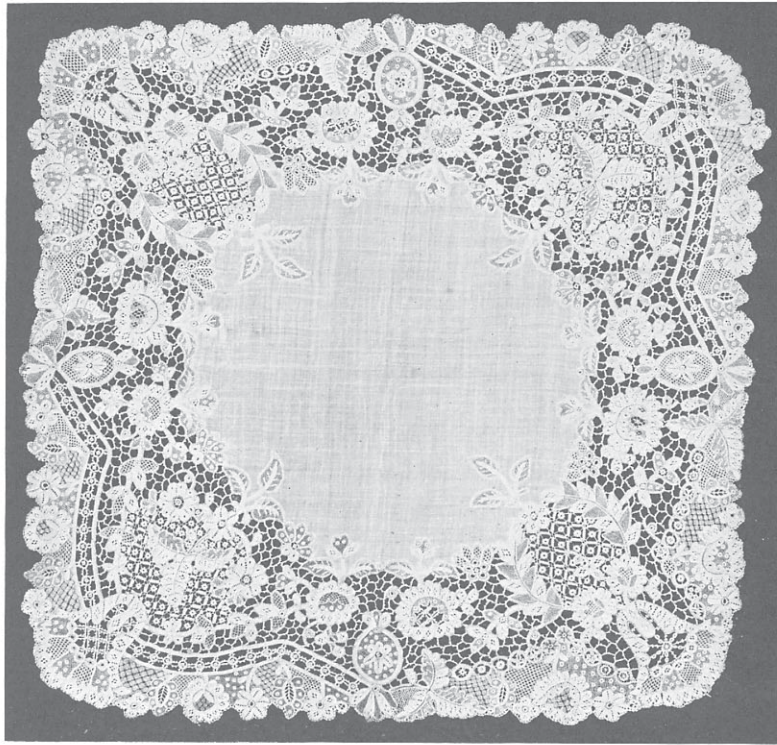
Real Carrick-ma-Cross.

carried out, both solid filling and openwork, with fine stitching, the buttonhole stitch being most generally employed.

Bobbin, or pillow-made, lace is the highest artistic development of twisted and plaited threads. It is made from a large number of threads attached by means of pins to an oval-shaped cushion or pillow, each thread being wound upon a small bobbin. The design, as in the making of needle-point lace, is first drawn on stiff paper or parchment, and carefully stretched over the pillow. Then the pattern is pricked out along the outline of the drawing and small pins are introduced at close intervals, around which the threads work to form the various meshes and openings. From right to left the thread is bound lightly upon the bobbins and tied at the top of each in a loop that permits it gradually to slip off the bobbin when gently pulled, as occurs generally when working.

The worker begins by interlacing the bobbins, which are used in pairs, placing small pins in all perforations, and crossing the bobbins after the insertion of each pin. Around these pins the design is formed, the threads being crossed and recrossed and passed under and over each other with remarkable rapidity and accuracy. When the whole width of the large piece of lace is carried on together the number of bobbins and pins is very great and the work highly expensive, but it is customary to work each sprig separately, these being joined together in the form of a strip afterward by means of a curious loop-stitch, made by a hook called a needle-pin.

Scarcely had lace been invented before it had assumed almost priceless value, and it is worth while remarking here that though centuries have since elapsed, the value of these delicate, hand-wrought fabrics has not in any sense diminished. Throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rare lace of beautiful pattern has been highly prized, some of the earliest specimens, in the



**Real Irish Point.**



**Real Valenciennes.**

possession of world-famous libraries and museums, being of relatively fabulous wealth.

By very reason of the conditions inevitably associated with its making, lace must always remain one of the dearest articles of commerce, for there is certainly nothing more rare or costly than these fine, dainty, yet withal, substantial tissues.

Perhaps of all her compeers Venice attained the highest proficiency in the production of beautiful lace. There, as we have remarked, needle-point had its origin, and many of the beautiful patterns produced by the women of the "Queen of the Adriatic" are even to-day the admiration of all who have a true appreciation of the artistic.

Venice guarded the secret of her methods with jealous care, and it was many years before the world was made familiar with the manner in which the exquisite floral designs, with their wealth of minor adornments, were worked out. Thus Italy was able to lay tribute upon the entire civilized world, and her coffers were enriched to overflowing from the receipts of the sales of lace to eastern, central and northern Europe.

Apropos of Italy's claim to the invention of needle-point, it has been claimed that the Italians originally derived the art of fine needlework from the Greek refugees in Italy, while another author asserts that the Italians are indebted to the Saracens of Sicily for their knowledge. All these claims, however, are merely speculative. For instance, no one disputes that embroidery antedates lace, and yet we have authors who endeavor to show that embroidery had its origin in Arabia, deducing from this that lace, also, must have had its birth in one of the Oriental countries. But it is a well-established fact that while we have absolute knowledge of the existence of embroidery in the countries of the Levant, there is absolutely no indication, of even the slightest value, that points to the existence of lace before it was made by the Italians and Belgians.

In the municipal archives of Ferrara, dated 1469, is an allusion to lace, but there is a document of the Sforza family, dated in 1493, in which the word "trina" constantly occurs, together with "bone" and "bobbin" lace.

Spain was, as far as the records testify, the earliest and most adept pupil of Italy in the art of lacemaking, though, as in Italy, at the beginning the work was confined in the Iberian peninsula to the inmates of the convents. Spain, too, achieved high distinction in this field, its Point d'Espagne being one of the most celebrated of all the ancient laces, even vying with the finest Venetian point. In those days, as will be recalled, the power of the Church was absolute, and the use of laces for daily wear was prohibited, though on Sundays and holidays it was greatly in evidence in the attire of those of high station.

One of the most interesting facts concerning the development of lace has to do with the patterns produced in the various localities of Europe. In the beginning the number of designs was necessarily limited, but as the industry developed and spread, and as the workers became more expert and artistic, there was an uncontrollable impulse to break away from conventional designs and to evolve new patterns. Then, too, there was something of the spirit of pride behind this movement—a sort of local patriotism, if it may so be termed. The Belgian, the Spaniard and the Frenchman were not content slavishly to imitate Italian designs, and, anxious to win a name for themselves, set about to produce new effects that would immediately identify them with the place of their origin.

Thus it was, too, that various cities and towns in Italy, France, Belgium, Spain and elsewhere sought to establish for themselves an individual product of great excellence that would give to the city or town prestige and renown in the then few commercial marts of the world. This explains the various names which were given to distinct



types of laces hundreds of years ago, and which designations still obtain, as, for instance, Alençon, Valenciennes, Chantilly, Honiton, Arras, Bayeux, Genoa, Florence, etc.

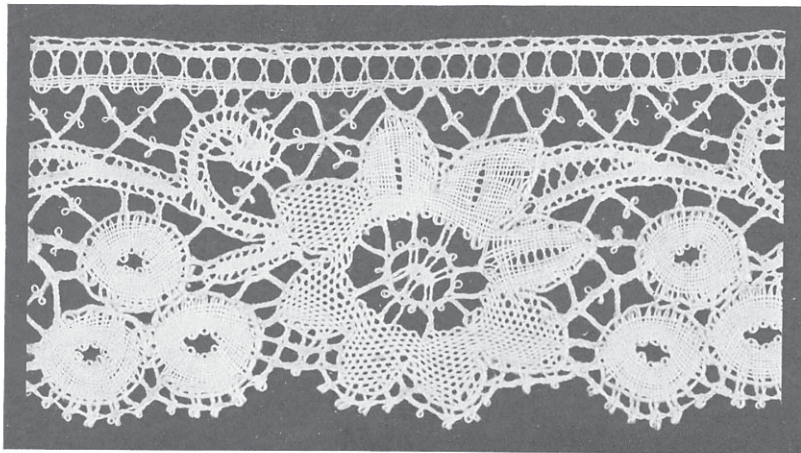
Another fact worthy of record is that of all the almost numberless designs that have been given to the world since the birth of lace there have been some one or two characteristics that tell as plainly as though expressed in words that each one of these designs was made at some particular period of history. It is well that this is so, for it has enabled the historian to trace, with more or less certainty, the development of the industry. In other words, a lace expert is enabled to tell from the fabric not only in what country it was made, but in what part of that country, and also the approximate date.

In the self-sufficiency of the present age we are apt to regard with a sort of supercilious disdain any story reflecting upon the supremacy of our forebears in any of the arts or the sciences; but that we cannot make, in a commercial way, such lace as was woven in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is beyond question. In the first place, time is lacking, and if it must be confessed, the great skill that comes only through years of constant practice is also lacking.

Modern real lace is artistic, even superior, but compared with such few specimens as have come down to us of the work of the lacemakers of old, its deficiency, particularly in the matter of the fineness of the execution and thread, is at once apparent. Hand-made lace is to-day produced all over the world; commercially its production is confined to France, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy and England, where large quantities are still produced. France, however, with that fostering care which she has bestowed upon her many other arts, and with that keen appreciation of the beautiful that is so inherent in her people, is far in the van in the matter of producing hand-made lace, though in respect to two or three types Belgium is in the front rank.



**Real Honiton.**



**Real Florentine.**

Coming down to the question of machine-made lace, it is necessary to observe at the outset that the same distinctions that exist between the genuine and the imitation do not obtain as applied to these fabrics. In other words, the knowledge that lace is a product of the frame rather than the fingers in no sense condemns it. For to such a high plane has the mechanical production of lace been lifted that one is almost tempted to say that the products vie in beauty of design and perfection of finish with the lace produced by hand. That there is warrant for this seeming exaggeration is borne out by the fact that not infrequently it is impossible for experts to tell the difference between two specimens of lace of the same design, one made by hand and the other by machine.

What inventors have accomplished in this respect is truly marvelous. In the beginning their efforts were not at all satisfactory, and the history of machine-made lace abounds with pathetic instances of men who sought in vain to duplicate with fidelity, by means of mechanical devices of hundreds of types and patterns, the dextrous touch of the human hand.

W. Felkin, in his history of lace manufacture, says that lace net was first made by machinery in 1768. Other authorities place the date as between 1758 and 1760. In 1809 bobbin net was invented, and in 1837 the Jacquard system was applied to the bobbinet machine.

Mrs. B. Palliser, in "The History of Lace," says of the invention of machinery for the production of lace that the credit is usually assigned to Hammond, a stocking framework knitter of Nottingham, who, examining one day the broad lace on his wife's cap, thought he could apply his machine to the production of a similar article. His attempt so far succeeded that, by means of the stocking frame invented in the previous century, he produced, in 1768, not lace, but a kind of knitting of running loops or stitches.

In 1777 Else and Harvey introduced at Nottingham the pin or point net machine, so named because made on sharp pins or points. Point net was followed by various other stitches of a lacelike character, but despite the progress made, all efforts at producing a solid net were futile. It was still nothing more than knitting, a single thread passing from one end of the frame to the other, and if a thread broke the work was unraveled. This was overcome in a measure by gumming the threads, giving the fabric a solidity and body not possible without resorting to some artificial method of this sort.

The great problem inspired the efforts of numberless inventors, and many attempts were made to combine the mechanism used respectively by the knitter and the weaver, and after many failures a machine was produced which made Mechlin net.

There are few histories bearing upon the invention of labor-saving devices that are so replete with the records of failure as is the history of the attempt to produce a practical lace machine. John Heathcoat, of Leicestershire, England, was the inventor of the machine for making bobbin net. His patents were taken out in 1809, and to him must be accorded the credit of solving for the first time the problem that had vexed the minds of so many inventors and had depleted the purses of so many capitalists.

The bobbin net machine, so named because the threads are wound upon bobbins, first produced a net about an inch in width, afterward, however, producing it a yard wide.

It was the application of the celebrated Jacquard attachment to the lace machine that has made possible the duplication of practically every pattern of lace made by hand. The machine of Heathcoat was vastly improved by John Leavers, also of Nottingham, and the types produced by him are still in use throughout England and France, though, of course, there are in these days a large number of different

types of machines bearing different names, but the principle of the Leavers machine, more or less modified, obtains in practically all of the devices. Therefore a description of the process of lacemaking by the Leavers frame will serve as a description for all.

The number of threads brought into operation in this machine is regulated by the pattern to be produced. The threads are of two sorts, warp and bobbin threads. Upward of 9,000 are sometimes used, sixty pieces of lace being made at once, each piece requiring 148 threads (100 warps and 48 bobbin threads). The supply of warp threads is held upon reels, the bobbins carrying their own supply. The warp threads are stretched perpendicularly and about wide enough apart to admit a silver quarter passing edgeways between them. The bobbins are flattened in shape so as to pass conveniently between the warps. Each bobbin can contain about 120 yards of thread. By most ingenious mechanism varying degrees of tension can be imparted to warp and bobbin threads as required. The bobbins, as they pass like pendulums between the warp threads, are made to oscillate, and through this oscillation the threads twist themselves or become twisted with the warp threads, as required by the pattern that is being produced. As the twisting takes place, combs compress the twistings, making them more compact. If the bobbin threads be made tight and the warp threads slack, the latter will be twisted upon the former; but if the warps are brought to a tension and the bobbin threads be slack, then the latter will be twisted on the warps. The combs are so regulated that they come clear away from the threads as soon as they have pressed them together, and fall into position ready to perform their pressing operations again. The contrivances for giving each thread a particular tension and movement at a certain time are connected with an adaptation of the Jacquard system of pierced cards. The lace machine is highly complicated, much of its complexity being due to the mechanism



**Real Point Appliqué.**

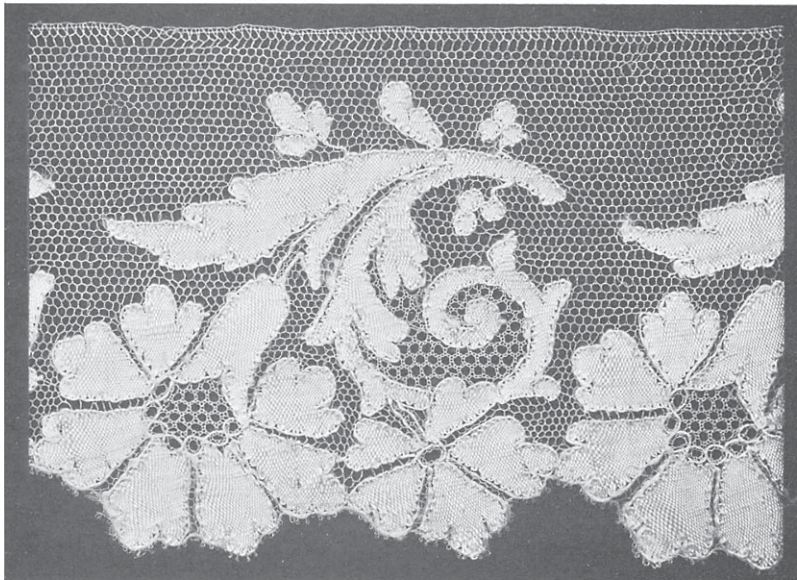
by which the oscillating or lateral movements are produced. Expert workmen prepare the working drawings for the lace machine, and also perform the more important duties in its operation, but a large part of the work is carried on by women and girls.

One of the most interesting developments of the lace industry has been the gradual evolution from the work of the hand toilers to the utilization of complex machinery. In addition to the Leavers machine, which is referred to elsewhere in extenso, the embroidery machine plays a very important part in the making of laces. From 1870 to 1880, various efforts had been made to produce lace on the embroidery machine, and it was during this decade that the first success was achieved in the making of Oriental or net laces in Plauen. This was the first actual production of lace from the embroidering machine, and this sort of lace, which still exists to-day, is really an embroidery on a net, although usually designated as lace. A few years later a discovery was made which effected a great change in the making of laces on the embroidery machine. This was the principle of embroidering on a material which was afterward removed by a chemical process. The first article produced was called Guipure de Genes, and was at that time patented, but the patent was held to be invalid, and a few years afterward this article was generally produced both in St. Gall, where it first appeared, and in Plauen. By this method of manufacture are produced to-day all of the imitation guipure laces, such as Point de Venise, Rose Point, Point de Genes, etc.

The embroidering machine in use at the present day is constructed entirely of iron, measuring from 15 to 20 feet long, 9 feet high, 9 feet wide and weighs about 3,800 pounds. It can be operated by hand or by power. The method of embroidering is exceedingly simple. The cloth, usually somewhat over  $4\frac{1}{2}$  yards long, is tightly stretched in an upright position in the center of the machine, each end of the suspended



**Real Chantilly.**



**Real Spanish.**



strip being held firmly by means of stout hooks. The needles (from 150 to 300 in number, according to the sort of work to be done) are arranged horizontally in a framework in a straight, level row, all pointing toward the cloth and extending from end to end of same. The needles are supplied with threads about one yard in length, which are fastened by means of a peculiar knot to the eye, the latter being in the middle of the needle instead of at the end. In producing any given stitch in the pattern to be worked, the long row of needles all move forward at once at the will of the operator, and thus duplicate the stitch in every pattern or "section" along the entire  $4\frac{1}{2}$  yards of cloth suspended in the machine. As may be readily understood, the machine in this manner completes  $4\frac{1}{2}$  yards of embroidery in the same time it would take a woman with a needle to finish a single pattern. When one row is completed the strip of cloth is raised and another row is made, and so on until it is necessary to put in another length of cambric. This machine is capable of making patterns from the very narrow up to the full width of the cloth.

What is known as the Schiffli, or power machine, is very similar to the hand-embroidering device, being an improvement on the latter and worked with a shuttle in addition to the needles. Its capacity is nearly eight times greater, or from 15,000 to 18,000 stitches per day, against 2,000 to 3,000 on the hand machine. To offset this advantage, however, the Schiffli machine is much more expensive, and is of delicate and complicated construction, easily got out of order and costly to repair. Until a comparatively recent date the Schiffli was not considered as a competitor of the hand machine, its work being inferior in quality and confined to simple patterns. At present, however, it is generally conceded that the goods produced by it not only compete with the hand-machine products, but are already superseding the latter to some extent. It is predicted that the Schiffli machine, operated by power, will ultimately supply all the embroidery in the low and medium grades.

The variety and adaptability of the designs which both of these machines are capable of producing are endless, and at the same time comparatively inexpensive. It is this latter fact which accounts for the great advantage of the embroidering machine over the lace machine. The preparing and setting of a design for a lace machine is very expensive, and the great cost compels the manufacturer of machine lace to turn out large quantities of one set pattern in order to get a return from his investment.

About the beginning of the nineteenth century, lace machines were first introduced into France from Nottingham, at Boulogne-sur-mer, where the industry remained for a few years and then moved to Calais. There this industry has developed and increased to such proportions that Calais is now the principal city for the production of fine laces of all kinds, and practically leads Nottingham in creating novelties and new and original effects. Shortly after the Franco-Prussian war the industry found a foothold in Caudry, in the north of France, where it has also developed to quite large proportions, and shares to-day a large part of the trade which has resulted from the founding of the parent industry in Calais. The kind of lace produced in Caudry is generally of a cheaper character than that produced in Calais.

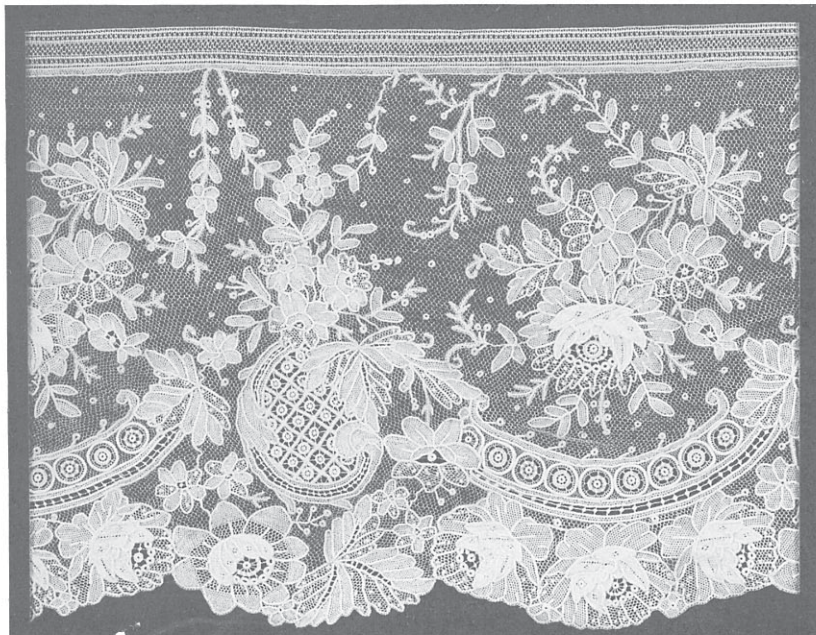
In Lyons, too, there has been established for many years the industry of making laces and nettings by mechanical processes. This is still a very large industry, and about twenty years ago there was a large trade done with America in the manufacture of laces in vogue at that time, which were the imitation of the real Spanish, called "Blonde Grenade." There are still made in Lyons to-day various imitations of fine laces, which in a general way are of a different quality to the laces made at Calais or Caudry, and Lyons enjoys a reputation in regard to the character of the laces it produces which is unique in the trade.

About the year 1890, a Frenchman invented a machine similar in

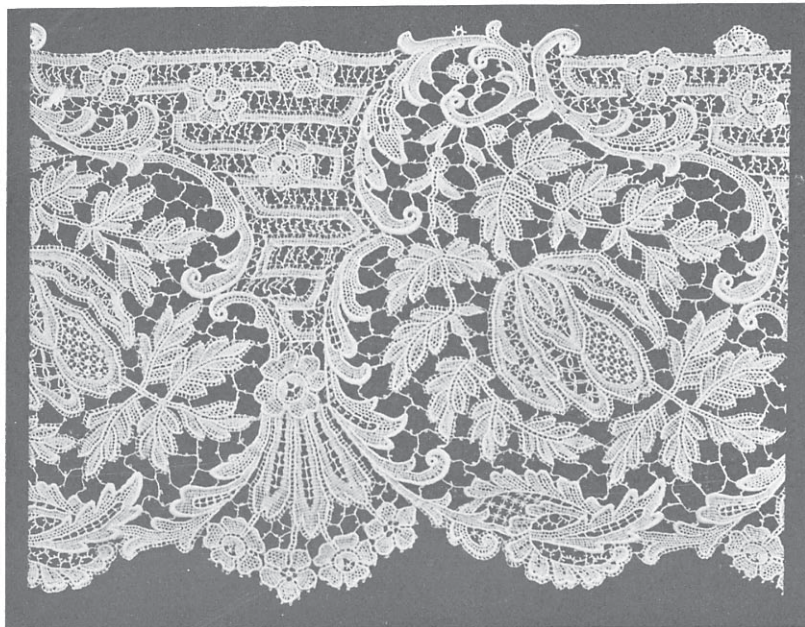
principle to the knitting machine, which reproduces with absolute fidelity the work of the bobbins in making pillow laces. Through this invention he was able to imitate such hand-made laces as Torchons, Medicis, etc., so exactly that experts could not detect the difference. In fact, it is the general testimony of men associated with laces for years, that the work of this machine in a great many of its aspects is one of the most important contributions of the mechanical arts in the production of lace.

Through the importation of foreign machines and foreign workmen, various attempts have been made in the United States to establish the manufacture of lace. At the present writing it is impossible to state with any definiteness what the result will be, as the experiment has been of only a few years' duration, and in the very nature of things is at this date of a tentative character.

In order that the reader may be able to distinguish the various types of hand and machine made laces, we append herewith a glossary, defining as concisely as possible the characteristics that indicate not only the manifold makes of laces, but what may be called the various sub-divisions. These definitions are set forth, the writer hopes, in terms that will enable the reader to understand what each one of the various names means, both as applied commercially and descriptively.



Real Point Gaze.



Imitation Duchesse.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LACE.

ALENÇON.—A fine, needle-point lace, so called from Alençon, a French city, in which its manufacture was first begun. It is the only French lace not made upon the pillow, the work being done entirely by hand, with a fine needle, upon a parchment pattern in small pieces. The pieces are afterward united by invisible seams. There are usually twelve processes, including the design employed in the production of a piece of this kind of lace, and each of these processes is executed by a special workwoman; but in 1855, at Bayeux, in France, a departure was made from the old custom of assigning a special branch of the work to each lacemaker, and the fabric was made through all its processes by one worker.

The design is engraved upon a copper plate and then printed off upon pieces of green parchment of a specified length. After the pattern is pricked upon the parchment, which is stitched to a piece of coarse linen folded double, the pattern is then formed in outline by guiding two flat threads along the edge by the thumb of the left hand, and, in order to fix it, minute stitches are made with another thread and needle through the holes of the parchment. After the outline is finished it is given to another worker to make the ground, which is chiefly of two kinds: *bride*, consisting of uniting threads which serve to join together the flowers of the lace, and *réseau*, which is worked backward and forward from the footing to the picot. There was also another ground called *Argentella*, consisting of buttonhole-stitched skeleton hexagons.

In making the flowers of Alençon point, the workwoman, using a needle and fine thread, makes the buttonhole-stitch from left to right, and, when she has reached the end of the flower, throws back the thread from the point of departure and works again from left to right

along the thread. As a result, the work is characterized by a closeness, firmness and evenness not equaled in any other point lace.

When the work is completed the threads which bind lace, linen and parchment together are carefully cut, and the difficult task of uniting the pieces together remains to be done. This is accomplished by means of what is called the "assemblage" stitch, instead of the "point de raccroc," where the pieces are united by a fresh row of stitches.

Another way of uniting the pieces, which is used at Alençon, is by a seam which follows as far as possible the outlines of the pattern so as to be invisible. A steel instrument, called a picot, is then passed into each flower so as to give it a more finished appearance.

Alençon point is of a durability which no other lace can rival. A peculiarity in its manufacture is, that it is the only lace in which horse-hair is inserted along the edge to give increased strength to the cordonnet, a practice originating in the necessity of making the point stand up when the tall headdresses formerly worn by women were exposed to the wind.

Formerly Alençon point, notwithstanding its beauty of construction, could not vie with Brussels lace as regards the excellence of floral design, but this inferiority has now been removed by the production of exquisite copies of natural flowers, mingled with grasses and ferns. Alençon point is now made not only at the seat of its original manufacture, but at Bayeux, at Burano, near Venice, and at Brussels.

Bayeux can boast of one of the finest examples of this lace ever made. It was exhibited in 1867, and consisted of a dress of two flounces, in which the pattern, flowers and foliage were most harmoniously wrought and relieved by shaded tints, which give to the lace the relief of a picture. The price of the dress was \$17,000, and it took forty women seven years to finish it.

The city of Alençon had on exhibition at Paris, in 1899, a piece of

lace of exquisite description, that had taken 16,500 working days to complete.

ALLOVER.—Lace of any kind which is eighteen inches or more in width, and used for yokes, flouncings and entire costumes.

ANTIQUÉ.—A pillow lace, hand-made from heavy linen thread, and characterized by an exceedingly open, coarse, square mesh. It is mainly used for curtains, bed sets and draperies.

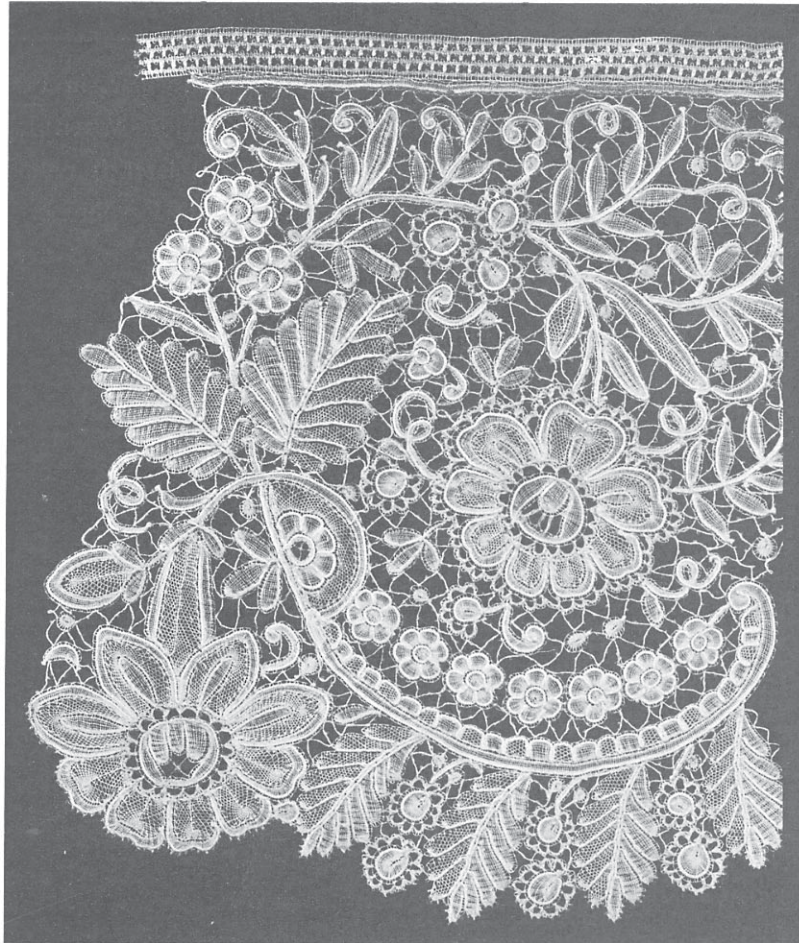
ANTWERP.—A pillow lace made at Antwerp, resembling early Alençon, and whose chief characteristic is the representation of a pot or vase of flowers with which it is always decorated. The pot or vase varies much in size and details. It is usually grounded with a coarse "Fond Champ."

APPLICATION.—A lace made by sewing flowers or sprigs, which may be either needle-point or bobbin-made, upon a bobbin-lace ground. One variety of Brussels lace affords the best example of Application.

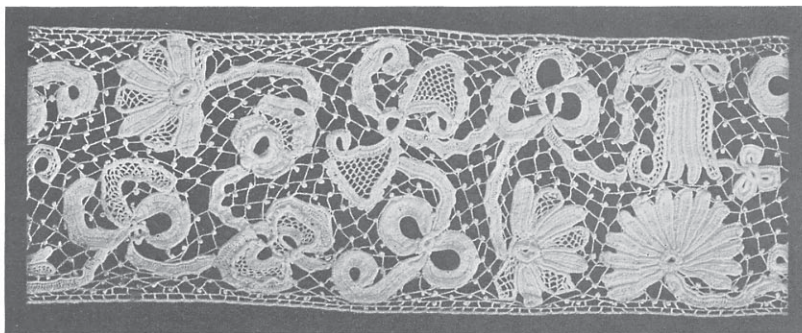
APPLIQUÉ.—The same as Application lace.

ARGENTAN.—A needle-point lace, usually considered indistinguishable from Alençon, but which is different in some respects, its marked peculiarity being that the réseau ground is not made of single threads only, but the sides of each mesh are worked over with the buttonhole stitch. Argentan is often distinguished from Alençon lace by a larger and more striking pattern, and in some instances it is especially known by its hexagonally arranged brides. It is called after Argentan, a town near Alençon, and the lace was made there under the same direction.

ARRAS.—A white pillow lace, so called from Arras, in France, the city of its original manufacture. It is simple and almost uniform in design, very strong and firm to the touch, and comparatively cheap in price. It is made on a lisle ground. The older and finer patterns of Arras lace reached their climax of excellence during the first Empire, between 1804 and 1812, but since then they have gone out of fashion.



**Real Duchesse.**



**Real Irish Crochet.**



AURILLAC.—A pillow or bobbin lace, made at Aurillac, in France. In the early period of its manufacture it was a close-woven fabric, resembling the guipure of Genoa and Flanders, but later it resembled English point. The laces of Aurillac ended with the Revolution.

AUVERGNE.—A pillow lace made at the French city of Auvergne and the surrounding district.

AVE MARIA.—A narrow lace used for edging. (See Dieppe lace.)

BABY.—A narrow lace used for edging, and made principally in the English counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. These laces are ordinarily of simple design and specially employed in adorning infants' caps. Though this fashion went out in Great Britain, the ladies of America held to the trimmed infants' caps until the breaking out of the Civil War, and up to that date large quantities of this lace were exported to America.

BASKET.—A lace so woven or plaited as to resemble basket-work. It is mentioned in inventories of 1580.

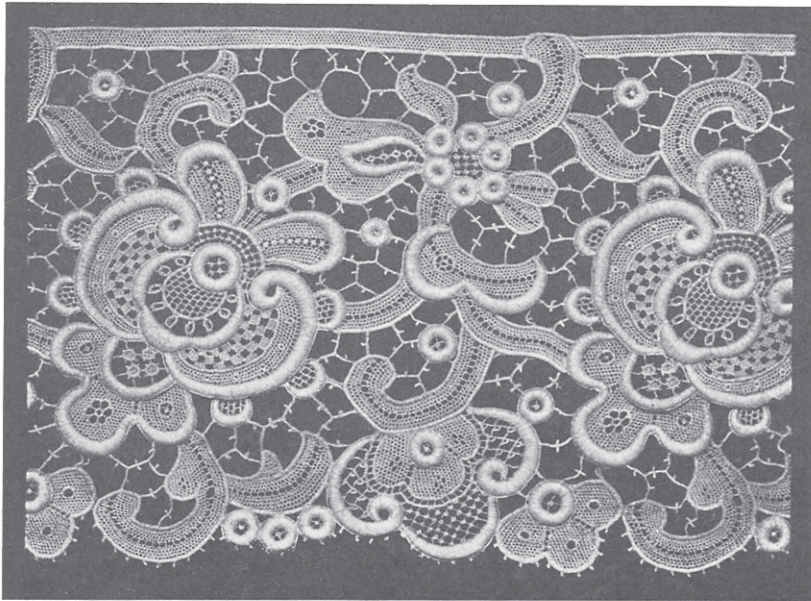
BAYEUX.—There are two descriptions of lace known by this name: (a) A modern pillow lace, made at Bayeux, in Normandy, particularly the variety made in imitation of Rose point; (b) A black silk lace, popular because made in unusually large pieces, as for shawls, fichus, etc.

BISETTE.—A narrow, coarse-thread pillow lace of three qualities, formerly made in the suburbs of Paris by the peasant women, principally for their own use. The name is now used to signify narrow bordering lace of small value.

BOBBIN.—Lace made on a pillow, stuffed so as to form a cushion, without the use of a needle. A stiff piece of parchment is fixed on the pillow, and after holes are pricked through the parchment so as to form the pattern small pins are stuck through these holes into the pillow. The threads with which the lace is formed are wound upon bobbins—small, round pieces of wood about the size of a pencil, having round



**Real Irish Appliqué.**



**Imitation Point de Venise.**

their upper ends a deep groove, so formed as to reduce the bobbin to a thin neck, on which the thread is wound, a separate bobbin being used for each thread. The ground of the lace is formed by the twisting and crossing of these threads. The pattern or figure, technically called "gimp," is made by interweaving a thread much thicker than that forming the groundwork, according to the design pricked out on the parchment. This manner of using the pillow in lacemaking has remained practically the same during more than three centuries.

BLONDE.—A lace so-called because, being made from raw silk, it was "fair," not white in color. Blonde lace has a "réseau" of the Lille type, made of fine twisted silk, the "toile" being worked entirely with a broad, flat strand, producing a very attractive glistening effect. It was made at Chantilly, in France. At the Revolution the demand for this fabric ceased, as lacemakers were commonly looked upon as royal protégés. During the First Empire, however, blonde became fashionable again, and since that time the popularity of black silk blonde for Spanish mantillas alone has kept the trade in a flourishing condition. The manufacture is not confined to any one town, but is carried on throughout the province of Calvados, in Normandy, and is also made in Spain.

BOBBINET.—A variety of Application lace, in which the pattern is applied upon a ground of bobbinet or tulle.

BONE POINT.—A lace without a regular mesh ground.

BORDER.—Lace made in long, narrow pieces, with a footing on one side, the other edge being ordinarily Van Dyked or purled. During the larger part of the seventeenth century a constant supply of this lace was made at Genoa. It was commonly called "Collar" lace, from the use to which it was put. In the pictures of Rubens and Van Dyke it is frequently represented as trimming the broad falling linen collars, both of men and elderly women. It can be distinguished from Flemish lace, also employed in the same way, by its greater boldness of design.

Younger women also made use of it as trimming for the shoulders of their décolleté dresses, and also for sleeves, aprons, etc.

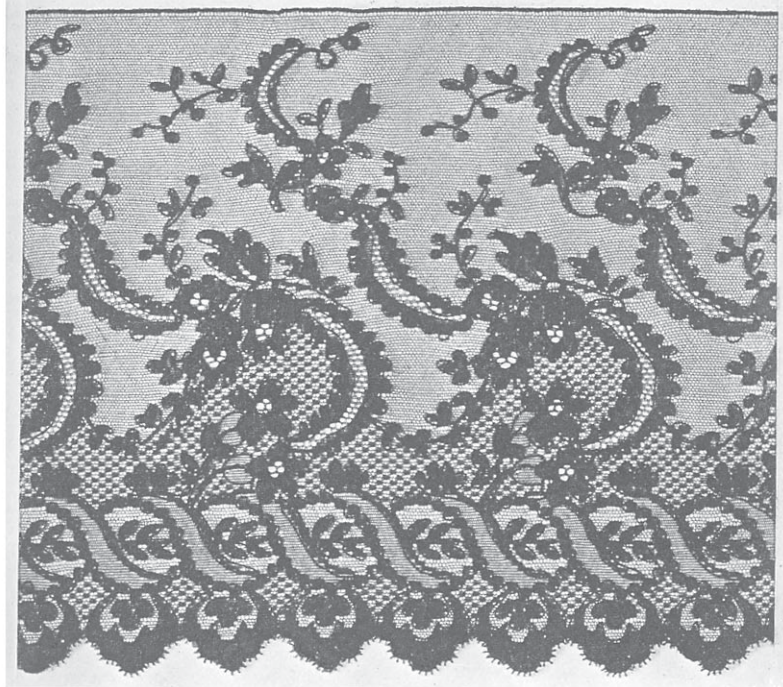
BRIDE.—Lace whose ground is wholly composed of brides or bars, without a réseau or net.

BRUSSELS.—A celebrated lace, made at and near Brussels, in Belgium; more particularly, a fine variety of the lace made there whose pattern, as compared with Alençon, has less relief, and whose fine net ground is without "picots," the knots or thorns which often decorate "brides," and also the edge of the pattern. Brussels lace, whose history is one of the most interesting in the progress of this industry, is now often regarded as an application lace, by reason of the fact that the laceworkers of that city, after machine-made net had been perfected by an English invention in 1810, adopted the plan of appliquing their pillow-made patterns on that material. Lace so appliqued can be recognized as distinct from that made with the "vrai réseau," or true network ground, by the fact that the net ground, though sometimes removed, is often seen to pass behind the lace pattern, and also by the character of the network. Machine-made net is composed of diamond-shaped meshes, and is made with two threads only, tightly twisted and crossed, not plaited, at their junction, and is quite unlike the Brussels pillow "réseau." Other peculiarities by which Brussels lace may be recognized are: (a) It is not made in one piece on the pillow, but the pattern is first made by itself, and the "réseau" ground is worked in around it afterward. (b) The "réseau" ground, when magnified under a glass, has a mesh of hexagonal form, of which two sides are made of four threads plaited four times, and four sides of two threads twisted twice. (c) Brussels pillow lace has two sorts of "toilé," or substance of the pattern as contrasted with the groundwork; one, the usual woven texture, resembling that of a piece of cambric; the other, a more open arrangement of open threads, having very much the appearance of

the Fond Champ "réseau." It remains to be said, in spite of the fact that the above-mentioned characteristics may always be distinguished, that the Brussels pillow lace of the present day differs materially from the earlier forms, having gone through many changes and style in pattern and make. Among these are Point d'Angleterre, called such for mistaken reasons only, as it is not point lace nor made in England; and Duchesse, a name of comparatively recent date, though the style itself is of earlier origin, and was called "Guipure façon Angleterre." As regards Brussels needle-point, the earliest made closely resembles that of Alençon, though not quite so close and firm. There were also other differences, both the "cordonnet" and the "réseau" being unlike those of Alençon. From the beginning of the nineteenth century Brussels needle-point underwent changes analogous to those of pillow lace; it became Point Appliqué, in which the needle-lace pattern, instead of having a true net ground, was appliquéed on the machine-made net. But in recent years it has been noted that a return to the character of the earlier and more beautiful Brussels needle-point is being sought, the chief evidence of it being the exquisite Point Gaze, made entirely with the needle and grounded with its own "réseau."

BUCKINGHAM.—A lace originally made in the county of Buckingham, England, and of two kinds: (a) Buckingham trolley lace, whose pattern is outlined with a thicker thread, or a flat, narrow border, made up of several such threads. The ground is usually a double ground, showing hexagonal and triangular meshes; (b) A lace with a point ground, with the pattern outlined with thicker threads, these threads being weighted by bobbins larger and heavier than the rest. In general character and design these laces strongly resemble those manufactured at Lille.

CADIZ.—A variety of needle-point Brussels lace.



**Imitation Marquise.**



**Real Point d'Angleterre.**

CARNIVAL.—A variety of reticella lace made in Italy, Spain and France during the sixteenth century.

CARTISANE.—Guipure or passement, made with cartisane, which is vellum or parchment in thin strips or small rolls, covered with silk, gold thread or similar material.

CHAIN.—A lace of the seventeenth century, consisting of a braid or passement so worked as to resemble chain links. It was made of colored silk, and also of gold and silver thread.

CHANTILLY.—One of the blonde laces, of the sort recognizable by their Alençon réseau ground and the flowers in light or openwork instead of solid. It is made both in white and black silk. Black Chantilly lace has always been made of silk, but a grenadine, not a lustrous silk. The pattern is outlined with a cordonnet of a flat, untwisted silk strand. During the seventeenth century the Duchesse of Longueville established the manufacture of silk lace at Chantilly and its neighborhood, and as Paris was near and the demand of royalty for this lace increased it became very popular. At the time of the Revolution the prosperity of the industry was ruined, and many of the lacemakers were sent to the guillotine. During the ascendancy of the first Napoleon, the manufacture of Chantilly again became flourishing. Since then the industry has been driven away from that town on account of the higher labor costs resulting from the nearness of Chantilly to Paris, and the lacemakers, unable to meet this increased cost, retired to Gisors, where half a century ago there were between 8,000 and 10,000 lacemakers. The supremacy of lacemaking formerly enjoyed by Chantilly has now been transferred to Calvados, Caen, Bayeux and Grammont. The widely-known Chantilly shawls are made at Bayeux, and also at Grammont.

CHENILLE.—A French lace, made in the eighteenth century, so called because the patterns were outlined with fine white chenille. The ground

was made of silk in honeycomb réseau, and the patterns were geometrical and filled with thick stitches.

CLUNY.—A kind of net lace with a square net background in which the stitch is darned. It is so called from the famous museum of antiquities in the Hôtel Cluny, at Paris, and also because the lace was supposed to have a medieval appearance. The patterns used are generally of an antique and quaint description, mostly of birds, animals and flowers, and in the existing manufacture the old traditions are fairly well preserved. Sometimes a glazed thread is introduced in the pattern as an outline. Cluny is a plaited lace, somewhat similar to the Genoese and Maltese laces, and is made in silk, linen or cotton.

CORDOVER.—A kind of filling used in the pattern of ancient and modern point lace.

CORK.—A name formerly used for Irish lace in general, when the manufacture of Irish lace was principally confined to the neighborhood of Cork.

CRAPONNE.—A kind of stout thread guipure lace, of cheap price and inferior make, used for furniture.

CRETAN.—A name given to an old lace, ordinarily made of colored material, whether silk or linen, and sometimes embroidered with the needle after the lace was complete.

CREWEL.—A kind of edging made of crewel or worsted thread, intended as a border or binding for garments.

CROCHET.—Lace which is made with a crochet hook, or whose pattern is so made and then appliquéed on a bobbin or machine-made net. It is similar to needle-point lace, although not equal in fineness to the best examples of the latter.

CROWN.—A lace whose pattern was worked on a succession of crowns, sometimes intermixed with acorns and roses. It was made first in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. A relic of this lace may still be found