

Face Book



Ms. H. Hudson Moore



THE LACE BOOK





QUEEN MARIE AMÉLIE (1782-1866)
WIFE OF LOUIS PHILIPPE

Portrait by Winterhalter

*Brussels lace flounces. Scarf of
machine-made net embroidered by hand*

THE LACE BOOK

BY

N. HUDSON MOORE

AUTHOR OF

"The Old China Book," "The Old Furniture Book," etc.

WITH SEVENTY ENGRAVINGS

SHOWING SPECIMENS OF LACE, OR ITS WEAR IN FAMOUS PORTRAITS

AND

WITH BORDER BY CHARLES E. CARTWRIGHT AND
DECORATIONS AFTER BODONI



NEW YORK

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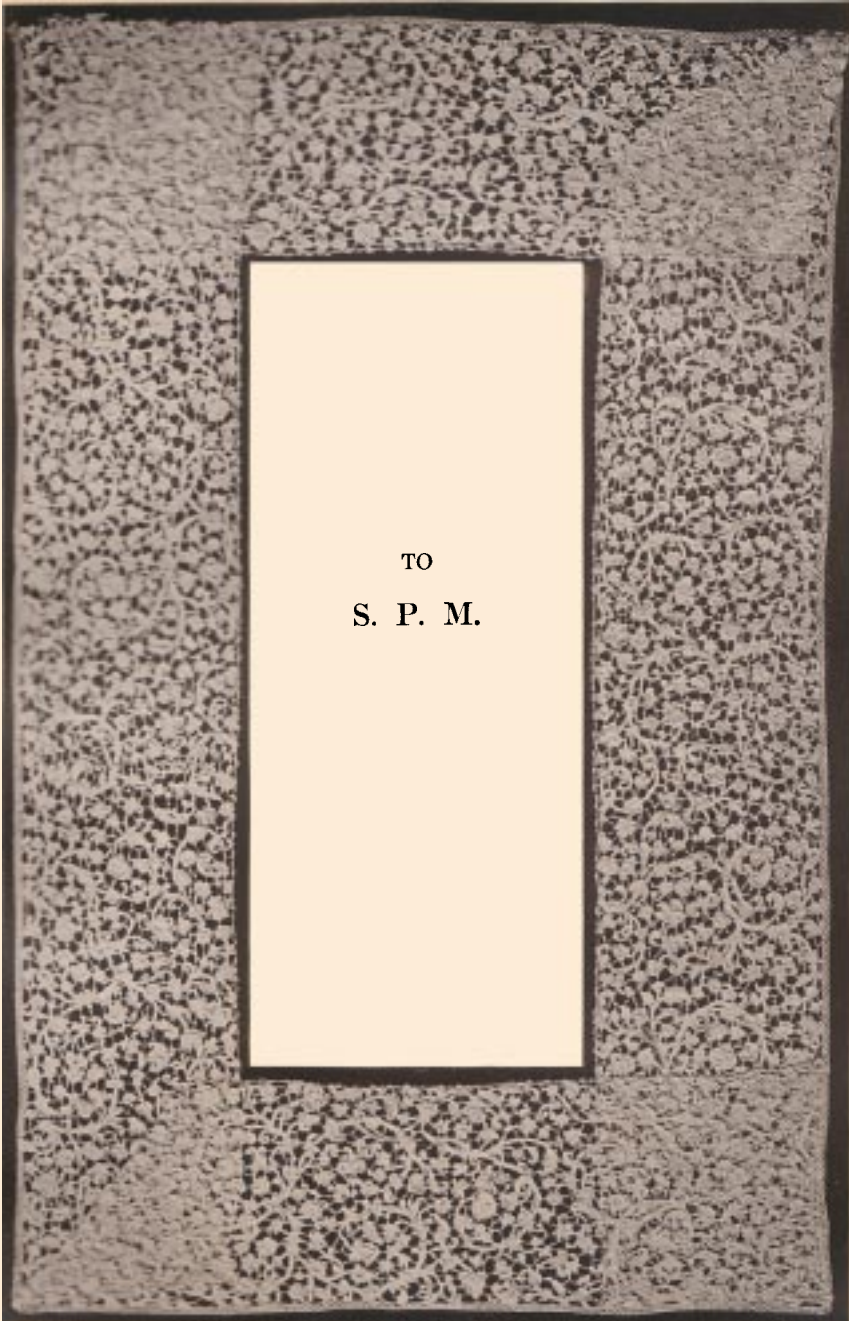
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TO
S. P. M.



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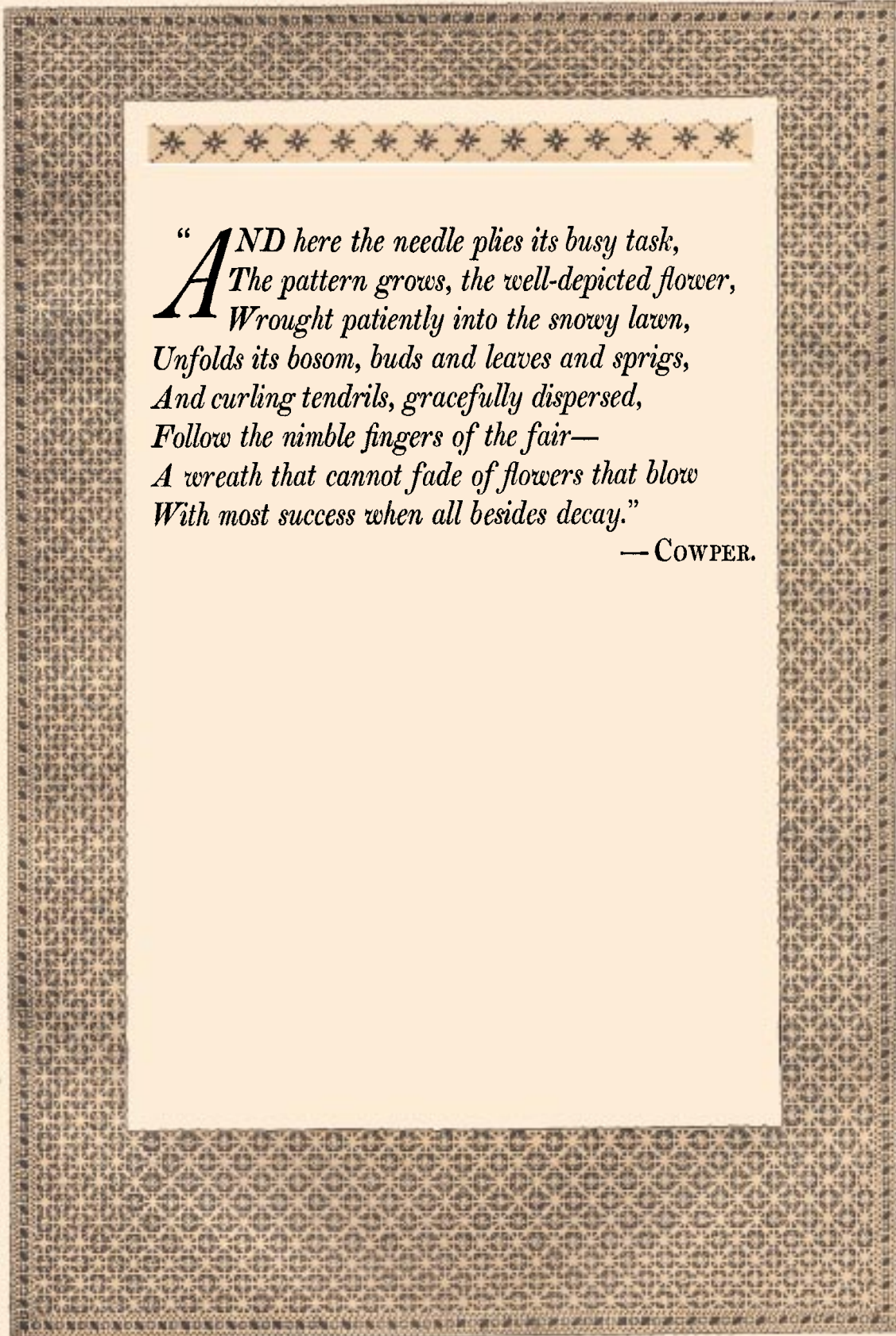


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Part I—The Growth of Lace



*“AND here the needle plies its busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
Unfolds its bosom, buds and leaves and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully dispersed,
Follow the nimble fingers of the fair—
A wreath that cannot fade of flowers that blow
With most success when all besides decay.”*

— COWPER.



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THE desire for beauty in attire which is found in even the most primitive and barbarous nations is responsible for the production of the finest and most costly trimming which can be lavished upon costume. The progressive steps have been slow and interesting, the first having been taken as far back as the tenth century before Christ, in the land of the Pharaohs, whose mummy-cases yield up work made on flax cloth with coloured threads, and patterns drawn and worked in geometric design or with inscriptions. The luxury-loving Greeks and Romans ornamented their togas and peplums with graceful patterns wrought in contrasting colours or in gold. Garments, when fresh and new, needed no ornament about the immediate edge, but as they became frayed and worn the threads were twisted and stitched together, and little by little, from such humble beginnings, grew the beautiful fabric we call lace.

The fancy for ornamental edges during mediæval times sought expression in diverse ways, and by 1250 we read in various accounts of men's and women's clothes being "slittered, dagged, and jagged," which means that the



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edges were cut in patterns of leaves and flowers and bound about with a strip of cloth or cord, or sometimes a thread of gold, or the decoration might be cut from velvet and sewed on.

Primarily the word lace signified a line or small cord of silk thread or any material which was used to tie together portions of clothing, among both civilians and the military, as the doublet and hose, the sleeves to the body, or the stays and bodices of ladies' dresses. In the "Paston Letters," where so many of the fashions of the times are mentioned, in the year 1469 John Paston wrote to his brother: "I pray you bring home points and laces of silk for you and me," which referred to these laces, made of silk, for tying the clothes together. "Points" were the metal tags on the ends of the laces to keep them from ravelling. There is no reference to lace other than this in the book, although there are many references to clothes, their fashion and trimming. But Lady Paston followed the manners of the times in placing her daughters in the families of persons of high rank, who had them trained in the various accomplishments deemed necessary for well-born females, among which skill with the needle held an important place. Royal ladies wrought their endless tapestries and embroideries with needles of gold, and used up pounds of gold thread besides, some of them working merely to pass away time otherwise unoccupied, and others, like the unhappy Mary Stuart, who was famous for her skill at needlework, endeavouring to bridge over the tedium of a weary captivity.



THE GROWTH OF LACE

No two languages use the same word for this fabric. In English it is lace, from *lacier*, to fasten. Lace in French is either *passemment*, *dentelle*, or *guipure*. The Germans call it *spitzen*; the Italians, *merletto* or *trina*; *pizzo* is the Genoese, while the Spaniards call it *encaje*. Flanders calls its priceless product *peerlen*, while the Dutch have it *kanten*, and the Portuguese, *renda*.

Two countries claim to be the birthplace of lace,—Flanders and Italy; and while the Dutch have contributed more to the making of thread lace, it seems undoubtedly true that Italy was first in the field with this beautiful adornment, but in its earlier form of gold and silver, and later with coarse threads of flax. It is in the Italian inventories that the earliest mention is made of lace, and Italy long sustained her supremacy in the production of superb points. She worked right on, even though other countries, envious of the immense sums which poured into her coffers, sought to prohibit the sale of her wares, and in retaliation, during the reign of Louis XIV, when her work-people were drawn to France, framed the following laws:

“If any artist or handicraftsman practices his art in any foreign land, to the detriment of the Republic, orders to return will be sent him; if he disobeys them, his nearest kin will be put in prison, in order that through his interest in their welfare his obedience may be compelled.

“If he comes back, his past offence will be condoned, and employment for him will be found in Venice; but if, notwithstanding the imprisonment of his nearest of kin, he obstinately decides to continue living abroad, an emissary will be commissioned to kill him, and his next of kin will be liberated only after his death.”



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Different styles of laces may be roughly divided into the periods wherein they flourished, the dates in Flanders and Italy being approximately the same.

From 1480 to 1590 was the Geometric or Gothic period, without brides. From 1590 to 1630 there were floral forms held by brides, these being rendered necessary by the heavy character of the lace. At this time "modes," as the different filling stitches were called, were introduced by various makers, and from this time until 1670 development and elaboration were constant. Not only were floral forms attempted, but figures, heads, scenes, and birds were used, and there was more lace made with meshed or net grounds.

From 1720 to 1780 little bouquets, sprigs, sprays, flowers, leaves, buds, and dots were freely scattered over grounds, and these patterns we have since copied constantly, for their beauty cannot be improved on.

Among the old cathedrals all over Europe the stores of lace are of fabulous value, being of silver, gold, and flax. The number of ecclesiastical vestments which may be trimmed with lace, and which are in use in the Church of Rome to-day, give an idea of the immense amount of this costly fabric which could be used on a single set. The dalmatic, the surplice, and the alb are those most profusely ornamented with lace, although the veil is sometimes trimmed with lace, or entirely composed of it, having sacred symbols or letters woven in it. The corporal is made of the finest and whitest linen to be obtained, and if any lace is put upon it, it



PLATE I.—Early Italian drawn-work. The background is formed by a dark thread stitched over the net-work left by drawing some of the threads of the linen foundation. Fifteenth Century.


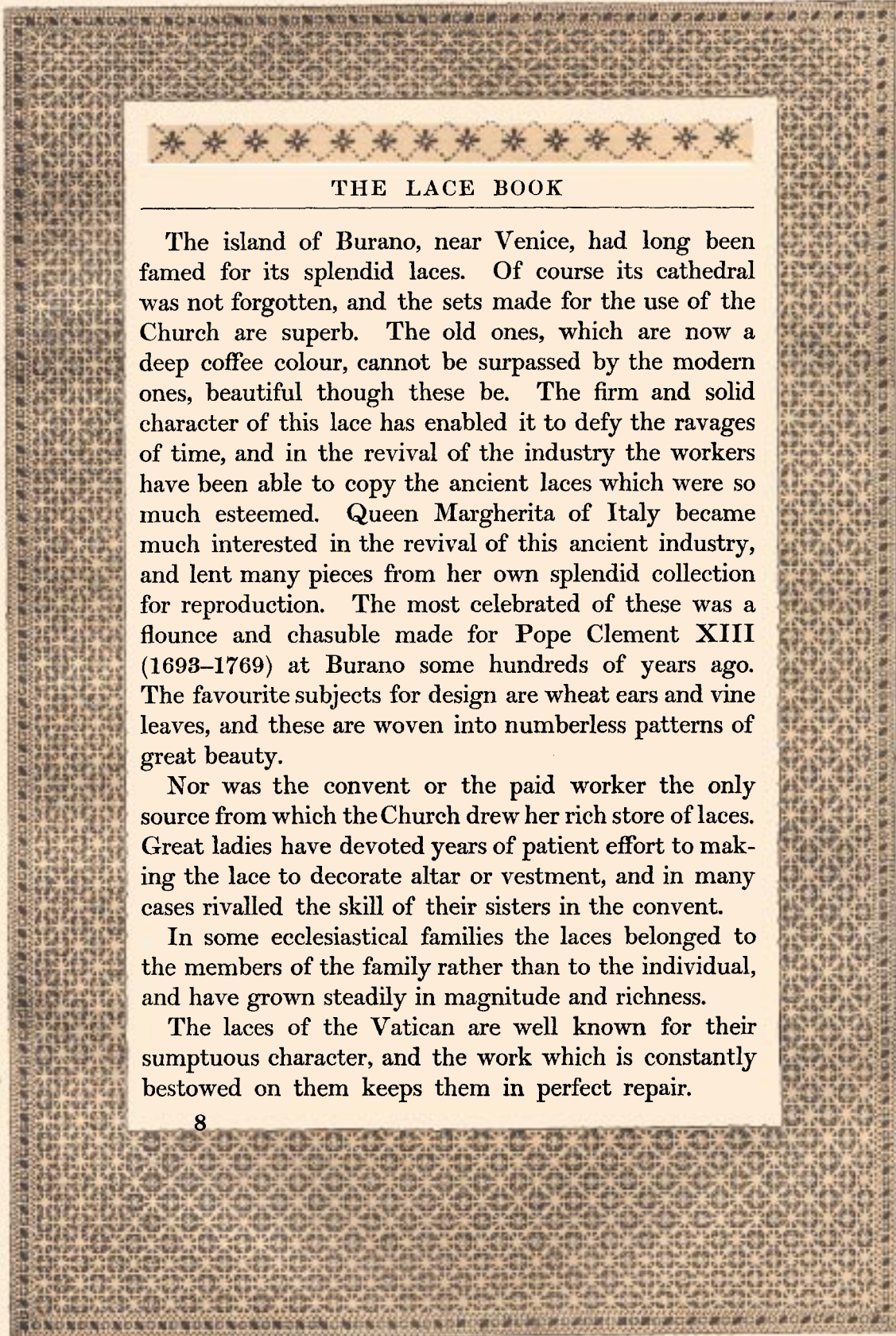


THE GROWTH OF LACE

must not exceed two fingers in breadth. In churches where solemn high mass was performed there were white silk veils, trimmed with lace, for holding the paten. The towels for service on the altar were also richly trimmed with lace, often with sacred emblems interwoven in the pattern.

Not only was lace used for the robes of the dignitaries of the Church, but the saints and madonnas were hung with the choicest possessions of their devotees. No lace was too fine and no jewels too costly to be devoted to this purpose. So many robes were bestowed on some of these saints that they were changed each day, or, like the rich albs of the priests, were worn only during the celebration of high mass, and preserved with the greatest care. In St. Peter's at Rome stands a statue of St. Peter, said to have been cast by Leo the Great from the old statue of Jupiter Capitolinus. It is of very rude workmanship and stands with one foot extended. It is an object of great devotion to Roman Catholics, who cover with kisses the extended foot. On high festival days this statue is robed in full pontificals. On the jubilee of Pius IX, in June, 1871, it was attired in an alb and stole of old Point de Venise, with gold embroidered cope fastened at the breast by a clasp of diamonds.

There was no one kind of lace devoted to the use of the Church, but the choicest of all kinds. Venice Point, Burano lace with its splendid net ground instead of ground of bars, Alençon, Argentan, Mechlin, Valenciennes, all were used.



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The island of Burano, near Venice, had long been famed for its splendid laces. Of course its cathedral was not forgotten, and the sets made for the use of the Church are superb. The old ones, which are now a deep coffee colour, cannot be surpassed by the modern ones, beautiful though these be. The firm and solid character of this lace has enabled it to defy the ravages of time, and in the revival of the industry the workers have been able to copy the ancient laces which were so much esteemed. Queen Margherita of Italy became much interested in the revival of this ancient industry, and lent many pieces from her own splendid collection for reproduction. The most celebrated of these was a founce and chasuble made for Pope Clement XIII (1693-1769) at Burano some hundreds of years ago. The favourite subjects for design are wheat ears and vine leaves, and these are woven into numberless patterns of great beauty.

Nor was the convent or the paid worker the only source from which the Church drew her rich store of laces. Great ladies have devoted years of patient effort to making the lace to decorate altar or vestment, and in many cases rivalled the skill of their sisters in the convent.

In some ecclesiastical families the laces belonged to the members of the family rather than to the individual, and have grown steadily in magnitude and richness.

The laces of the Vatican are well known for their sumptuous character, and the work which is constantly bestowed on them keeps them in perfect repair.



THE GROWTH OF LACE

In England, till the time of the Reformation, lace was used on the altar of every parish church. When these stone altars were abolished, and tables standing on a frame were introduced, about 1565, by Queen Elizabeth's order, the fine old laces disappeared, to reappear in some new form in the homes of those whose interest in the Church allowed them to get possession of them.

While the anathemas of the Church were loudly directed at undue extravagance in matters pertaining both to dress and to indulgences at the table, there was no class which wore richer garments, furred or laced, or on whose table could be found rarer dainties or sweeter wines, than those of the princes of the Church. In France the lace worn by the Churchmen was of the greatest value and beauty, of home manufacture as well as of the splendid Venice and Flanders Points. The laces of the Rohan family were heirlooms and of enormous value. The Baroness de Oberkirch, in the "Memoirs of the Court of Louis XVI," speaks of seeing the Cardinal de Rohan, coming out of his chapel, —

—"dressed in a *soutane* of scarlet moiré and rochet of English lace of inestimable value. When on great occasions he officiates at Versailles, he wears an alb of old lace, needle point, of such beauty that his assistants are almost afraid to touch it. His arms and device are worked in a medallion above large flowers. This alb is estimated at 100,000 livres. On the day of which I speak he wore the rochet of English lace, one of his least beautiful, as his secretary, the Abbé Georget, told me."

The Hebrews also used lace in their religious ceremonies, and their *talith* or praying scarf was often very



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beautifully trimmed with lace, if not made of it entirely. Hebrew law forbade a mixture of materials in these scarfs, so, when the body of the scarf was made of silk, the lace was of silk also. This silk lace was made with the needle, of course, and was like the other laces of the period except in material. The beautiful Gros Point de Venise is exceedingly rich when made in a silk which has grown to a deep cream with age, and looks even more like carved ivory than when made of thread.

In the reign of Henry VIII of England the Wardrobe Accounts show that by 1539 shirts had become quite common, at least with those who could afford them,—for among this monarch's New Year's gifts were shirts embroidered with threads of gold and silver as well as with black or "blew" thread, which latter made a very picturesque and ornamental trimming. This coloured embroidery was in fashion during both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In "Religious Ceremonies," published in 1731, appears a direction that a cross shall be worked in "blew thred" to denote the spot where the altar cloth shall be kissed.

In 1605, in a play called "Laugh and Lie Down; or, The World's Folly," a handkerchief is thus spoken of: "It was a simple napkin wrought with Coventry blue,"—the making of this blue thread being the great industry of that city.

In 1575 Queen Elizabeth made one of her progresses to "Killingwoorth Castl in Warwick Sheer." The Earl of Leicester exerted himself for her entertainment, and

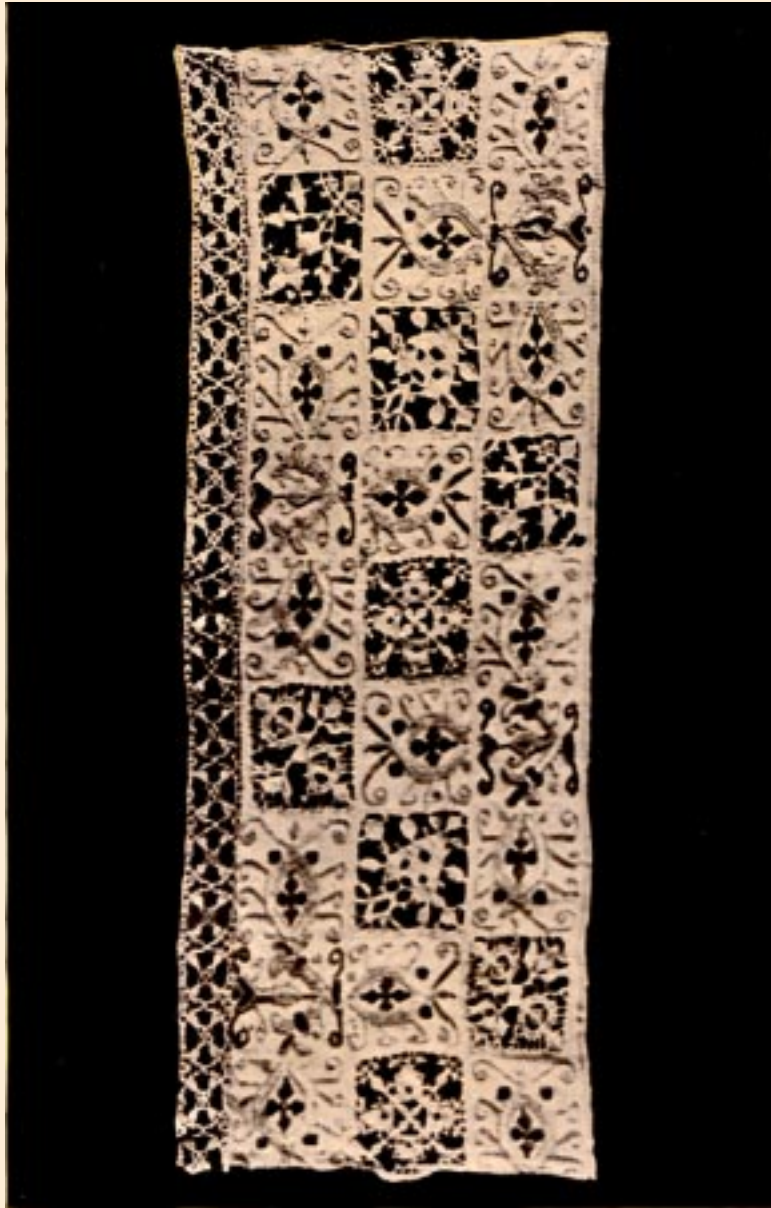


PLATE II.—Cut-work, with squares of embroidery. Sixteenth Century, Italian.



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in one of the many pageants an ancient minstrel performed, whose appearance and dress are minutely described in "An Essay on the Ancient Minstrels" in "Percy's Reliques."

"A person very meet seemed he for the purpose, of forty-five years old, apparelled partly as he would himself. His cap off; his head seemly rounded Tonsterwise; fair kembed, that with a sponge daintily dipt in a little capon's greace was finely smoothed, to make it shine like a mallard's wing. His beard smugly shaven; and yet his shirt after the new trink, with ruffs fair starched, sleeked and glistening like a pair of new shoes, marshalled in good order with a setting stick and strut, that every ruff stood up like a wafer. A side gown of Kendal green, after the freshness of the year now, gathered at the neck with a narrow gorget, fastened afore with a white clasp and a Keeper close up to the chin, but easily, for heat to undo when he list. Seemly begirt in a red caddis girdle; from that a pair of capped Sheffield Knives hanging a' two sides. Out of his bosom drawn forth a lappet of his napkin edged with a blue lace, and marked with a true love, a heart, and a D for Damian, for he was but a bachelor yet. His gown had side sleeves down to midleg, slit from the shoulder to the hand, and lined with white cotton. His doublet-sleeves of black worsted, upon them a pair of poynets of tawny chamlet laced along the wrist with blue threaden points, a wealt towards the hand of fustian-a-napes. A pair of red neather stocks. A pair of pumps on his feet, with a cross-cut at the toes for corns; not new indeed, yet cleanly blackt with soot, and shining as a shoing-horn."

There is a portrait of Henry VIII, showing him in a costume with ruffles at the hand, and an entry occurs in the wardrobe book, of a pair of sleeves, "ruffd at the hands with strawberry leaves and flowers of golde embroidered with black silke." Also a pair of sleeves of "redde cloth of gold with cut workes."



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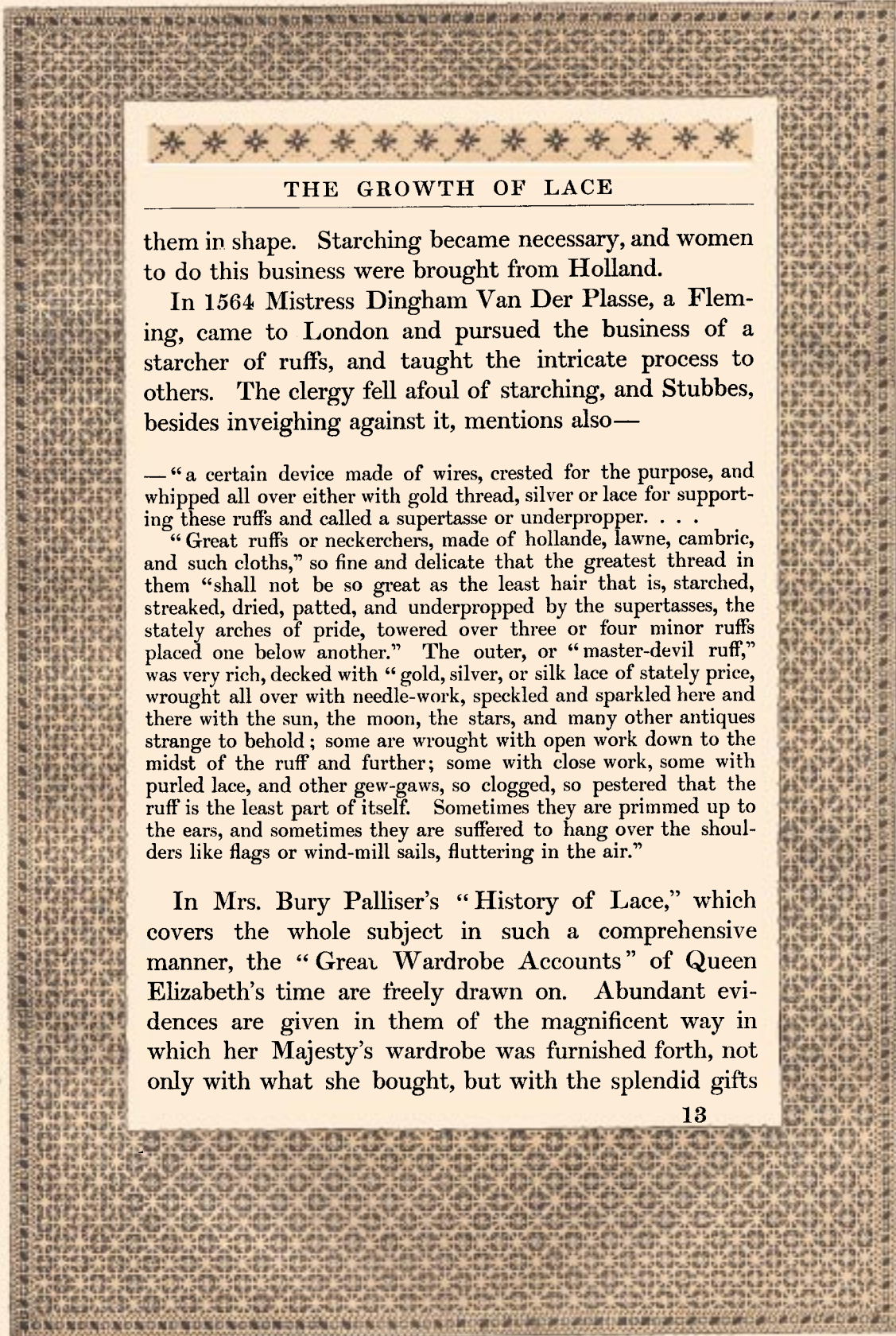
There had been many acts passed during the reign of Edward IV (1461-1483) regulating wearing-apparel, and during the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) gold and silver lace as well as thread became an article of commerce from Italy. There must have been considerable traffic in this fabric, for an act was passed prohibiting the sale of a packet of lace as a pound when it did not weigh twelve ounces, and that the contents of said packets should contain lace of the same goodness and colour as that displayed on the outside, the crafty Venetians considering it allowable to make more than a just profit by giving short weight and inferior quality. Queen Elizabeth of York pays in 1502 quite a sum for laces, and Friar Hercules is also paid for "gold of Venys," and "for making a lace for the King's mantell of the Garter."

Queen Mary, whose thoughts were not fixed on "app'l," nevertheless continued some of the laws of Henry VIII's making, in which "ruffles made or wrought out of England, commonly called cut work, are forbidden to any one under the degree of a baron." No woman whose station was of less degree than the "wife of a knight might deck herself with lace, or passement lace of gold or silver, with sleeves, partlet or linen trimmed with purles of gold or silver, whitework or cut work made beyond the sea."

It was in the second year of Elizabeth's reign that the great ruffs came in, trimmed with the beautiful thread Guipure of the period, and requiring stiffening to keep



***PLATE III.**—Lucrezia Ricasoli né Zanchino.
Gimp lace, probably made at Ragusa. Six-
teenth Century.*



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them in shape. Starching became necessary, and women to do this business were brought from Holland.

In 1564 Mistress Dingham Van Der Plasse, a Fleming, came to London and pursued the business of a starcher of ruffs, and taught the intricate process to others. The clergy fell afoul of starching, and Stubbes, besides inveighing against it, mentions also—

—“a certain device made of wires, crested for the purpose, and whipped all over either with gold thread, silver or lace for supporting these ruffs and called a supertasse or underpropper. . . .

“Great ruffs or neckerchers, made of hollande, lawne, cambric, and such cloths,” so fine and delicate that the greatest thread in them “shall not be so great as the least hair that is, starched, streaked, dried, patted, and underpropped by the supertasses, the stately arches of pride, towered over three or four minor ruffs placed one below another.” The outer, or “master-devil ruff,” was very rich, decked with “gold, silver, or silk lace of stately price, wrought all over with needle-work, speckled and sparkled here and there with the sun, the moon, the stars, and many other antiques strange to behold; some are wrought with open work down to the midst of the ruff and further; some with close work, some with purled lace, and other gew-gaws, so clogged, so pestered that the ruff is the least part of itself. Sometimes they are primmed up to the ears, and sometimes they are suffered to hang over the shoulders like flags or wind-mill sails, fluttering in the air.”

In Mrs. Bury Palliser’s “History of Lace,” which covers the whole subject in such a comprehensive manner, the “Great Wardrobe Accounts” of Queen Elizabeth’s time are freely drawn on. Abundant evidences are given in them of the magnificent way in which her Majesty’s wardrobe was furnished forth, not only with what she bought, but with the splendid gifts



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from subjects, which were rather in the nature of a tax than evidence of a desire to give.

In 1577 Lady Ratcliffe gave the Queen for a New Year's gift a night coif of white cut-work, flourished with silver and set with spangles. Sir Philip Sidney on the same occasion gave a pair of cuffs of cut-work. In the Wardrobe Accounts this cut-work is mentioned as being of both Flemish and Italian make, the latter being the more costly.

Besides the cut-work, mention is frequently made of other kinds of lace. "Bone lace" heads the list, and was so called from the use of fish-bones, which were scraped down to the proper size, instead of pins. The bobbins were also made of bones, the small bones in pig's "trotters" being those generally chosen, — in England, at any rate. Italy used, besides small bones, bobbins of wood, with sometimes a pretty bead set in or a bit of silver. Mrs. Palliser says that lead bobbins were also in use, but the weight of these would seem to be prohibitory. After a time the bone bobbins were replaced with those made of wood, and the term bone lace becomes less frequent.

"Bobbin lace" was next in order, and afterward there was scarcely any end to the various trimmings which the Virgin Queen lavished upon herself, although she kept a stern eye on any too excessive gaudiness in the apparel of her loyal subjects. "Crown lace," as its name implies, had devices of crowns; then there was "Hollow lace," "Parchment," "Spanish," "Fringe and Diamond"



*PLATE IV.—A. Laces, or darned net-work.
Sixteenth Century. B. Venetian drawn-work.
Fifteenth Century.*



THE GROWTH OF LACE

lace,—all mentioned in these voluminous Wardrobe Accounts, which extend from the first year of Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558) till 1781, and fill one hundred and sixty volumes.

Articles of feminine attire were easily purchased at the shops of merchants by those who dwelt in cities. But the country ladies, who were quite as eager to be "brave" in their attire, were forced to buy from peddlers, who carried their wares from one end of Europe to the other, and were eagerly welcomed whenever they appeared, as they were not only expected to show their goods, but to be able to tell the latest fashions in coifs and wimples, smocks and pillow-beres, ruffs, cuffs, and passements. Needle-made lace was always more valuable than bobbin lace, and in Queen Elizabeth's time varied from 8*s.* 6*d.* to 50*s.* a yard, while the bobbin ranged from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 11*s.* 6*d.*

The entries in these account-books seem to show that the laces worn and most in demand were of foreign make, and imported from Venice, Lucca, Genoa, and Flanders. As early as 1454 a complaint was made by the women of London against six foreigners by whom the manufacture of cut-work, both of silk and thread, was introduced. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries lace was made in many counties of England, some of it of great beauty; but in the early days it was the foreign lace which was worn.

It seems amazing that Queen Elizabeth, herself an arch-offender in the matter of exaggeration of costume,



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should have been so strict in her proclamations against the "inordinate use of apparel." In 1568 the value of the lace imported into the kingdom was £775 6s. 8d., and the Queen personally was a small buyer, since she received for presents such quantities, all of the richest quality. Her very petticoats bristled with lace of "Venys gold," and none of them were so poor that they did not at least have a guarding of "Venys silver." There was hardly a garment which was not edged with lace, and christening-shirts, mittens, and mantles or "bearing-cloths" were richly laced, and aprons came into fashion. Laced handkerchiefs were given as love tokens. King Henry VIII himself had used "handkerchers of Holland fringed with Venys gold, red and white silk." They kept on gaining in richness with nearly every reign. In June, 1665, there are advertised as lost :

"6 handkerchers, wrapt up in a brown paper, two laced, one point laced set on tiffany; the two laced ones had been worn, the other four new."

Everybody knows the sad ending of Mrs. Turner, who invented yellow starch, and expiated that crime and some others upon Tower Hill. Not only starch was needed to keep these huge ruffs in the desired shape; there were setting-sticks and struts of either bone or wood, and the poking-stick of iron, which, being heated and drawn through the ruff, gave it the proper arch of pride. Queen Elizabeth no doubt considered her huge ruff most becoming, and never dreamed that it was whispered about behind her back that she



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had the "yellowest throat in all England" and wore the huge gorget to conceal it. In the face of such extravagance as we know her to pardon in her own person, Queen Bess ordered that—

"neither also shoulde any person use or weare such great and excessive ruffs, in or about the uppermost part of their necks, as had not been used before two yeares past; but that all persons shoulde in modest and semely sort leave off such fonde, disguised, and monstrous manner of attyring themselves as both was unsupportable for charges and undecent to be worn."

Stranger to us, in these days, would be the laces woven from human hair, the soft and silky white being that most often chosen. Mary Stuart had a small piece of hair lace given her by the Countess of Lennox, woven from her own white hair.

The clergy and those rich and powerful nobles of Scotland who could receive their "passements" and guards from France and Italy, as did the rest of the world, used them no doubt according to the fashion of the times. Mary Stuart's arrival in her dominions stimulated yet further elegance of attire, and in her Wardrobe Accounts of 1567 are found records of passements and Guipures, gold and silver lace, and most of the varieties of thread lace then known. The national dress of Scotland precluded the use of lace of a delicate character, and an account of the costume of the women, written by Martin in 1703, is as follows :

"The plaid for women, being plaited all around, was tied with a belt below the breast. . . . They wore sleeves of scarlet cloth, closed at the end as men's vests, with gold lace round 'em, having plate buttons set with fine stones."



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The bulk of the people not wearing lace, little was made except among the great, who worked at it themselves and had their maidens make it, so that petticoat and apron, neckerchief and fly cap need not be without it. The quantities made by the captive Queen Mary seem almost incredible, fashioned from patterns designed by herself, "after nature," of birds, fishes, beasts, and flowers. Of the latter 52 patterns, of four-footed beasts 16, and of birds 124, were mentioned in her inventory.

The sumptuary laws in England regarding dress must have been carried out in a half-hearted way, for during the early days of the reign of James I (1603) the ruff, double, single, three and four piled, was the fashion still. The clergy yet railed at them, and "deep ruffs and shallow ruffs, thick ruffs and thin ruffs, double and no ruffs" were denounced from the pulpit.

In 1607, according to a play of the period called "What You Will," a gentleman's dress, as described by his servant, was as follows :

"A cloak lined with rich taffeta, a white satin suit, the jerkin covered with gold lace, a chain of pearl, a gilt rapier in an embroidered hanger, pearl-colored silk stockings, and massive silver spurs."

The granting of monopolies "as numerous as the frogs of Egypt," and then the rescinding of them, occupied King James's attention for twenty years. The importation of gold and silver lace was the perquisite of the Earl of Suffolk, and no doubt he saw to it that plenty was worn.



PLATE V.—Donna Emilia Spinelli. Ruff of linen trimmed with Reticella or drawn-work and edged with Gothic Point. Sixteenth Century.



THE GROWTH OF LACE

As early as the middle of the sixteenth century there were many styles of cloaks,—

“Genoa cloaks, French, Spanish, and Dutch cloaks; some of cloth, silk, velvet, taffata, and such like. . . . Some short, reaching to the girdlestead or waist, some to the knees, and others trailing upon the ground, resembling gowns rather than cloaks. Then they are guarded with velvet guards, or else faced with costly lace, either of gold or silver, or at least of silk three or four fingers broad down the back, about the skirts and every where else.”

When Queen Anne, wife of James I, was hurried over from Scotland to sit on the English throne, her scant wardrobe was replenished for the moment from the relics of Queen Elizabeth’s magnificence. But as soon as possible she bought a good wardrobe for herself, and lace in plenty, “little bone lace,” “great bone lace,” and “18 yards of fine lace, at 6s. the yard,” and yards upon yards more.

All accounts of the period tell how Prince Charlie and his companion the Duke of Buckingham ruffled it in Spain when the marriage with the Infanta was in prospect. One item in “Extraordinary Expenses for Prince Charles’s Journey to Spain” (1623) is: “95 dozen rich silver double diamond and cross laces.” Not only were rich presents sent from England to the Spanish princess, but when the negotiations were fairly under way great preparations were made by the Infanta herself, according to the letters of James Howell, who was in Spain at the time.

“She is preparing divers suits of rich clothes for his Highness of perfumed amber leather, some embroidered with pearl, some with gold and some with silver.”



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The English Ambassador was so sure the marriage was to come off that he—

— “caused above thirty rich liveries to be made of watchet velvet (pale blue), with silver lace up to the very capes of the cloaks, the best sorts whereof were valued at £80 a livery.”

It seems as if Buckingham must have almost outshone the prospective bridegroom in the magnificence of his attire and the superb jewels he wore, which, by the way, were none too tightly sewed on, so that a few occasionally fell off, to be picked up by whoever would stoop for them, since their haughty owner would not do this, nor would he receive those that had once fallen on the floor. In “Curiosities of Literature,” D’Israeli writes :

“Buckingham had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, silver, gold, and gems could contribute.”

Speaking of the Spaniards, Howell says (1623) :

“His gravity is much lessen’d since the late proclamation came out against ruffs, and the king himself shew’d the first example ; they were come to that height of excess herein that twenty shillings were us’d to be paid for starching of a ruff; and some, tho’ perhaps he had never a shirt to his back, yet he would have a toting huge swelling ruff about his neck.”

After the intricate ruff with its treble-quadruple plaiting, the fashion for what was known as “standing bands” came in. These were of linen either starched or wired to stand up stiffly, and edged with lace. They were seen as early as 1604, and were worn by persons of quality till the middle of the seventeenth century. Even before the standing band went out entirely, the “falling



***P**LATE VI.—Donna Portia de Rossi. Ruff
of Reticella or drawn-work, edged with Gothic
Point. Sixteenth Century.*



THE GROWTH OF LACE

band" came in, and was bordered by lace, embroidery, cut-work, or even pearls. It may be said that in King Charles's reign the ruff finally died, and falling bands became the mode. These latter were worn by all classes save judges, and must have been very much more comfortable than the ruffs which preceded them. With them came "band strings," so called, to tie or fasten them. These were often very rich, and were made with the collar or sold separately. Sometimes they were plaited, or made with bobbins, being finished with a medallion of lace or merely a tassel. "Snake-bone band strings" are mentioned by 1652. It is agreed that the reign of Charles I (1625-1648) was the most elegant and picturesque in the line of costume ever known in England. Because Van Dyck painted at this time and made the dress such a feature of many of his wonderful pictures, the costume has become known by his name. The perfection of this courtly costume was not reached until about the middle of the reign, for during the first decade the dress of his father's (James I's) time still prevailed. To the completed dress of the gallant of say 1630 almost every European nation had contributed its quota, and in Ben Jonson's comedy of "The New Inn," first performed in 1629, a beau observes :

" I would put on
The Savoy chain, about my neck the ruff,
The cuff of Flanders ; then the Naples hat
With the Rome hat-band and the Florentine agate,
The Milan sword, the cloak of Geneva set
With Brabant buttons, all my given pieces,
My gloves, the natives of Madrid."



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Even after the commencement of the Civil War, when Royalists were dubbed Cavaliers, and Republicans were called Roundheads, the costume still retained its elegance and beauty among the faction devoted to the Crown. The doublet of velvet, satin, or silk guarded with lace, had large, loose sleeves slashed up the front. The collar was covered by a falling band of richest Point lace, which, with its peculiar edging of points, became known as Vandyck's. The breeches met the long boots, which were wide, and fringed with either lace or lawn ruffles.

The female dress was equally elegant and varied. "Rhodon and Iris," a play first acted in May, 1631, gives the following catalogue of the ornaments of a lady of fashion :

"Chains, coronets, pendans, bracelets and earrings ;
Pins, girdles, spangles, embroideries and rings ;
Shadowes, rebatoes, ribbands, ruffs, cuffs, falls,
Scarfes, feathers, fans, maskes, muffs, laces, cauls ;
Thin tiffanies, cobweb lawn and fardingals,
Sweet fals, vayles, wimples, glasses, crisping pins ;
Pots of ointment, combes, with poking sticks and bodkines,
Coyfes, gorgets, fringes, rowles, fillets and hair laces,
Silks, damasks, velvets, tinsels, cloth of gold,
Of tissues with colours of a hundred fold."

The varieties of falling bands are "French falls," "Geneva bands," which were worn by the clergy, and the narrow falls worn by the Roundheads.

Nightcaps, which had appeared in King Henry VIII's time, had by 1626 become valuable adjuncts to both men's and women's attire. Prince Charles carried two



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with him on his Spanish trip, for which the gold and silver laces cost £15. These nightcaps must have been very large, for King James required ten yards of needlework for his, which cost £16 13s. 4d. Nightcaps held their own for many years, and in 1762 we find women of fashion wearing the "French nightcap" in the daytime. It was a large and flapping garment, so that a writer of the time says: "Each lady, when dressed in this mode, can only peep under the lace border."

During King Charles's reign, if the lace ruff had decreased in size, there was no less lace worn, since it blossomed out in prodigious fashion on the boot-tops and in rosettes on the shoes. By 1627 much fine lace was made in England, but it was not till 1635 that home industries were protected by prohibiting the importation of "Purles, Cutworks, or Bone-laces, or any commodities laced or edged therewith."

Under Cromwell such vanities as lace were sternly suppressed, except among those like Cromwell's mother, who would not lay aside her rich lace; but with the coming of the Stuarts such "fallals" as lace were once more brought forth and shaken out. Although Charles II issued many prohibitions, he himself loved Flanders lace, and wore it, too. The fashion of dressing the hair in flowing locks effectually killed the wide collar, as only the front could be seen, so that the cravat, richly laced and tied in front, became the mode. In the last year of Charles II's reign the expense accounts show that he paid £20 12s. "for a new cravat to be worn on the birth-



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day of his dear brother." Pepys wore one of these bands to church on October 19, 1662. He was so pleased with his appearance that he notes down: "So neat it is that I am resolved my great expence shall be lace-bands." Pepys speaks many times of the lace on his and his wife's clothes, of gold lace, lace bands, lace petticoats, garments guarded with lace; and finally, when his brother goes to Holland to seek his fortune, Pepys, in a burst of generosity, gives him an old coat trimmed with lace from off one of his wife's petticoats!

Lace cravats were popular for many years, and were only beginning to be superseded in 1735. James II wore, on his coronation, a Venice Point lace cravat and ruffles, and the cravat cost £36 10s.

William III and Mary did not hesitate to have much and costly lace, both of Italian and of Flanders make, and the expense accounts duly set forth the fact. In one instance six Point lace cravats for William cost £158, and it is in this reign that the extravagance in lace reached its height, everything being trimmed with it, even such homely articles as combing-cloths, "toy-lights," pillow-beres, night shifts, razor-cloths, etc. If the Queen pays £17 for a lace apron, the King exceeds her by giving £499 10s. for the lace to trim his new nightshirts. Nor were simple gentlemen far behind royalty, for in 1709 Mr. Gore's wedding shirts are described as "laste with lace of eight pound a yard, the nightshirt lace three pound ten a yard."

"Good Queen Anne," whose name has been attached



PLATE VII.—The Gonfaloniere Peretti. Ruff and breeches of cut-work. Portrait by Domenichino (1581-1641).



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to so many objects from a hoop-skirt to a house-roof, did not spend quite as much money on lace as her sister, but she, too, when she wanted it for state occasions, sent to Flanders for it. Until this time we find that the term "Flanders' lace" covered all of this fabric which the Netherlands furnished. In 1710 Queen Anne paid £151 for 26 yards of fine edged Brussels lace, and two years later her bill for Brussels and Mechlin lace to one merchant alone was £1418 14s. There was no extravagance to which the ladies of the court did not go in regard to the quantity of lace lavished upon their clothes, and in an effort to stem the rising tide an embargo had been laid, in 1711, upon the importation of gold and silver lace, under pain of the forfeiture of the lace and a fine of £100. The companions of laces were the unguents, essences, and cosmetics considered necessary to improve the complexion. In 1730 Swift wrote:

"Five hours (and who can do it less in?)
By haughty Celia spent in dressing;
The goddess from her chamber issues,
Array'd in lace, brocade, and tissues."

The male costume was scarcely less exacting. The long wigs necessitated a weekly shaving for the head. The ill-paved streets wrought havoc with fine clothes and the rich laces with which they were trimmed, so great cloaks, often edged with gold lace, were part of every man's costume. Each walk in life had its own dress, and each might choose to throw about him at night the Doyley, the Joseph, or the wrap-rascal.




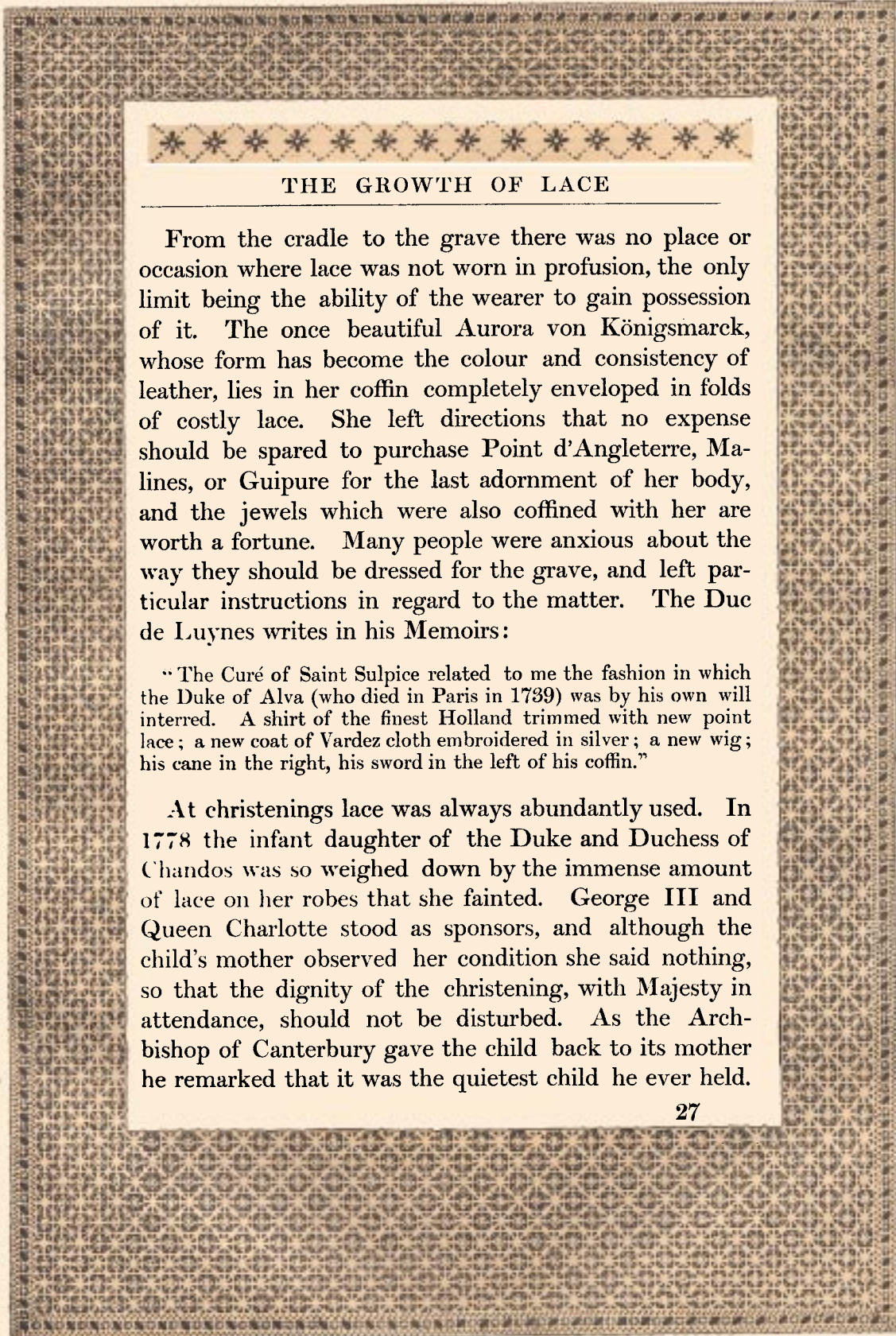
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Year after year the "Great Wardrobe Accounts" teem with exorbitant sums paid for lace. During the reigns of the first two Georges we read of lappets and flounces, caps, aprons, stomachers, and handkerchiefs, and the second George was quite a martinet as to the quality of his lace and the profusion with which it was to be worn. To please him, and in deference to the prevailing English fashions, when Queen Caroline first appeared in England she wore the dress most in vogue among English ladies. She had on a gold brocade with a white ground, had a stomacher ornamented with diamonds, and a fly cap with richly laced lappets. During his reign English laces began to be held in greater estimation and more worn on high occasions, and edicts were passed prohibiting foreign importations.

By 1760, with George III on the throne, much less lace was used in masculine attire, and the rich lace which had been in daily use was laid aside, appearing only on great occasions.

Early in the nineteenth century collections of old lace began to be made by women of fashion, and Sydney, Lady Morgan, gathered much in her travels. In 1818, at Paris, she writes to her sister :

"I have had to set myself up an evening dress, and though materials are extraordinary cheap here, work is wonderfully dear, so dear that I cannot get a plain dress made up under a guinea and a half. However I have made myself a very pretty dress with my own two hands, white satin with a deep lace flounce. With the skirt I got on beautifully, but as to the corsage, fortunately there is scarcely any, what there is being covered with falls, and frills of lace, so it does not signify how the body is made."



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From the cradle to the grave there was no place or occasion where lace was not worn in profusion, the only limit being the ability of the wearer to gain possession of it. The once beautiful Aurora von Königsmark, whose form has become the colour and consistency of leather, lies in her coffin completely enveloped in folds of costly lace. She left directions that no expense should be spared to purchase Point d'Angleterre, Malines, or Guipure for the last adornment of her body, and the jewels which were also confined with her are worth a fortune. Many people were anxious about the way they should be dressed for the grave, and left particular instructions in regard to the matter. The Duc de Luynes writes in his Memoirs:

“The Curé of Saint Sulpice related to me the fashion in which the Duke of Alva (who died in Paris in 1739) was by his own will interred. A shirt of the finest Holland trimmed with new point lace; a new coat of Vardez cloth embroidered in silver; a new wig; his cane in the right, his sword in the left of his coffin.”

At christenings lace was always abundantly used. In 1778 the infant daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Chandos was so weighed down by the immense amount of lace on her robes that she fainted. George III and Queen Charlotte stood as sponsors, and although the child's mother observed her condition she said nothing, so that the dignity of the christening, with Majesty in attendance, should not be disturbed. As the Archbishop of Canterbury gave the child back to its mother he remarked that it was the quietest child he ever held.



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It died soon after, having never recovered from the effects of its christening.


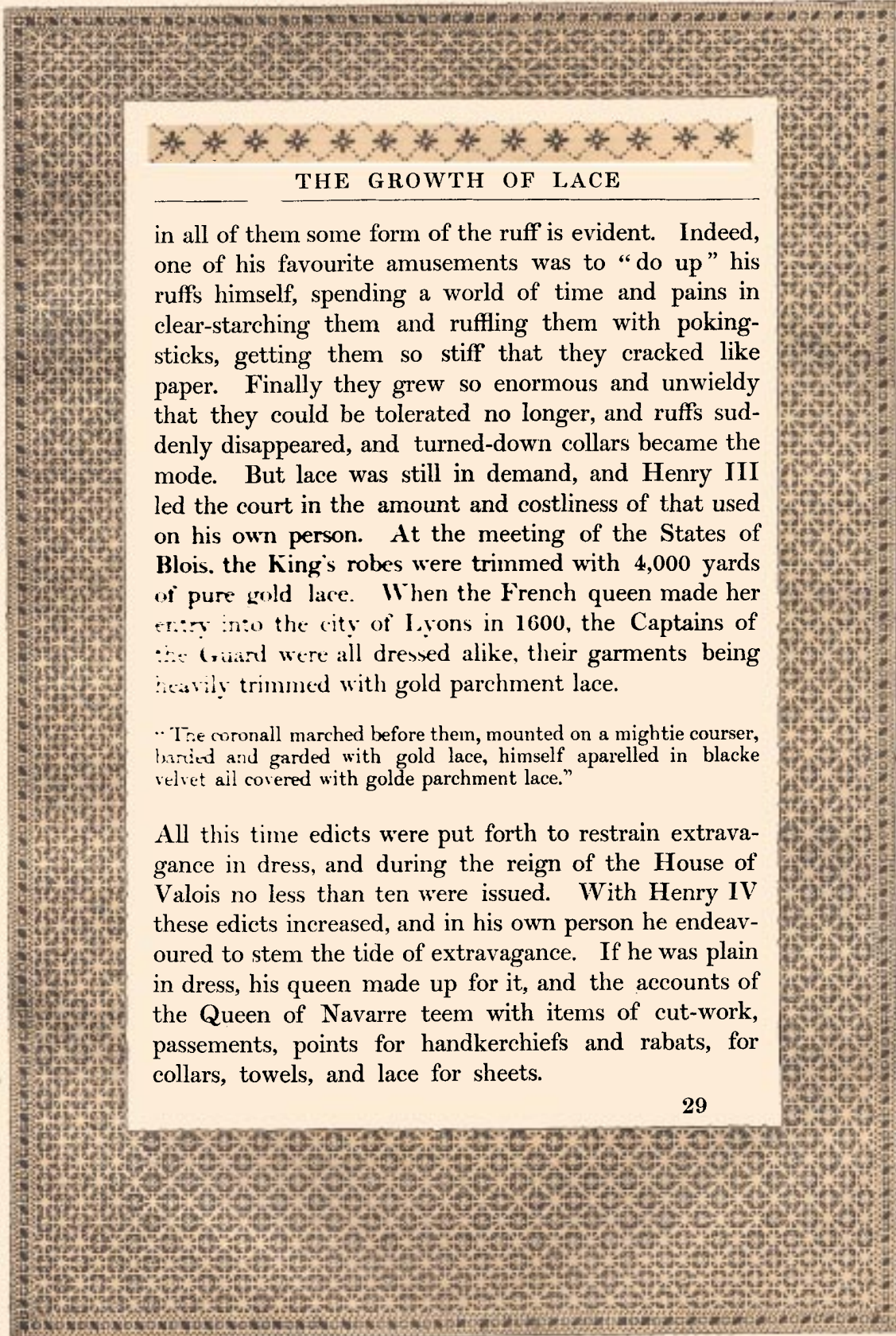
It was much the fashion for great dames to receive company upon their "uprising" a few days before the christening. Lady Chesterfield, in 1802, received the Queen and George III "reclining on a state bed, dressed in white satin with a profusion of lace, the counterpane of white satin embroidered with gold, and the bed of crimson satin lined with white."

England, in her love of lace and extravagant use of it, had but followed in the path worn by her Continental neighbours. France desired to be no less brave than the rest of the world, and the sums of money she expended were even greater than those of England.

It was the arrival of Catherine de Medici in France that disseminated the taste for lace through all classes, together with other luxuries that had their origin in Italy. It is true that it was at first the more primitive forms of lace which she brought with her, but, with the development of lace in Italy, France followed suit, and it was in full favour by 1550. The effeminate Valois, dissolute and extravagant, gave themselves up to every species of folly. Their dress was as costly and brilliant as could be devised, and the last of this family, Henry III, paid so much attention to the preservation of his beauty and the details of his costume that he was well called the *homme-femme* of the Louvre. There are many portraits of him,—with his dogs; receiving Guise; at Blois; instituting the order of the "Holy Spirit;" and at balls.—and



***P**LATE VIII.—Faustina, wife of Count John of Nassau. Ruff of lawn, triple-plaited, edged with fine Gothic Point. Portrait by Ravestejn (1572-1657).*



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in all of them some form of the ruff is evident. Indeed, one of his favourite amusements was to "do up" his ruffs himself, spending a world of time and pains in clear-starching them and ruffling them with poking-sticks, getting them so stiff that they cracked like paper. Finally they grew so enormous and unwieldy that they could be tolerated no longer, and ruffs suddenly disappeared, and turned-down collars became the mode. But lace was still in demand, and Henry III led the court in the amount and costliness of that used on his own person. At the meeting of the States of Blois, the King's robes were trimmed with 4,000 yards of pure gold lace. When the French queen made her entry into the city of Lyons in 1600, the Captains of the Guard were all dressed alike, their garments being heavily trimmed with gold parchment lace.

"The coronall marched before them, mounted on a mightie courser, barded and garded with gold lace, himself aparelled in blacke velvet all covered with golde parchment lace."

All this time edicts were put forth to restrain extravagance in dress, and during the reign of the House of Valois no less than ten were issued. With Henry IV these edicts increased, and in his own person he endeavoured to stem the tide of extravagance. If he was plain in dress, his queen made up for it, and the accounts of the Queen of Navarre teem with items of cut-work, passements, points for handkerchiefs and rabats, for collars, towels, and lace for sheets.



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The inventory of Gabrielle, Duchess of Beaufort, 1599, mentions handkerchiefs worked with gold, silver, and silk ; cuffs of cut-work, enriched with silver ; handkerchiefs of cut-work enriched with gold and silver ; and much linen also cut and worked. The sumptuous elegance of Marie de Medici's costume has been amply portrayed by Rubens, and her laces and jewels were the finest to be had anywhere. Yet the time came when she was obliged to curtail her expenditure, owing to the clamour of her subjects, and in 1613 she, too, issued an edict prohibiting the use of lace and embroidery. For some years previous to this the court had been using quantities of the richest Point from both Venice and Flanders. Much lace had been made in France, however, and many pattern-books published there, the first by Vinciolo, the Venetian, in 1587. He was commissioned by the King to print these books, and they were so much in demand that there were many editions, and *grande dames* made lace as did the great Italian ladies, for themselves, and also rarely for the Church.

Boots, garters, aprons, cuffs, and falling bands were all garnished with lace, and though edicts were showered upon the use of it, the portraits of the time show that it was still the finishing touch to the toilette of beauty or of cavalier. That gallant boy, Cinq-Mars, Master of the Wardrobe to the fickle Louis XIII, is always remembered by his 300 sets of lace ruffles. He was only twenty-two when he went to the block in 1642, his suit of "dark-coloured Holland cloth covered with gold



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lace, and a scarlet mantle with silver buttons," setting off his handsome person, and befitting the way he met his untimely end.

By 1634 boots and carriages, it is decreed, must show no lace. In 1636 a fine of 6,000 francs, banishment for five years, and confiscation, was the penalty for wearing home-made laces as well as foreign. Yet Marie de Medici still imported and wore gold, silver, and thread laces from Italy and Flanders. The waists of the gowns, stiffened to an extent that made them instruments of torture, were cut out so liberally in the neck that the Pope at last interfered and threatened excommunication to those who persisted in baring their necks in this style. But this had little effect, and the superb upstanding ruffs of lace, stiffened and borne on wire frames, set off the painted faces of their wearers in a most sumptuous frame, enhancing the whiteness of the shoulders from which it rose, and adding another lustre to the brilliancy of the jewels that were crowded on neck, corsage, and hair. On one gown alone the queen had sewn 32,000 pearls and 3,000 diamonds, in addition to many yards of gold lace, and the finest Venetian Point for ruff and cuffs.

Nor was the use of lace confined to the outer garments only. A dame correctly dressed wore three skirts of different colours, all guarded or trimmed with lace, for each skirt was expected to show, and the fashionable colours for these petticoats were called by such whimsical names as "dying monkey," "sick



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Spaniard," "gladsome widow," "rat colour," "fading flower," and many other equally grotesque terms.

During the regency of Marie de Medici fashions underwent a transition state, and the gorgeousness of the Renaissance lasted till about 1630, when for a brief time, under the edicts of Richelieu, simpler stuffs untrimmed with silver or gold lace, gold thread, or thread lace, were worn. But this eclipse was only temporary, and men and women shone with even gayer costumes under the eye of the Sun King.

Nor was the crafty Mazarin above the passion for Points, which he bought from Genoa, Venice, and Flanders. Later, under the fostering care of Colbert, the lace industry of France grew and prospered. This astute minister found edicts of small avail. It was of no use to prohibit the wearing of any lace greater than an inch in width. "Canons," enormous ruffles of lace just below the knee, were entirely prohibited, and, as usual, gold and silver lace was under the ban; yet so superior were the splendid laces of Italy and Flanders that no royal mandates could compel the wearing of coarse, home-made fabrics.

In 1665, Colbert, at one of his own châteaux, Lonrai, near Alençon, started a small lace-factory with thirty women whom he had brought from Venice. This first effort is connected by most authorities with the name of Madame Gilbert, a French woman who was a native of Alençon, and who was installed as head of the factory, since she had already learned how to make Venetian



PLATE IX.—Bossuet (1627-1704). He wears
an alb trimmed with Point de France.
Portrait by Rigaud.



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Point. Fine lace was produced here, and soon in other places in France. It was originally called "Point de France." Later, specific names were chosen; and encouraged by Colbert, and fostered by the edict of Louis XIV, who forbade the use of any other kind of lace in his immediate court circle, Alençon lace grew to great perfection and beauty, and many people were at work upon it. Drastic measures were used to see that the edicts relative to the wearing of French lace only were carried out. In 1670 the hangman publicly burned "one hundred thousand crowns' worth of Point de Venise, Flanders lace, and other foreign commodities that are forbid."

At the frequent balls and masques which were the diversion of the French court, the outlay for lace was immense. Louise de Querouaille had a man's dress made to wear at a ball in 1672. The bill shows it to have been a very rich court suit:


"For making a dove-coloured and silk brocade coat, Rhingrave breeches and canons, the coat lined with white lutestring and interlined with camblett; the breeches lined with lutestring; seams all over with a scarlet and silver lace; sleeves and canons white and laced with a scarlet and silver lace and a point lace trimmed with a scarlet figured and plain sattin ribbon and scarlet and silver twist £ 2
" Buttons 1
" 10 yds. brocade at 28s. 14
" Linings and ribbons 20
" 22 yds. of lace at 18s. 19 16
" Beaver hat 2 10

"£59 6"



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By 1680 it was publicly stated that the laces commonly called Point de Venise were made in France as well as in Italy, while in 1687 the Earl of Manchester, writing from Venice, complains of the excessive price of the Point made there, and says he is sure it can be bought as cheap and in better patterns in England or Paris. Never was dress more extravagant. Since the ponderous richness of the fashions of the Renaissance had been thrown off, it was lighter and more graceful. Beauties and *élégantes* of both sexes gave their minds to this absorbing subject. She who could invent a new use for a bit of lace, and he who could contrive something *bizarre* in the cock of a bonnet, were sure of the plaudits of their friends and the satisfaction of having their ideas promptly copied. There were such fantastic trifles as "galants," "ladders," "fanfreluches," "transparents," "furbelows," "hurly-burlies," "what-nots," "Steinkirks," "Fontanges," "engageants," "roses," and "palatines," — all requiring more or less rich and beautiful lace in their composition. The skirts of the gowns were looped aside to show an under-petticoat quite as rich as the gown itself, and frequently smothered in lace in the form of whole fronts which hung from the waist, or two or three smaller flounces. The sides of the outer skirt were trimmed with lace set on in full shell-like ruches, or in "ladders," and only the purse of the wearer, or her credit with the lace merchants, limited the amount put on these sumptuous gowns. Lest, even with all this elegance of attire, life should not be sumptuous enough, "bath sets"



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were made, trimmed with lace, and comprising a gown, towels, and a great flounce of lace to surround the bathtub itself.

Changes of fashions were shown on lay figures, or dolls, dressed in costly stuffs and laces. At this time France had assumed her place as arbiter and leader in the world of dress, so these dolls were sent all about, to Italy, Flanders, Vienna, and England, and called "Courriers de la Mode." Two hundred years before, Isabella D'Este had sent to France a doll from Mantua dressed in the style she affected, which was also worn by the Milanese ladies, for Mantua was famous for its caps and its embroideries. Indeed, the well-known term "mantua-maker" comes from the name of this city, now scarcely more than a memory.

With the coming to the throne of Louis XV, lace was still in great demand. None, from *grisette* to *grande*, but squandered all they could gather together on this fragile fabric. Ruffles were an absolute necessity on day-shirts, dress-shirts, and nightshirts, Valenciennes being the proper lace for these latter garments. For other occasions the trimmings might be "Point à bride," "Point à réseau," "Point superfine," "Point brilliant," "Point d'Angleterre," "Point d'Alençon," or "Point d'Argentan." The extravagance of the period in the lace put on the night garments is shown in the Wardrobe Accounts of the Duc de Penthièvre (1738), who paid 520 livres (about \$104) for the lace for collar and cuffs for a nightshirt. His nightcaps were many and ornate.



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They cost from 27 livres (\$5.40) to 253 livres (\$50.60) each.

By 1730 the fardingale, which under the austere frostiness of Madame de Maintenon's reign had suffered eclipse, regained its old-time proportions. This led to a change in the fashion of gowns, and once more yards upon yards of lace were needed for their embellishment. The thick and heavy stuffs worn in the preceding reign were rejected for gauzes and transparent materials, trimmed with fluttering lace, which was seen on every article of attire from slippers to fans. It was during this reign (that of Louis XV) that in the fancy of the great dames special makes of lace were relegated to special seasons, Argentan and Alençon being called "winter laces," and their use being somewhat superseded by Malines and Point d'Angleterre.

In Mrs. Palliser's "History of Lace" is given some items from the Wardrobe Account of Madame Du Barry, showing the amount of Point d'Angleterre she considered necessary :

"One complete toilette of Point d'Angleterre, 8,823 livres [about \$1764.60].

"A head-dress composed of two barbes, six pairs of cuffs, and a jabot, all of finest Point d'Angleterre, 7,000 livres [\$1,400].

"Trimming for peignoir, of Point d'Angleterre, 2,343 livres [\$468.60].

"Trimming for a fichu, of Point d'Angleterre, 388 livres" [\$77.60].

—and so on, while her bills for other laces, Alençon and Argentan, even as late as 1773, teem with borders,



PLATE X.—Marie-Pauline Bonaparte, Princess Borghese (1780-1825). Empire robe trimmed with black Guipure. Ruff of gold lace, wired. Portrait by Mme Benoit.



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flounces, and festoons. Even a pair of *sabots* was trimmed with two ruffles of Blonde Tulle bordered with Alençon!

With the coming to the throne of Marie Antoinette, wearied with the formality and etiquette of the old *régime*, the court, when not on dress parade, laid aside formal fashions, and frivelled in India muslin and straw hats. There was not much lace worn, except Blonde, which made frills at the sleeves and about the corsage, and much of the eccentricity which crops out in every court found expression in the hair-dressing, which assumed such gross and ridiculous proportions that books and newspapers are filled with sarcastic remarks on the subject. Many little details of dress originated by the Queen were called by her name, like the fichus trimmed with lace and tied behind, which we now call "Marie Antoinettes." They were originally called "Archiduchesses," and were made from both Tulle and Marli, as well as from muslin. At the Petit Trianon the ladies worked at lace-making and embroidery as well as at farming, and flounces of Marli lace were embroidered, or at any rate commenced, and served as pretty trifles to show off white hands. Even the men worked at such things as lace work, and carried about with them little bags, called in derision "ridicules," which were furnished with sewing-implements all of gold, and often jewelled.

When a court lady reached her fortieth year she wore a coif of black lace and tied it under her chin. By 1789



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only old ladies wore caps "à la Pierrot," trimmed with quantities of lace.

With the Revolution died, at least in France, the manufacture and use of lace, to be revived for a brief period under Napoleon, who appreciated the effect of luxury of attire, and during the early years of his reign lace once more was imperial. Alençon, Brussels, and Chantilly laces were the favourite fabrics of this monarch, who made time even to attend to the small details of the costumes of his family and court. To encourage home manufactures, and commerce as well, Napoleon ordered Josephine not only to entertain extensively, but also to devote much attention to dress. The Empress, who was as fond of dress and gewgaws as a child, was only too glad to devise new and extravagant costumes, and spent over 1,000,000 francs a year on her clothes, and even then was constantly in debt. In the year 1802-03 she ordered 200 white muslin dresses, embroidered or trimmed with lace, costing from 500 to 2,000 francs each. In the same year she had 558 pairs of white silk stockings, and 500 lace-trimmed chemises. In her whole wardrobe there were but two flannel petticoats, since the fit of the gowns was so close that even in winter a chemise and corset were the only garments possible to wear underneath them. At the coronation Josephine wore a gown of silver tissue embroidered with gold, and around her white neck a ruff or *fraise* of exquisite lace heavily wired and studded with jewels.



***P**LATE XI.—Empress Eugénie. White and black silk Blonde lace. One length of this flounce three and one-half yards long, twenty inches wide, sold in London in 1903 for forty-five guineas. Portrait by Winterhalter.*



THE GROWTH OF LACE

The trousseau of Marie Louise, prepared under the critical eye of Napoleon himself, had an abundance of lace on the beautiful garments. Her bed was draped with fine Alençon lace made with the Napoleonic cipher, this figure being introduced into the coverlet, curtains, valances, and pillow-cases. At the birth of the King of Rome the city of Paris presented a cradle, made of silver, gilded, and designed by Prud'hon. It was an exquisite thing, crowned by a figure of Glory upholding a brilliant star. Silk curtains fell away on either side, and the most delicate Alençon lace composed the coverlet, while the lace flounces bordering it fell to the floor.

When Mademoiselle Permon became Duchesse d'Abrantès in 1800, her trousseau was the first one of elegance and beauty seen in Paris since the Revolution. It contained, as the bride described it with real girlish delight, —

—“full-trimmed chemises with embroidered sleeves, pocket-handkerchiefs, petticoats, morning gowns, dressing-gowns of India muslin, night-dresses, nightcaps, morning caps of all forms and colours,”

—and the whole of these garments were embroidered and trimmed with Valenciennes, Mechlin, or English Point. The wedding gown for the civil ceremony was trimmed with Point lace. The bonnet was of Brussels Point, from which fell a veil of fine Point d'Angleterre large enough to cover the whole person. Empress Josephine was present in a superb “redingote” trimmed with “magnificent Point d'Angleterre and with bows of turquoise-blue ribbon.”



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In a letter from the Duchesse Edmée de Brancas, dated Paris, 1778, she says :

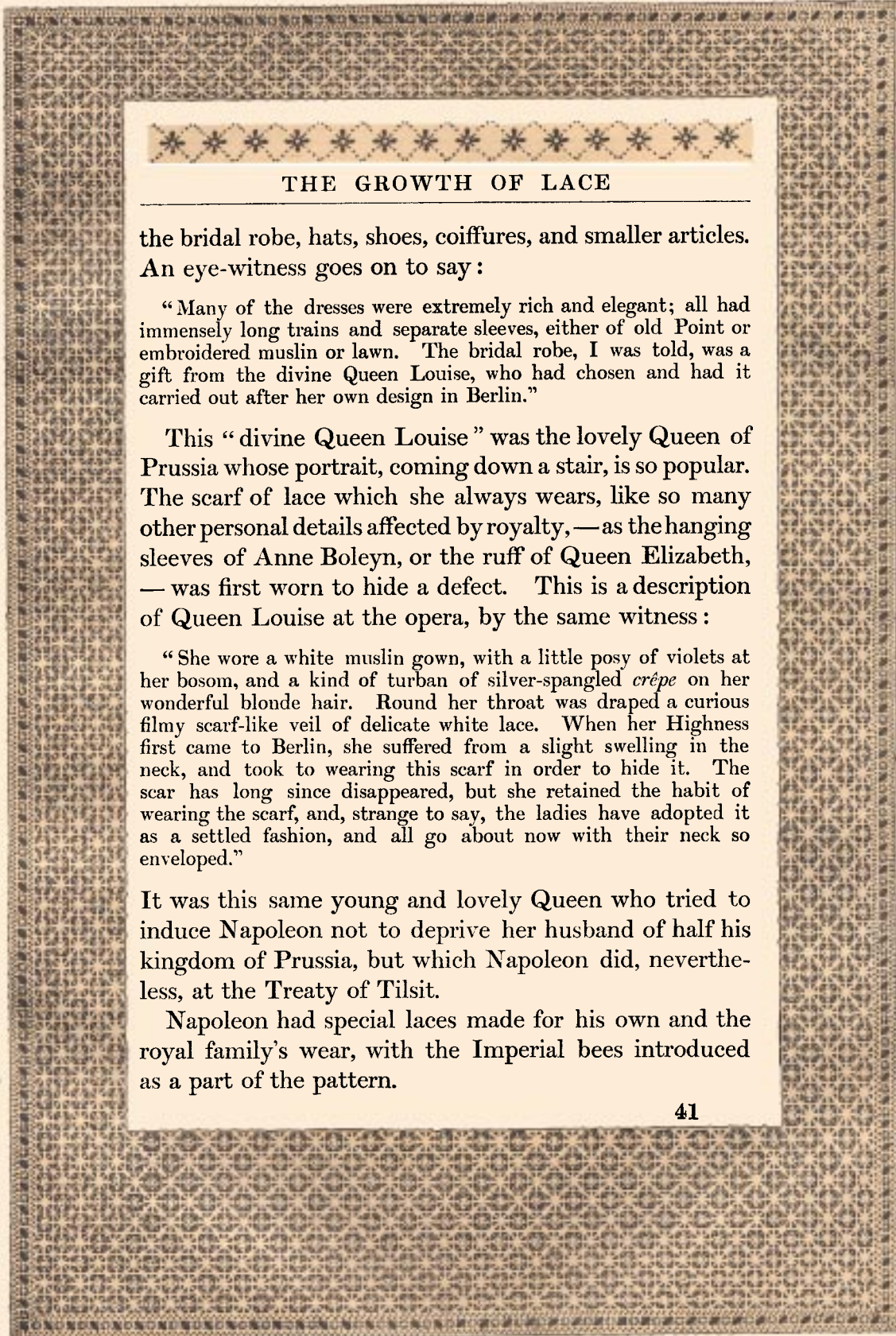
“The craze for the Neo-Greek costume which has been in favour ever since the Revolution demands that every line of the female form should be in evidence, and lays stress on much that were better concealed. To me it is quite disgusting.”

The colours affected were all called by fanciful names, a certain shade of brown being “terre d’Égypte,” while for ladies’ gowns such colours as “gorge de pigeon” were all the rage.

The Baroness de Courtot, a member of the old *ré-gime*, who returned to Paris in 1800, wore on her presentation to Josephine a gown of *gorge de pigeon*, “with the waist up under the arms and a long train.” The dress was decorated with a *jabot* of Flemish lace fastened on the bosom with a diamond clasp.

Madame Tallien, who was noted for her extravagance, was the possessor of 365 head-dresses and bonnets, all more or less lace-trimmed, and 400 gowns, varying in value from 50 to 1,000 francs each. The appearance of the court was very gay and bright, since Napoleon abhorred dark colours and would not permit them to be worn before him.

About this same period (1801) there occurred in Cassel the wedding of the Duke of Meiningen with the Princess of Hesse. The trousseau was on view in one of the rooms of the palace. The dresses were displayed upon a long table in the middle of the room, and round about stood smaller tables on which lay the body linen,



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the bridal robe, hats, shoes, coiffures, and smaller articles. An eye-witness goes on to say :


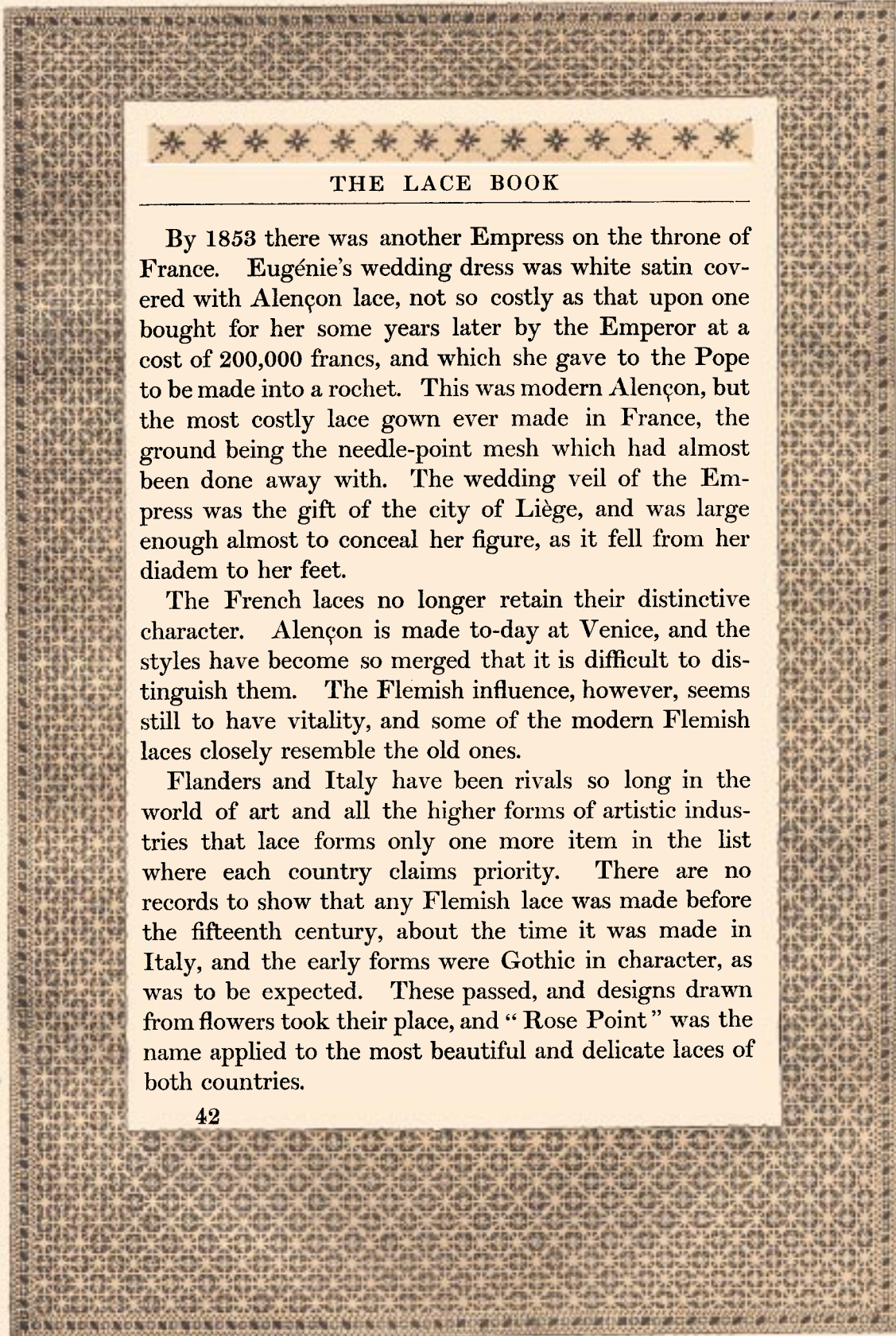
“Many of the dresses were extremely rich and elegant; all had immensely long trains and separate sleeves, either of old Point or embroidered muslin or lawn. The bridal robe, I was told, was a gift from the divine Queen Louise, who had chosen and had it carried out after her own design in Berlin.”

This “divine Queen Louise” was the lovely Queen of Prussia whose portrait, coming down a stair, is so popular. The scarf of lace which she always wears, like so many other personal details affected by royalty, — as the hanging sleeves of Anne Boleyn, or the ruff of Queen Elizabeth, — was first worn to hide a defect. This is a description of Queen Louise at the opera, by the same witness :

“She wore a white muslin gown, with a little posy of violets at her bosom, and a kind of turban of silver-spangled *crépe* on her wonderful blonde hair. Round her throat was draped a curious filmy scarf-like veil of delicate white lace. When her Highness first came to Berlin, she suffered from a slight swelling in the neck, and took to wearing this scarf in order to hide it. The scar has long since disappeared, but she retained the habit of wearing the scarf, and, strange to say, the ladies have adopted it as a settled fashion, and all go about now with their neck so enveloped.”

It was this same young and lovely Queen who tried to induce Napoleon not to deprive her husband of half his kingdom of Prussia, but which Napoleon did, nevertheless, at the Treaty of Tilsit.

Napoleon had special laces made for his own and the royal family's wear, with the Imperial bees introduced as a part of the pattern.



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By 1853 there was another Empress on the throne of France. Eugénie's wedding dress was white satin covered with Alençon lace, not so costly as that upon one bought for her some years later by the Emperor at a cost of 200,000 francs, and which she gave to the Pope to be made into a rochet. This was modern Alençon, but the most costly lace gown ever made in France, the ground being the needle-point mesh which had almost been done away with. The wedding veil of the Empress was the gift of the city of Liège, and was large enough almost to conceal her figure, as it fell from her diadem to her feet.

The French laces no longer retain their distinctive character. Alençon is made to-day at Venice, and the styles have become so merged that it is difficult to distinguish them. The Flemish influence, however, seems still to have vitality, and some of the modern Flemish laces closely resemble the old ones.

Flanders and Italy have been rivals so long in the world of art and all the higher forms of artistic industries that lace forms only one more item in the list where each country claims priority. There are no records to show that any Flemish lace was made before the fifteenth century, about the time it was made in Italy, and the early forms were Gothic in character, as was to be expected. These passed, and designs drawn from flowers took their place, and "Rose Point" was the name applied to the most beautiful and delicate laces of both countries.



PLATE XII.—Cornelias de Graef. Collar, band strings, and edging of cuffs Point de Flandre. Cloak and doublet edged with black Guipure, garters and roses on shoes of this same lace. Portrait by Nicholas Elias.



THE GROWTH OF LACE

The imitative Dutch always bettered the article they copied, and the lace made by their men, women, and children was no exception to the rule. Not only was it made at the homes of the workers, but in great establishments called *Béguinages*, one of the most famous of these being at Ghent. Different qualities of lace, and of course great varieties of patterns, were made in the lace schools, and were sold both for home use and for exportation. No Dutch *vrouw* considered her dress complete without some edging of lace at least on her cap, and generally her skilful fingers could make it if her pocket was too lean to buy it. Just how early lace-making began in the Low Countries it would be difficult to say, but it is known that long before it was applied to secular uses it was owned by churches and ecclesiastics. Many rich vestments still belong to the old churches of Brabant, made of the splendid old Brussels lace, and so well cared for that they retain to-day their old-time elegance. In the magnificent cathedrals of Holland will be shown you treasures of lace that are absolutely bewildering, not only those belonging to the robes of the priests and the cloths of the altar but also votive offerings to madonnas and saints. These often take the form of robes made wholly of lace or richly trimmed therewith, veils, or whole suits for the Infant the Madonna holds in her arms.

The Hollanders had many methods of economising, —selling the splendid cloths they made at home, and wearing an inferior quality of English manufacture ; or



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exporting their own rich, sweet butter and using a less admirable article purchased in the countries of northern Europe. They sold their lace, too,—thousands of yards yearly ; it remained their staple of commerce when the country was ravished by wars, distracted by troubles at home, or devastated by the plague. Yet we never find any record of lace being exported to that—

—“ country that draws fifty feet of water,
In which men live as in the hold of nature,
And when the sea does in them break
And drowns a province, does but spring a leak.”

They might go without lace, but, when they wore it, it was that made of choicest flax, and at home. Countless portraits bear out this statement, as well as testifying to the fondness these burghers had for rich raiment and twisted chains of fine gold made in Venice, which city, in the centuries of the Renaissance, led the world in goldsmith's work. They copied, it is true, the laces of Venice, but this was only till they learned the intricacies of needle point. After that they were quite able to stand alone.

The Dutch artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries painted charming genre pictures of life among the simple as well as among the great. Card parties, music parties, a lady sewing or reading in her room, flowed from their brushes with prodigal abundance. In all these pictures the least minutiae of dress, adornment, household belongings, and customs of the period and country are observed. The satin and lace, the broderies



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and furs, the carving on the furniture, and the goldsmith's handiwork, are treated with reverent care. None painted more realistic pictures of this character than Mieris, while the portraits of Mierevelt, Jan de Bray, Franz Hals, and Rembrandt show what dignified and elegant gentlemen these burgomasters of the Netherlands were, how sumptuous was their attire, and with what a grand air they wore it. The lace roses on their shoes were not too small a detail to be duly given point for point, while the falling collars, fichus, cuffs, stomachers, and caps of their wives are painted with such faithfulness that the quality and kind of lace is easily discernible.

The use of lace seems to have been encouraged rather than repressed, and the chief care for the Dutch was to keep at home their skilful workers who were tempted to other countries to teach those less skilful the arts and crafts in which the Flemings excelled. So alarmed did the Flanders burgomasters become at the number of lace-makers that emigrated to France, attracted there by the offers of Colbert, that in December, 1698, an act was passed at Brussels, threatening with punishment any person who should entice away her work-people. Even with the loss of many skilled hands, more than enough lace was made for home consumption, and in 1768 England alone paid Flanders for lace, \$1,250,000 (£250,000).

The Dutch were always on the lookout and ready to supply any market with any article desired, from wooden



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ware to South Carolina and Virginia, to a special kind of lace to the Spanish Indies. This lace was of quite a different character from that sent to other quarters of the globe, being a Guipure of large flowers, geometric in character and united by brides. In 1696 a galleon on its way to Cadiz was taken on the high seas, and among its rich freight were "2,181 pieces of assorted coarse Spanish laces." There is hardly a town in Flanders, east or west, that has not depended and does not still depend largely on the wages of her lace-makers, the greatest drawback to this industry being its merciless destruction of the workers' eyes, many of them losing their sight when in the neighbourhood of thirty years of age. Even so, there are always plenty of apprentices to be had, the lace schools of West Flanders alone numbering over 400, with more than 30,000 scholars. The *Béguinages* harbour many more lace-workers of all ages, for by far the greater number of inmates are women of independent means, who live at these institutions, come and go as they please, the only requisites being that they are not married, will come within the walls at a certain hour at night, and have enough money to maintain themselves. During a large part of every day they labour for the benefit of the institution, which is presided over by members of a Catholic Sisterhood, who also have in connection with it a lace school. The *Béguinage* at Ghent numbers several thousand of these independent workers, beside the immense numbers of children and young girls in the school itself.



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Quite different is the position occupied by Spain with regard to the lace made within her borders. Quantities of course occupied the attention of the many nuns which dwelt in such a Roman Catholic country. They copied very faithfully the beautiful Gros Points de Venise, and these were used wholly for the Church, adorning its altars and the robes of the priests. Little was known of this store of lace treasures till the middle of the nineteenth century, for the Spanish grandee, ever a wearer of choice raiment, laced his garments with the products of Italy, France, and Flanders, or with laces of silver or gold. Few laces ever achieved the vogue of what was known as Point d'Espagne, the most splendid trimming of the seventeenth century, worn extensively by all the world of powerful and great, and, although called Spanish Point, yet largely made outside of Spain and sent there for sale. With the changes of fashion in both men and women's clothes the use of this lace has wholly declined, the remnant of its glory still shining in subdued form on the uniforms of the army and navy.

Spanish Blonde, the only other famous lace of Spain, is yet worn in mantillas and flounces; but in modern times this is no longer made in Spain except in small quantities, the French market supplying the demand, and making these laces in the well-known Spanish style, with a fine net ground and heavy florid pattern.

Germany never occupied an important place in the lace-making world, though she early began to copy industriously from France in the north and Italy in the



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south. She never achieved fame in any branch of the industry, her sole great name in the work being that of Barbara Uttmann, who, having learned to make bobbin lace from a refugee from Brabant, introduced the work to her own countrywomen about 1561. French refugees settling in Dresden and that region brought their knowledge and skill with them, and taught the German workers, so that the quality soon improved.

Saxony Point, so called, was a close copy of Brussels Point, and, like that lace, extremely costly. Darned work, lacis, and embroidery on net were extensively made, and gold and silver lace was made at Hamburg (another point where the French refugees settled) and became known in Germany as Hamburg Point. Frederick William of Brandenburg encouraged lace-makers to settle at Potsdam, and France bought from Germany laces made by the very Frenchmen her intolerance had exiled. Bobbin lace gained a firm hold in Germany, and many varieties of coarse laces are still made there by the peasants. Some of the earliest known pattern-books were printed in Germany, and the patterns bear a strong resemblance to those in the Venetian books of the same period.

Nor is it possible to close this sketch of the use of lace without glancing at the colonies in North America, that followed at a distance and slowly, it is true, the fashions of the period, as they changed from time to time in the Old World. Little lace was made here. I have no doubt that many a Dutch *vrouw* brought her



PLATE XIII.—Silver Point d'Espagne. Sixteenth Century.



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pillow and bobbins with her, and found time amid her varied duties to make enough "Potten Kant" to keep her caps trimmed, and enough to edge the many fine linen cloths which stood on table and mantel-shelf. There are one or two old pillows, still set with pins, the thread yellow with age and the bobbins quiet for many a long year, treasured in museums in New York State and in Maine. But these are only occasionally to be met with. Like most of our luxuries, our lace came from London, and plenty of it was on sale here. Too much attention and too much money was bestowed on these gauds in the opinion of our ancestors, and they found it necessary to frame sumptuary laws for the guidance of the light-minded, just as was being done in Europe, to check over-indulgence in world's gear.

In 1634 the Massachusetts General Court prohibited the purchase of "any app'ell either woolen, silke, or lynnem with any lace on it, silver, golde, silke, or threed." The very fact of this prohibition being framed shows that there were sufficient quantities of these articles on sale to draw attention to them.

From year to year these prohibitions continued in force, and in 1653, nearly twenty years later, we find a man taken before the Court for excess "in bootes, rebonds, gould and silver lace." This was the period of the lace "whisk," as the gorget was called, of lace-frilled boots, garters, and other extravagances.

Even from somewhat remote spots like Ipswich, Mass., which was settled in 1633 by the younger Win-



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throp, to cut off the Jesuits from starting a mission there, Madame Rebekah Symonds, wife of Deputy Governor Symonds, sent to England for her clothes. About 1658, when the lady was close upon sixty years of age, she had from London shoes of damson-purple Turkey leather and satin, scarlet stockings, and a light violet-coloured petticoat, "grave and suitable for a person of quality." She had a spotted gauze gown, a "striped" silk, a cinnamon silk, and a flowered silk, "with partes (ruffles), as they rate them, to weare in the sleeves, as the fashion is for some." Silver gimp and ribbons for trimming, a black sarinden cloak with two black plush muffs, "modish and long," were among the next articles forwarded to her. She must have known the colony law :

"Noe p'son, either man or woman, shall make or buy any slashed cloathes, other than one slashe in each sleeve and one in the backe ; also all cutt works, imbroidered or needle worke capps ; bands and rayles are forbidden here after to be made and worne ; also all gold and silver girdles, hatt bands, belts, ruffs, beav'r hats are prohibited to be bought and worne."

Fortunately the Pilgrim Fathers left a loophole of escape, for they go on to say, —

"It is the meaneing of the Court that men and women shall haue liberty to weare out such app'ell as they are now provided of, except the immoderate greate sleeves, slashed app'ell, greate rayles, and long wings."

In more liberal New York fine clothes were more freely worn. In 1700 the wife of Colonel Bayard wore to



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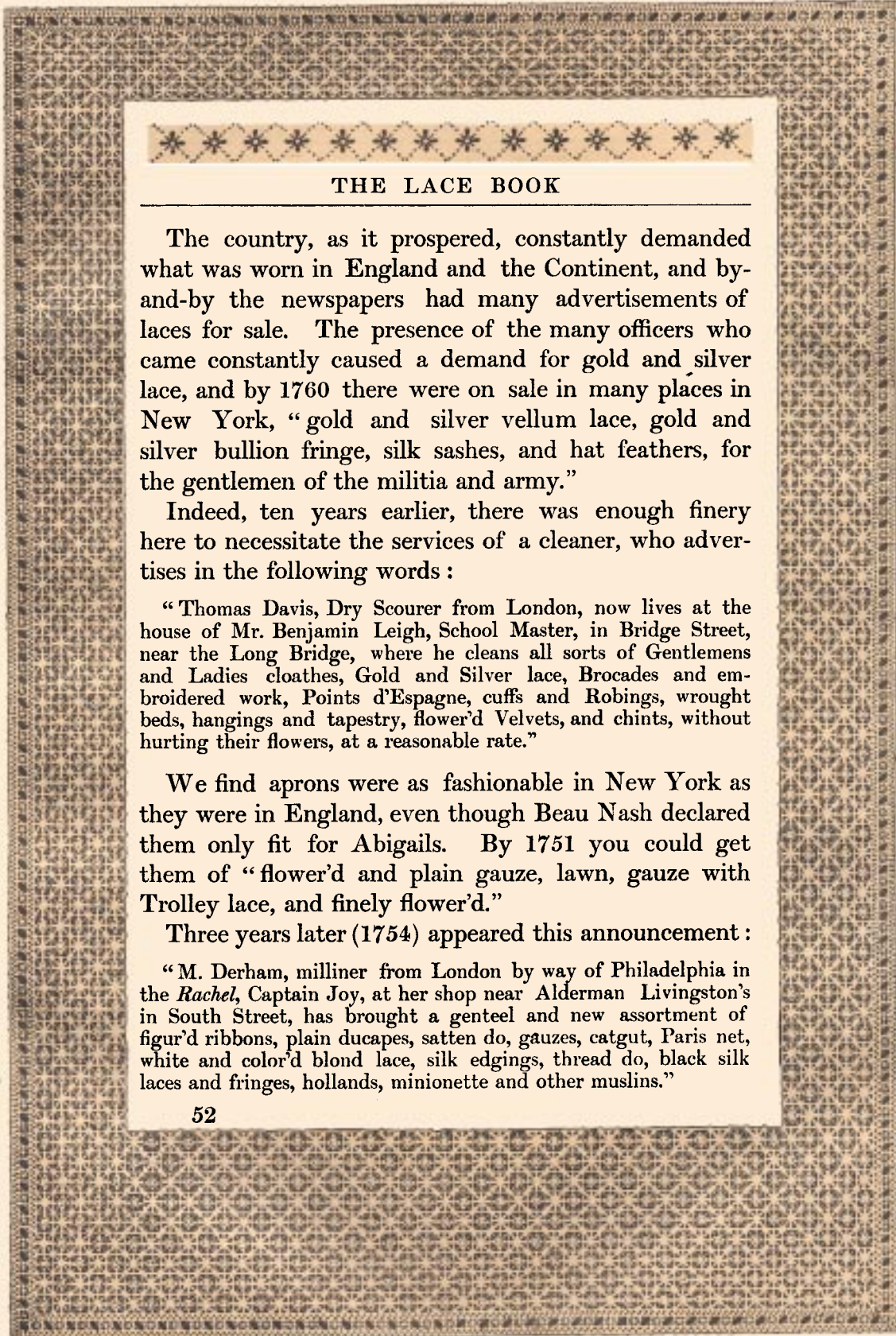
church of a Sunday morning a purple and gold atlas gown, cut away in front to show her black velvet petticoat edged with two silver orrices. Her head-dress was a "frontage," or "Fontange," and she wore around her neck a "Steinkirk" edged with lace. The news had probably not yet arrived that Fontanges had been "out" a six month and "flat heads" were the mode.

Nor was the dandy less solicitous about his appearance. From 1730 till half a dozen years later his gold-laced coat was buttoned at the waist, and then left to fly open to the throat, to show as much "bravery" as he could muster in the way of lace ruffles. These were repeated at his wrists.

Governer Montgomery, when he occupied Fort George, had not only much household furniture sent him from London, but clothes as well, suitable to his quality. Among them was a suit with "open silver lace," "a scarlet coat and breeches trimmed with gold lace," and many lace-trimmed shirts.

New York and New England were, however, away behind Virginia and the Carolinas in the elegances which could be obtained there without sending to England. John Frison of Henrico County, Virginia, had on sale in his store, beside farming-tools, such as they were, the following expensive articles :

"Holland night-caps; muslin neck-cloths; silk-fringed gloves; silver shoe-buckles; embroidered Holland waistcoats; 2 doz. pr. white gloves; 1 lace cap; 7 lace shirts; 9 lace ruffles; holstercaps of scarlet embroidered with silver and gold; gold and silver hat-bands; a parcel of silver lace; and a feathered velvet cap."



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The country, as it prospered, constantly demanded what was worn in England and the Continent, and by-and-by the newspapers had many advertisements of laces for sale. The presence of the many officers who came constantly caused a demand for gold and silver lace, and by 1760 there were on sale in many places in New York, "gold and silver vellum lace, gold and silver bullion fringe, silk sashes, and hat feathers, for the gentlemen of the militia and army."

Indeed, ten years earlier, there was enough finery here to necessitate the services of a cleaner, who advertises in the following words :

"Thomas Davis, Dry Scourer from London, now lives at the house of Mr. Benjamin Leigh, School Master, in Bridge Street, near the Long Bridge, where he cleans all sorts of Gentlemens and Ladies cloathes, Gold and Silver lace, Brocades and embroidered work, Points d'Espagne, cuffs and Robings, wrought beds, hangings and tapestry, flower'd Velvets, and chints, without hurting their flowers, at a reasonable rate."

We find aprons were as fashionable in New York as they were in England, even though Beau Nash declared them only fit for Abigail's. By 1751 you could get them of "flower'd and plain gauze, lawn, gauze with Trolley lace, and finely flower'd."

Three years later (1754) appeared this announcement :

"M. Derham, milliner from London by way of Philadelphia in the *Rachel*, Captain Joy, at her shop near Alderman Livingston's in South Street, has brought a genteel and new assortment of figur'd ribbons, plain ducares, satten do, gauzes, catgut, Paris net, white and color'd blond lace, silk edgings, thread do, black silk laces and fringes, hollands, minionette and other muslins."

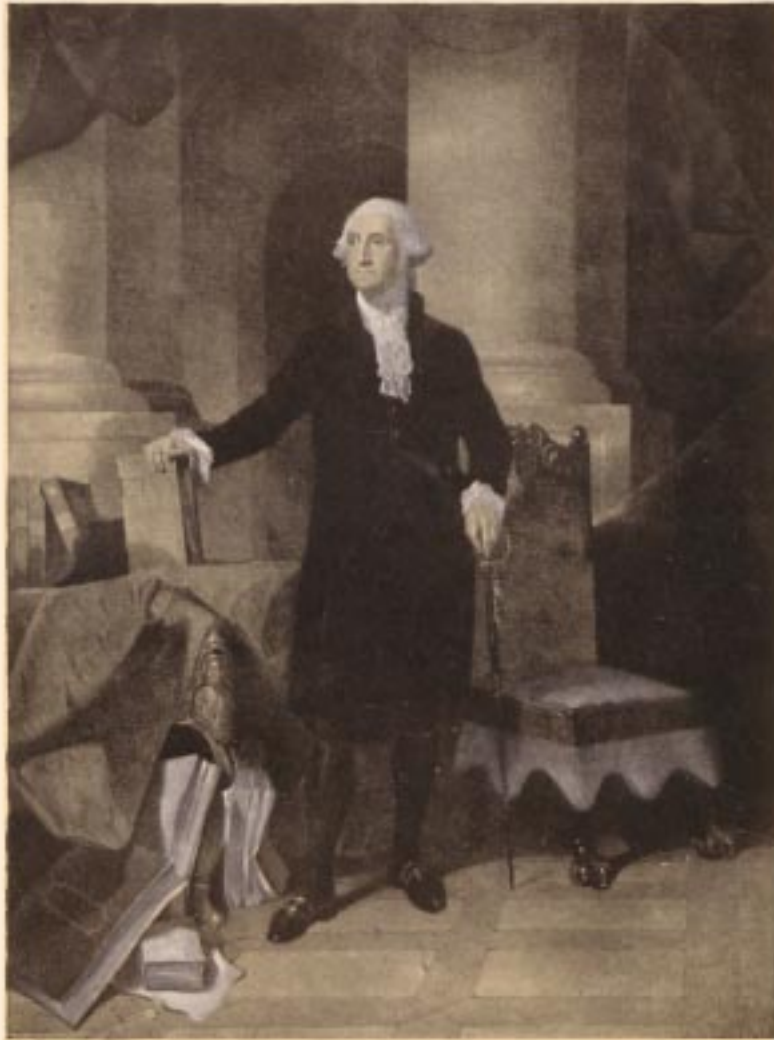


PLATE XIV.—Portrait of George Washington, by Rothermel. Showing use of lace, probably Mechlin, in Colonial costume.



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There are more than a hundred other articles mentioned in Mistress Derham's list of goods which concludes as follows :

"Every thing in the millinery way is made up in the newest fashion, such as lappet heads, caps, French handkerchiefs, ruffles, stomachers, ruffs, sleeve and glove knots, shades, capuchines, hats, bonnets, etc., at the very lowest prices."

In 1762 there is advertised a special importation of "gentleman's superfine laced and plain hats, dress'd and cock'd by the most fashionable hatter in England." In addition were to be had castor and felt hats, and a particular kind of felt hat with gold lace and feathers.

By 1764 there could be bought at Moore & Lynsen's Vendue House such fine "apper'l" as a "suit of superfine white broadcloth trimmed with gold, and a suit of superfine blue trimmed with gold vellum holes." This same year Nicholas Stuyvesant advertises "Gentlemen's ruffles of Blonde lace."

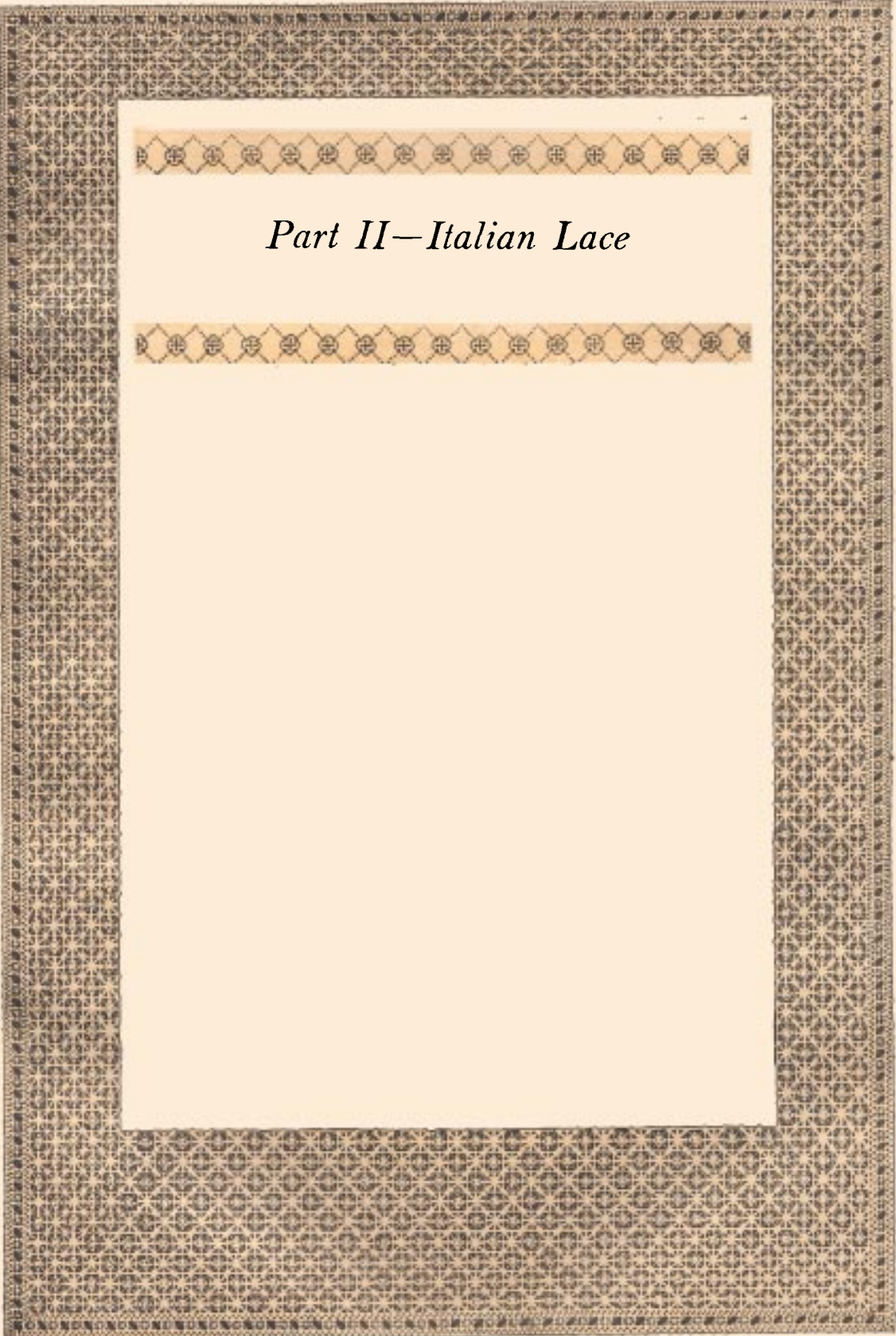
Colonel Washington sent to London in 1759 for articles needed by his wife. No lace is specified, but there are caps, handkerchiefs, and tuckers ; "double handkerchiefs," a black mask, a silver tabby petticoat, and a "tuckered petticoat of a fashionable colour," and two handsome breast-knots. All these articles were probably trimmed with thread or metal lace. Nearly all the portraits of Washington in state dress show lace ruffles at the sleeves and a cravat or breast ruffles of the same. In later life Mrs. Washington's caps and kerchiefs were always edged with lace, and some of this, of both



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English and Dutch make, remains in the possession of her descendants.

But with the ascendancy of pantaloons and shoestrings the glories of ruffles and buckles perished in man's costume, and to woman alone was left the prerogative of decking herself in the richest products of the loom, the needle, and the mine.



Part II—Italian Lace

***V**ELLETO uno d'oro filato.
Payro uno fodrete di cambria lavorate a guglia.
Lenzuolo uno di revo di tele cinque lavorato a
punto.
Peza una de tarnete d'argento facte a stelle.
Lenzuolo uno de tele, quatro lavorato a radexelo.
Peze quatro de radexelo per mettere ad uno moscheto.
Tarneta una d'oro et seda negra facta da ossi.
Pecto uno d'oro facta a grupi.
Lavoro uno de rechamo facta a grupi, dove era suso le
perle de Madona Bianca.
Binda una lavarata a poncto de doii fuxi per uno
lenzuolo.”*

From the Inventory of Angela and Ippolita Sforza-Visconti.
Milan, September 12, 1493.



Part II—Italian Lace



NO other article of attire has been so hemmed and hedged about with restrictions, orders, edicts, and laws as this, the most becoming of all the frivolities of woman's attire. Writing in the twentieth century, when the ungraceful habits worn by men have superseded those rich and graceful costumes of a century or two ago, one is led perforce to grant to women the sole use of this most elegant ornament. This is, however, only a matter of evolution. At first the richest laces were worn by men, and there was not a single article of attire, from hat to shoes, which was not decorated with it in one form or another. In fact, as a sprightly writer in the "Quarterly Review" for 1852 puts it,—

—“we cannot point to one single excess or caprice of dress which has appeared on the beautiful person of woman, that has not had its counterpart, as bad or worse, upon the ugly body of man. We have had the same effeminate stuffs—the same fine laces—the same rich furs—the same costly jewels. We have had as much gold and embroidery, and more tinsel and trumpery. We have worn long hair, and large sleeves, and tight waists and full petticoats. We have sported stays and stomachers, muffs, earrings and



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love-locks. We have rouged and patched and padded and laced. If they have lined their petticoats with whalebone, we have stuffed our trunk-hose with bran. If they have wreathed lace ruffs around their lovely throats, we have tied them about our clumsy legs. In short, wherever we look into the history of mankind, whether through the annals of courtiers, the evidence of painters, or the researches of the learned, we find two animals equally fond of dress, but only one worth bestowing it on, which the Greek fathers doubtless knew as well as we."

The desire for the enrichment of the plain edges of garments manifested itself first in embroideries of silk in various colours, mixed, if possible, with gold or silver threads. This gave way to "cut-work," as it was called, where the material on which the embroidery was wrought was cut away, leaving open-work spaces. So perishable is this costly product, lace, that many of the earliest specimens have ceased to exist by the mere falling away of the materials of which they were composed, so that a great source of information as to the periods when certain laces were used, and how, is the pictures of the times. Cut-work to embellish sleeves and the necks of garments was shown as early as 1460.

The earliest cut-work, which is called *Punto Tagliato*, had for its foundation coarse woven linen. Elaborate patterns were buttonholed on this, and the linen cut away, so that it became more and more elaborate and ornate. The latest stage of this cut-work was made, not on coarse linen, but on fine lawn, known as "Quintain" from the town in Brittany where it was made. Over the lawn, which was fastened to a light wooden frame, were stretched threads which crossed each other



*PLATE XVI.—Eleanor of Toledo, wife of
Cosimo II, Duke of Florence, died 1562.
Showing chemisette of drawn-work very beautiful
in design, and net of knotted gold threads. Portrait
by Bronzino.*



ITALIAN LACE

back and forth, and which were sewed to the lawn with buttonholing, such parts of the lawn as were unnecessary being cut away.

Little by little new stitches were tried, different designs were introduced, and the first work which bore any resemblance to lace and eventually grew into its finer forms was called "Drawn Work," or *Punto Tirato*, some of it being of great delicacy and beauty.

Punto a Reticella, or "Greek lace," as it was commonly called, was made in both insertions and edgings. It was really the first needle point, as well as the first lace; since both cut- and drawn-work, which had preceded it, were more lace-like material than real lace. Greek Points or *Reticellas* were made in abundance from 1480 to 1625. Not only did they decorate vestments and altar-cloths, but whole shrouds were made of them as well. The earliest of these points—made in stiff geometric designs, such as were used in Gothic architecture—were at first threads buttonholed over, the foundation being cut away, or threads being drawn out, and little loops called "picots" or "purls" being set along at intervals. Later the varieties of pattern became greatly extended, wheels were introduced, and triangles with inside ornaments of great beauty. Designs alternated in the points, giving it great variety, and toward the end of its career the patterns lost their geometric tendency, and, as far as the limited nature of the work would allow, followed the style of design popular in other laces of the Renaissance. In some of



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the richest of the old Greek Points, to add to their beauty, silk threads of different colours were introduced as well as gold and silver. The best means of studying this lace is in the splendid portraits of the period, when artists delighted to linger over every loop and purl, and rendered the lace with a fidelity which betrayed their appreciation of it.

Although it was freely worn in France, Germany, England, Spain, and Flanders, little of it was made in any of these countries. In its home, Greece, and in the Ionian Isles and Italy, enough was made to supply what was needed in all these other countries. As finer laces were made, the *Reticellas* fell into disuse, and their production declined. With each succeeding year, under the skilful fingers and in the artistic atmosphere of Venice, all work became more and more beautiful, and the next step forward was *Punto in Aria*,—literally “point in air,” showing the departure from cut-work, or drawn-work, in having no cloth or thread foundation upon which the pattern was worked. It was in reality what we call “lace,” worked on a parchment pattern upon which the design was clearly drawn, and enriched with many very beautiful stitches, the various parts of the design being connected with “brides,” or bars, made of buttonholing and ornamented with loops of thread and sometimes with tiny wheels.

It was not difficult to trace how, little by little, this lace became the celebrated *Punto Tagliato a Fogliami*, which was made in the same manner as *Punto in Aria*,



PLATE XVI.—Eleanor of Toledo, wife of
Cosimo II, Duke of Florence, died 1562.
Showing chemisette of drawn-work very beautiful
in design, and net of knotted gold threads. Portrait
by Bronzino.



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but made richer and heavier by the use of heavy threads in some portions of the pattern, so that the outlines and edges were much raised. This thread or fine cord used to outline the pattern in needle-point laces is called *cordonet*. Sometimes the outlining cord is still further enriched by loops of thread, purls, or other ornaments which were then known as "Crowns," or *Couronnes*, when they came on the edge of the lace, and as *Fleurs Volantes* when they came in the body of the lace. The variety of complicated stitches used in the flat parts of the lace are without number and of exquisite beauty. This rich point is the famous lace known as the *Gros Point de Venise*, or "Venetian Rose Point," which was the most sought-after and celebrated lace of the seventeenth century. No cavalier was fully dressed without the use of some of it in his costume, and no *grande dame* hesitated to adorn herself with it for any ceremonial occasion. The pictures of the times show the use of this lace when it was at its greatest beauty, and when the artist prided himself upon the fidelity with which he copied it.

Besides these four there were two other varieties of lace made in Italy during the fifteenth century,—one a coarse knotted lace, *Punto a Groppo*, made of cords similar to what is known as *Macramé*. Then there was the darned netting called *Lacis*, in which patterns were stitched upon a lace ground already prepared. This was not used for clothing, but for domestic purpose, bed-linen, curtains, etc.



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There are so many technical terms used in lace, and their meanings and the ways in which they are applied have so changed with the years, that it is necessary to give several of them before proceeding further.

For instance, we now apply the term *Guipure* to all laces having large, showy patterns with coarse grounds, requiring no brides to hold the pattern together. Originally *Guipure* referred to lace made of gold and silver cords, and no doubt the white and gold lace worn by Berengaria at the coronation of Richard III was this same *Guipure*. Among other items of expense for the coronation ceremony it is stated that the Queen wore a mantle of cloth of gold with trimmings of lace of white and gold. This lace was extremely costly, and could be worn only on the garments of the rich, and was subjected to many sumptuary decrees. It was ultimately made in thread, which material showed itself admirably adapted for making an ornamental trimming of great beauty. Early in the seventeenth century when lace was in such great demand, a finer quality was made with grounds, or network mesh into which the pattern was worked. Such laces are called *à réseau*.

Guipure lace was made either with bobbins or with the needle, sometimes with both, as when the large flowing pattern was first made on a pillow with bobbins, and the clusters of flowers, leaves, and ornaments were filled in with stitches worked with a needle. The English term for this old *Guipure* was "Parchment lace," and as such it is frequently noted in inventories.

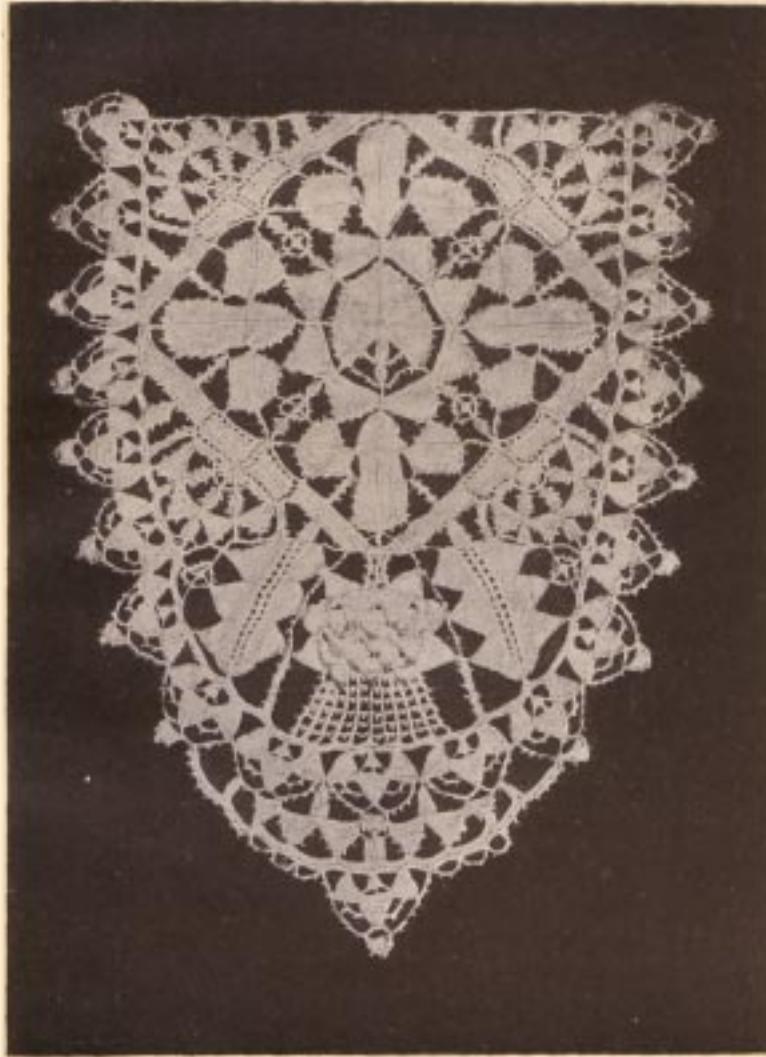


PLATE XVII.—“Punto in aria.” Italian
needle point. Early Sixteenth Century.



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This same name was made to cover a trimming made of twisted silk cords, — what in modern times is known as *passementerie*.

The old silver and gold Guipure looked much like modern *passementerie* from the coarse character of the cords which composed it. It was made all over Italy: in Milan, Florence, Genoa, Lucca, and Venice. At this time, the sixteenth century, Italy was the headquarters for all the rich and sumptuous articles of dress which decked the persons of both men and women. Silks, velvets, and damask were made in her cities, enriched with threads of silver and gold, and bearing that "stand alone" quality of which we have heard our grandmothers speak. The Italian cities were rich and prosperous. Love of beauty, ever a factor in the Italian heart, sought expression in paint, in stone, in stately architecture, in dress, and in small refinements and ornaments. Artists did not consider it beneath their abilities to design patterns of jewellery and linger lovingly on the setting of a gem. Indeed, several artists whose names added lustre to Italy's greatness began to work as goldsmiths' apprentices. Such an one was Ghirlandajo, the "garland-maker," who wrought, in gold, flowers as fine and delicate as a hair. Alessandro Botticelli has clothed his figures dancing on the hillside in "Spring" in gauzes fine as lace and almost as beautiful. The rich and magnificent viewed with alarm the encroachments upon their prerogatives. The usurpation, by the prosperous middle classes, of those things



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which those born in the purple considered their own prerogatives, gave rise to sumptuary laws, which sought to regulate the expenditure of those who wished to lavish too much money upon splendid gauds. Perhaps the earliest sumptuary law framed in regard to women's dress was that passed in Rome, 215 B. C. and called the Oppian Law. This provided that no woman should possess more than half an ounce of gold, wear a dress of different colours, or ride in a vehicle in the city, nor within a mile of it except on occasions of public religious ceremonies. This order was repealed twenty years later. In more modern times the first important sumptuary laws in Italy were those of Frederick II (1194-1250).

The Great Council forbade the use of any trimming which cost more than ten lire in all.

In the next century (1348) colours were a matter against which laws were framed, and neither dark green nor black gowns were allowed to be worn in the morning; while in 1330 edicts had been passed allowing only embroidered figures on dresses, not painted ones. By 1414, however, the manufacture of gold lace had so far progressed that the horses in a state procession at Venice had housings of gold lace. Of course this was of a less rich character than that used on clothes.

Prohibitions of gold embroidered and trimmed garments were passed in 1481, but, notwithstanding this, the manufacture and wearing of gold lace continued. About 1500, Hercules I, Duke of Ferrara, created the



PLATE XVIII.—Gros Point de Venise. Sixteenth Century. In process of construction.



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Order of the Golden Spur, and to the gift of the spur was added a sword, a mantle trimmed with gold lace, and a grant of money. With these emoluments a quantity of service was expected. About ten years before this, on January 26, 1491, at the wedding festivities at Milan held in honour of the marriage of Lodovico Sforza and Beatrice d'Este, the *fêtes* were a succession of most gorgeous pageants, in which men and women were robed and jewelled with a richness unparalleled even in the days of the Renaissance. In a tournament which was one of the crowning festivities of the week the combatants entered the lists in companies, clad in fancy costumes, and bearing the devices which were the fashion of the day. The Mantuans, a troop of twenty horsemen, were clad in green velvet and gold lace, and bore in their hands golden lances and olive boughs.

The old burgomasters of Florence made a firm stand against indulgences in dress and ornament. They aimed their strictures against the frivolities of women's attire, though the fop of the day was as much bedecked in his way as the belle was in hers. Dante aims some of his sarcasms at the rich chains and crosses worn about the neck and over the doublet, and the girdle of gold or silver, studded with stones and fantastically wrought, with which the good citizen begirt himself instead of with leather, as he did in earlier days. For the guidance of the feminine part of the Republic of Florence were these laws framed at the time when the



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only lace so far known was that twisted of strands of gold and silver.

“ No woman of any condition whatever may dare or presume in any way in the city, suburbs, or district of Florence to wear pearls, mother-of-pearl, or precious stones, on the head or shoulders, or on any other part of the person, or on any dress which may be worn upon the person.

Item. She may not dare or presume to wear any brocade of gold or silver, or stuff gilt or silvered, embroidered or trimmed with ribbons, neither on her shoulders nor on her head, nor on any garment as described above.

Item. She may not dare or presume to wear more than one pound of silver in the shape of garlands and buttons, or in any other way, on the head or shoulders, or otherwise as has been said above; except that besides the said pound of silver she may wear a silver belt of fifteen ounces' weight.

Item. She may not dare or presume to wear any slashings, in any robe or dress, neither at the bosom nor at the sleeves, nor to cuffs or collars, larger than the seventh of a yard according to the measure of the yard of the wool-workers, and these slashings shall not be lined with skins either of wild or tame beasts, or with silk, but only with woolen or linen, nor must they be trimmed with fringe either of silk, silver, or gold, or gilt or silvered.

Item. She must not wear on her fingers more than three rings in all, and the said rings can have no more than one pearl or precious stone in each, and the said rings must not exceed the weight of silver allowed above.

Item. No person in the city, suburbs, or district of Florence shall permit himself or presume to give in any way to any woman any kind of collar or buckle, or garland, or brooch of pearls, or of gold, or silver, or of any other precious stone or similar thing, by whatever name it may be called.

Item. No individual, tailor, dressmaker, or furrier, shall dare or presume to cut, arrange, or line any of the said scarves, dress or sleeves, prohibited garments, nor make any of the things forbidden by the present law.”



PLATE XIX.—A. Gros Point de Venise. Sixteenth Century. B. Punto tagliato a fogliami. Seventeenth Century. “Rose Point.” Both specimens are needle point.



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Yet the list of articles enumerated in the fourteenth century, as belonging to the trousseau of a Florentine bride, forms a curious commentary, since the rich stuffs, damasks, brocades, and velvets are calculated by the pound weight, and "great pearls" are given with unstinted lavishness. Yet there is the letter of the law observed in a "gold ring with *one* large pearl."

It can readily be seen how heavily such laws as this would fall upon the workers in gold and silver thread. Some of them left Italy and settled in other countries, where they pursued their trade and instilled a demand for these luxuries. Others remained at home and escaped the edict by making the lace of flax thread, coarse at first, heavy and raised, and growing finer and finer with the demand till it resulted in the exquisitely fine flat Point which became the pride of Venice and the desire of all the world. Both sexes made use of lace in their personal attire, and even before there was any distinct record of its export the fame of Venetian lace had spread far. But while Venetian laces were in great demand both at home and abroad, and the revenues brought in by them were large, they still met with opposition in their own country. Officers of the Republic issued several ordinances against the wearing of *Punto in Aria* in towns under pain of a fine of 200 ducats.

Another sumptuary law of 1514 lays down the law regarding the cut and character of "ladies' cloaks, laces, gloves embroidered with gold and silk, embroideries generally, fans, gondolas, and sedan chairs." In order,



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however, that Henry III, King of Navarre, who afterwards became Henry IV of France, might be duly impressed when visiting Venice in 1574, ladies were permitted and even urged to wear all sorts of costumes, jewellery, ornaments, and laces, "even such as were prohibited by the ordinances."

Curiously enough, lace does not appear in the programmes of any of the guilds, yet it was one of the most important industries of Italy. Beside being made in nunneries and secular houses, the great ladies themselves devoted much time and attention to making it. The production of it in private houses continued to the latter part of the seventeenth century, for De la Haye, travelling in Italy, notices that "when the ladies are at home they entertain themselves by making their *Punto in Aria*, which are the *Points de Venise* so much valued in France."

To assist not only the convent workers who had and maintained with pride their own patterns, but others as well, books were brought out containing directions and patterns planned particularly for "noble-minded ladies."

The earliest-dated pattern-book is of 1527, and contains patterns only. It was published at Cologne by O. Foelix. There are, however, undated pattern-books which have come down from monasteries, and they show patterns for edgings of *Reticella* or drawn-work as well as insertions, and so extremely beautiful that they vie in delicacy with the needle point, or *Punto in Aria*.

In 1537 Zoppino published his book of patterns, "ancient and modern." The use of lace became more

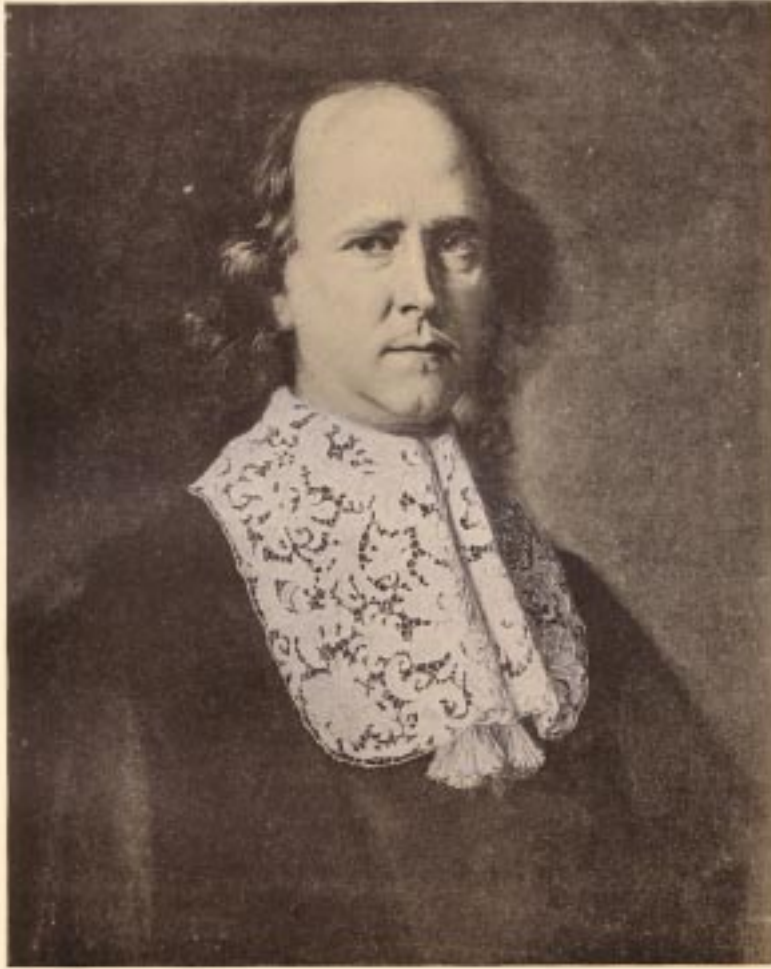


PLATE XX.—Called “*Leader of the choir of Henry IV.*” Collar of *Gros Point de Venise*. Supposed to be by *Van Dyck* (1599-1641).



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and more extended, and the patterns numerous. While the general character remained the same, there were certain stitches guarded as secrets by the convents where they were invented.

As early as 1550 Matio Pagani brought out :

“A good example of the laudable desire of noble-minded ladies to learn the art of making Guipure laces, with 31 engravings.”

In 1546 Andreoni Vavassore (called Guadagnini) first published his—

“New Universal work, entitled the Crown of Embroideries, in which worthy ladies and maidens will find various patterns for making collars of shifts, covers of cushions, silk coifs of many kinds, and a large number of works for embroiderers.”

The idea of attracting the mother's attention by providing occupation for her daughters seems first to have occurred to John Ostaus. In 1567 he produced :

“A most delightful way of occupying your daughters with work, such as the chaste Roman Lucretia gave her maidens, and upon which they were found employed with her by Tarquin and her husband Collatinus, as described in the first book of the Decades of Livy.”

The most famous lace book in both Venice and France was that published by Federico Vinciolo at Paris in 1587. It went through many editions, and was in two volumes, the first devoted entirely to cut-work, the beautiful patterns for which are shown in white on a black ground, and the second volume showing lacis, or darned work, most of the designs being in squares, with counted stitches like modern worsted work.



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As early as 1596 patterns were published by Giacomo Franco for lace made with bobbins, suitable for sheets and handkerchiefs. There were many other books showing designs for cut-work, drawn-work, and the Gros-point, which was worked on parchment.

The cut-work was made so beautiful that it became greatly in demand, and was introduced into France, where it became very popular. As the making of other lace trimmings arrived at a greater state of perfection, the use of cut-work declined, but during the whole of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it remained in fashion. When no longer popular for dress and outer garments it was used as borders for linen underwear and household linen. Of course the high Church dignitaries had first choice of the exquisite convent laces. One set of nuns might begin the magnificent altar laces or those for the ecclesiastical robes, and die before their completion. But there were always plenty of willing and industrious fingers to take the work right up and carry it on. Nor were these laces confined to personal decoration for Cardinal or Bishop. In the inventory of Giovanni Battista Valier, Bishop of Cividale di Bellemo, written in 1598, mention is made of five pieces of bed-linen of needlework Point, "ancient works." There were pillow-cases of the same lace, besides napkins of similar work equally old.

In the sumptuary laws of Venice in the years 1616, 1633, and 1634, the use of this lace was proscribed. Yet fashion circumvented these laws and retained the use of



*PLATE XXI.—Point de Venise à Réseau.
Needle-point lace. Seventeenth Century.*



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the lace even though there was a penalty of 200 ducats for each offence.

Reticella was very ornamentally used, early in the fifteenth century, by Venetian and Florentine ladies, to veil their necks, when the fashion of the day called for their gowns to be open. The perfection at which this lace arrived is shown in some of the accompanying illustrations, and it seems a pity that change of fashion caused its decline.

Punto Tagliato a Fogliami, or flowered lace, acquired a greater renown than any other made at Venice, on account of the beauty of its design. Everybody, whether of the Church or the world, strove to own some of it, and men as well as women hoarded it for love of its beauty as well as for the pleasure of wearing it. The Doge Francesco Morosini (1618-1694) had wonderful laces of this make, which are still jealously guarded by his family. Some of them are shown in his portraits, and portraits of other Venetian noblemen who lived from the seventeenth to the first half of the eighteenth century depict how highly this lace was esteemed.

The surplices of ecclesiastics were rich and costly garments, and there are many records of their cost. In 1769, more than 1,896 lire (\$379.20) were spent for the lace alone on two of these garments for the "Venerable Scuola di San Maria della Carita."

The festivals and all ceremonial occasions were opportunities seized by the beauty-loving Italians for the display of their richest finery. The entrance of the Doge



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Luigi Mocenigo into office, April 18, 1763, is described by an anonymous contemporary. The share of the Dogaressa in the festivities seems to have been of equal importance. She went to the palace by water, accompanied by her mother and many other female relatives. Seated upon a dais in the great hall, she received the congratulations of the members of the Electoral College and of others present. The festivities lasted three days, and on one evening there was a ball, during which the Dogaressa danced a minuet. Her outer robe was cloth of gold, like that of the Doge. The underpetticoat showed in front where the robe flowed aside, and was smothered in floral sprays of gold lace. On her head she wore a lace veil so disposed as to look like a *berretta*, though lace lappets fell from it on either side of the face. The costumes of the ladies present showed that the use of gold lace and jewellery was not diminishing.

The appearance of both men and women during the Renaissance in Italy was more beautiful and polished than among any other nation in Europe. Their dwellings surpassed in comfort and luxury any of the habitations of the noblemen of northern Europe. The style of dress varied continually, and nowhere did it assume such importance. Even while the Church was gathering in the richest work, beautiful graduated fronts were being made for the great Neapolitan ladies, showing the demand there was for these sumptuous trimmings.

The earliest Italian inventory which gives the names of the laces in vogue at the end of the fifteenth century

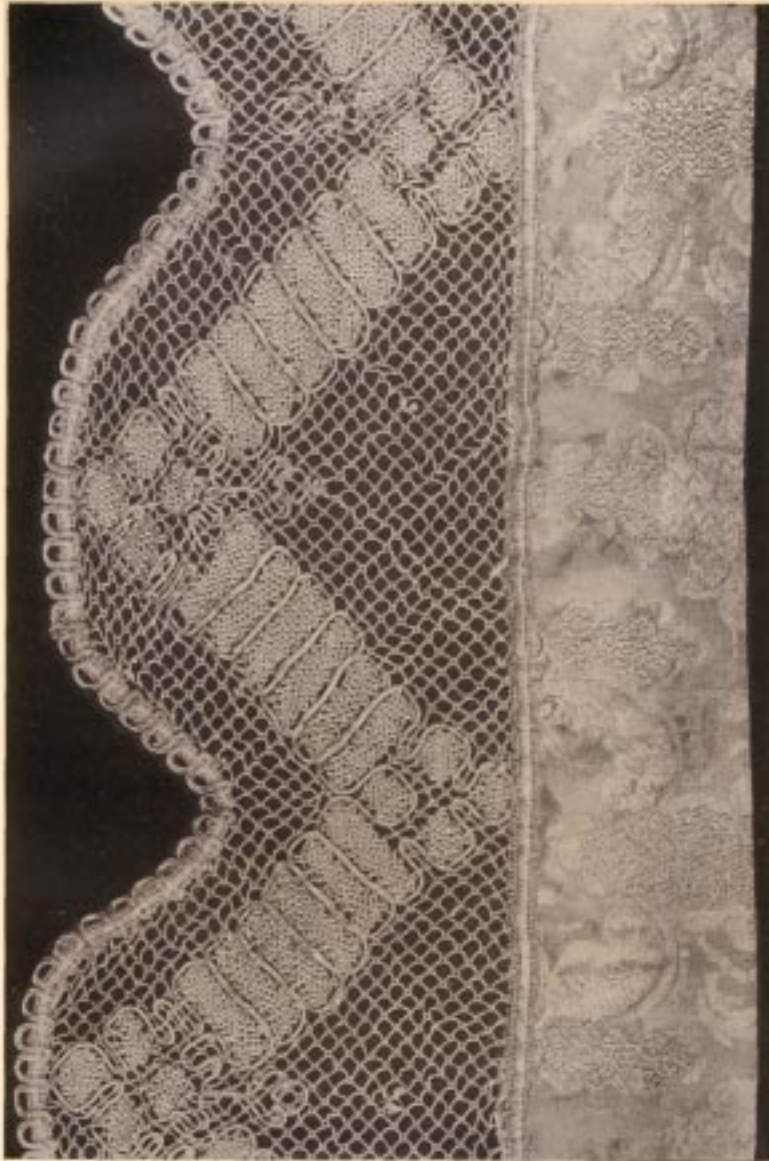


PLATE XXII.—Gold lace edging robe of damask. Sixteenth Century. Italian, bobbin-made.



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is that of the rich and powerful Sforza family, dated April, 1493. A division of family property took place, in the records of which not only the jewels are mentioned, but rich stuffs, borders, veils, fine network (*Reti-cellà*), Points, and Bone lace, all of which are mentioned in the pattern-books of the time.

The notorious Lucrezia Borgia, married for her third husband Alfonso d'Este, brother of Beatrice d'Este, connections of the Sforza family, the division of whose property has been spoken of just above. The marriage ceremonies were most lavish and prolonged, both at Rome and at Ferrara, the home of the bridegroom. The bride's dowry consisted of 300,000 ducats,¹ 100,000 in gold being paid down in Ferrara, and 200,000 being spent in clothes, plate, jewels, and fine linen, costly hangings, and trappings for horses and mules. Among the garments are mentioned 200 *camoras*,² each of which was worth 100 ducats, with sleeves and gold fringes valued at 30 ducats apiece. The records of the d'Este family give full accounts of the clothes worn not only by the bride and her ladies, but of the bridegroom, his family, and the attendants. Amidst all this gorgeousness of damask, velvet, satin, brocade, and cloths of silver and gold, only one mention of lace is made. When the bridegroom rode out of Ferrara to meet his bride, his father accompanied him and wore "a suit of grey velvet covered with scales of beaten gold, worth at

¹ A ducat is worth about 11½ francs, or roughly speaking about \$2.30.

² The *camora* was a sort of coat.



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least 6,000 ducats, a black-velvet cap trimmed with gold lace and white feathers, and grey leather gaiters.”

While it is true that records still in existence show that lace was made and used before 1500, it was by no means such an ornament to costume as it became half a century later.

When Catharine de Medici came as a bride to France in 1533, the lace she brought with her was *Reticella* and *Punto Gotico*. Her ruff, which was at first a modest affair, succeeded the chemisette of drawn-work which was used by Italian ladies at an earlier period.

The first portraits painted of Catharine after her arrival in France, by Clouet, who was then court painter, show her in a ruff of *Reticella* of very simple design, while a portrait of her daughter Claudia, painted between 1550 and 1560, shows nearly the same style of dress as Catharine's, except that the ruff entirely surrounds the throat of Claudia, while her mother's is open in front. Catharine's trousseau was very fully furnished forth with all the richest stuffs Milan, Venice, Genoa, and Florence could supply. Among the ornaments she had was a set of especially magnificent pearls, “the largest and finest,” Brantôme tells us, “that were ever seen in such a quantity; which at a later period the queen gave to her daughter-in-law, the Queen of Scotland.” Mary Stuart wore these pearls at Amboise when she was the newly made wife of Francis II. Her hair fell upon her shoulders in rich curls, and she had a stiff ruff of lace about her throat.



***P**LATE XXIII.—Thomas Francis Carignan of Savoy. He wears collar and cuffs of needle point, “Van Dyck style,” 1634. Portrait by Van Dyck.*



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Nor were the ladies the only ones who changed the fashions of their garments radically and often. The splendid gorget ruffs of *Punto Gotico* were succeeded by the square collar bands and edgings, or by the collar wholly composed of the costly *Gros Point de Venise*.

The portrait of Francis Carignan, Prince of Savoy, painted in 1634, shows the Van Dyck Point in the height of its beauty and in the richest Venetian Point. Points were succeeded by lace with a straight edge, which was made in the most beautiful patterns of flowered laces (*punto tagliato a fogliami*) about 1664, both in Italy and France.

The fashion for wearing it was straight about the corsage, which displayed its beauty to the best possible advantage, and also threw into relief the lovely shoulders it encircled.

Fortunately for us, the dark-eyed beauties of Italy still live on the immortal canvases of her painters, and present a picture vivid almost to reality of those splendid days which we have learned to call "the Golden Age of Italy."

Reference List of Italian Laces

PUNTO TAGLIATO, cut-work.

PUNTO TIRATO, drawn-work combined with cut-work.

PUNTO A RETICELLA, Greek lace, or drawn-work afterward worked with a needle in bands or points.

PUNTO IN ARIA, "points in air," having no foundation of either cut- or drawn-work.



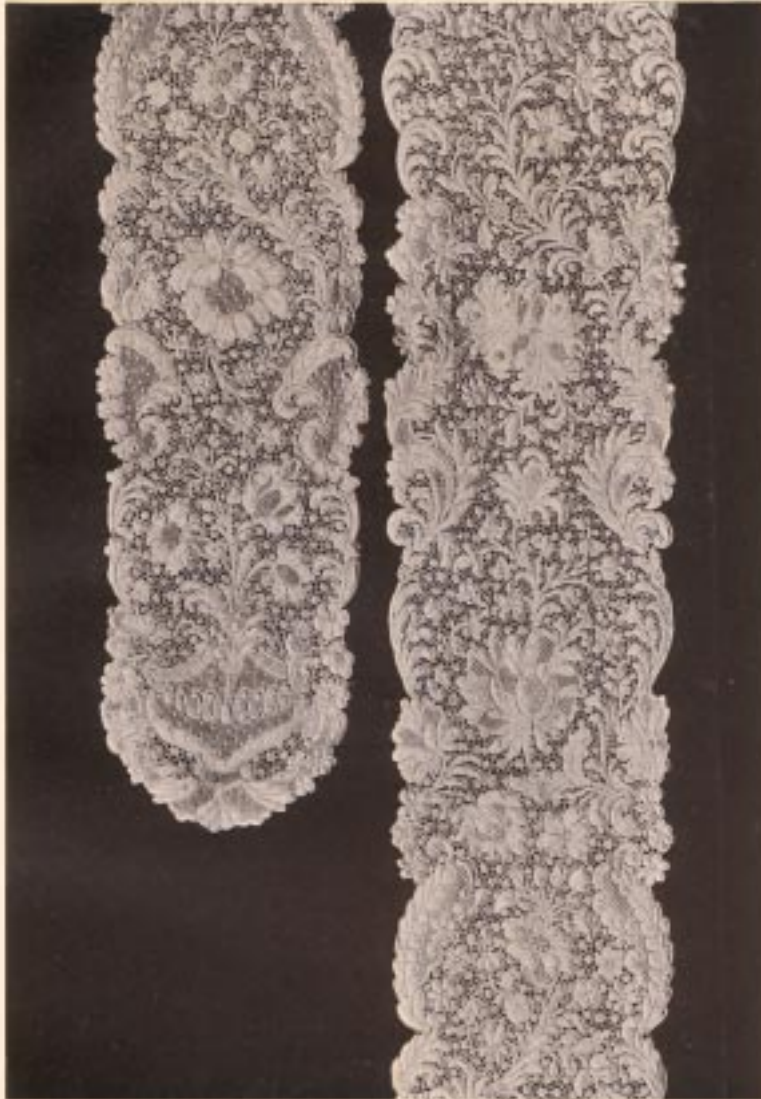
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PUNTO TAGLIATO A FOGLIAMI, flowered lace, known variously as Venice Point, *Gros Point de Venise*, Rose Point or raised Point, made in silk, white or coloured, or flax thread.

PUNTO GOTICO is *reticella* or Greek lace of the earliest style, when the patterns were copied from the Gothic architecture then in vogue.

PUNTO BURANO is the lace made on the Island of Burano, not far from Venice. Much of this beautiful fabric was made there during the eighteenth century, and this particular variety has a *réseau* or network ground, not the brides or bar ground. This network was made entirely with the needle. From this fact the lace is not unlike both Brussels and Alençon lace, which have similar grounds. The old lace was extremely beautiful, and was made with the finest thread. The making of this lace was revived in 1872, and the Royal Lace Schools are situated on the island. Only the choicest laces are made there now, but they are no longer exclusively Italian in character, since beside the Venetian Point, flowered laces, and Venetian Rose Point, Brussels, Alençon, and *Point d'Angleterre* are copied there with the greatest skill.

POINT LACE. In Venetian laces, as in those of every other country, the term "point lace" grew to mean that the lace was of the finest quality, and made with a needle and thread. Connoisseurs, however, now use the term "point" to indicate lace of a superior quality and exquisite design, whether needle or bobbin, so that the



*PLATE XXIV.—Italian bobbin-made lappet,
showing "snowy ground." Eighteenth Century.*



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Venetian bobbin lace, Brussels lace, and Valenciennes are called "points," as much as the needle-made laces.

THE VENETIAN ROSE POINT, with its varied outlines, the most beautiful of all laces, had the ground of brides or bars. These brides were buttonholed over threads, and were the earliest form of a groundwork. From being at first irregularly placed in the work, and used only as supports, they became placed in regular shapes, almost forming a mesh. This form was followed by a regular mesh, six-sided, the bars were constantly made lighter and lighter, till at last the buttonholing was entirely given up, and the mesh was made of single threads.

THE VENETIAN POINT À RÉSEAU was the final outcome of this desire for the fine and light, and this form of lace was what the French workers seized upon and constantly improved. But the fine and very light laces demanded by fashion in the eighteenth century could be better made with bobbins, so the making of needle point declined.

At the present time, when rich lace of the old makes is so eagerly sought, little ever comes to public sale, as there are always private buyers ready to take it. The old Venice Point, the handsomest lace in the world for wear on rich stuffs, and velvets in particular, always brings high prices. Some was recently sold at Christie's, in London, for very large sums. A flounce 4 yards in length and 11 inches deep brought £350 (\$1750). But as this lace could be used, one does not regard the price as so excessive as £24 (\$120) for a square of Rose Point



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measuring but 25 inches, and of use only as a cabinet specimen.

The first-mentioned piece, the flounce, was interesting from the fact that the pattern showed not only fine arabesque curves, but figures; animals and birds were introduced as well, placing its manufacture in the sixteenth century.

Still another length of Rose Point, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 5 yards and 21 inches long fetched the large sum of £15 (\$75) a yard.


Some panels for dress fronts were sold at the same time, the design conforming to the shape of the panel, some only 4 inches wide by 20 inches long bringing as much as £19 (\$95), while one 20 inches wide and 43 inches long brought £38 (\$190).

Some splendid fichus of Rose Point and Gros Point brought from £38 (\$190) to £150 (\$750), and a small cap-crown had many bidders and was finally knocked down for £4 10s. (\$22.50). These prices seem exceedingly high, yet it must be remembered that these Venetian Points are so solidly and beautifully made that they do not wear out or tear like the more fragile French laces, or like the Venetian *Points à Réseau*.

Even after the severe sumptuary laws of Italy forbade the making and wearing of gold and silver lace, threads of these metals were woven or embroidered into flax thread laces for their further enrichment. The collection of laces belonging to Sir William Drake, and mentioned elsewhere, was exceedingly rich in specimens of thread



***P**LATE XXV.—Italian bobbin-made flounce,
twenty-two inches wide. Seventeenth Century.
Photograph by Charles Balliard.*




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lace enriched with gold. There was one piece which was considered quite unique, being 4 yards long and 29 inches wide. The pattern was of foliage in arabesques, introducing animals and birds, and at regular intervals were panels or medallions consisting of views and figures. In the length of four yards there were five of these: first, a queen with an attendant in a garden; second, St. John appearing as a monk; third, a monk telling his vision to six persons, all seated; fourth, people in a garden with a dove hovering in air; fifth, a king with armed soldiers and pages bringing gifts to the queen surrounded by her maids of honour. The price given for this was £380 (\$1900).

There was another flounce also, and a pair of cuffs of similar pattern, both enriched with gold; they brought £135 (\$675). Two pieces of cut-work on linen were also embellished with the finest gold wire, showing how the elegance and richness of the Renaissance would crop out, even in forbidden places.

Only twenty-five lots of Sir William's collection were offered at this particular sale, and of these, eighteen were of the fine old Italian laces, showing that the judgment of this distinguished connoisseur agreed with the opinion of those who have long believed that Venice led the world in lace as well as in the creation of other sumptuous works of art.

MILAN POINT was lace made at Milan during the seventeenth century and earlier. It was made both of silver and gold thread and of silk, and the patterns



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became justly famous. Like the other famous Italian laces, Milan Point declined, and although lace is made there to-day it is of a coarse quality and very similar to the Torchon laces.

LAVORO A MAGLIA, or LACIS, network on which the pattern is run or darned into the stuff.

PUNTO A GROPPA, or knotted lace, includes all the laces made of knotted cords, whether of silk, gold or silver thread, or coarse white or cream thread. It somewhat resembles the Guipures made in different countries as well as in Italy, and was used for ecclesiastical linen, and, by the upper-class Italians, for the trimming of bed and table linen. The chief characteristic of this lace is the variety of knots used in its making, which were tied with the fingers, individual workers sometimes having knots and combinations of their own which were very beautiful. The method of manufacture is on a pillow, the threads being cut into short lengths, so that they can be easily handled and knotted. At the present time, since gold and silver laces are no longer made, this lace is formed of thread, and has become a peasant lace, used by the *contadini* to ornament their undergarments.

GUIPURE was a kind of lace formed of gold and silver threads. Owing to the nature of the material used, the designs were large and florid, requiring no brides or bars, and with coarse grounds. From this circumstance all laces with large designs and coarse grounds are called Guipure, although that name is now chiefly applied to lace made of black silk.



***P**LATE XXVI.—Marie de Medici (1573-1642).
Standing ruff of superb Point de Venise.
Portrait by Scipione.*



ITALIAN LACE

Nor was the name applied only to the gold and silver lace mentioned, for it was also given to a style of trimming which is now known as *passementerie*, made of cords around which silk is lightly wound to conceal them. Formerly, instead of the cotton threads, a strip of parchment or vellum was used, called *cartisane*. The nature of this filling made the lace very perishable and costly. It broke, was ruined with water, and shrank with heat. It was used, even when made with silk, only by royalty and the very wealthy. Later the *cartisane* was discarded, and the Guipure became more common. In addition to these rich Guipures just described, thread laces made either with bobbins or needles, and with the patterns outlined in narrow hand-made tapes, were used as early as the time of Louis XIV. The Italian and Flanders varieties were the handsomest and most showy of these laces, with a background or *réseau* of round meshes, or simply brides. The fillings of the pattern were worked in a variety of stitches with a needle. By the first quarter of the seventeenth century the demand for lace was so great that these Guipures with tape design became very popular. The tape lace made in Flanders had peculiarities of its own, being of superfine quality and fineness. The change of fashion to the collar and falling bands required a heavier style of lace than the exquisite points of fairy lightness that had been used on the standing ruffs, and Guipures were found to be very suitable. Of course these laces were found on altar cloths as well as on secular garments; and the earlier ones had a straight



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edge, while the later ones had a clover-leaf edge, which made it a little heavier. These tape Guipures are still made in Italy, of handsome design, but lacking the charming irregularity of the old patterns and hand-made tapes.

GENOA LACE. The rich old city of Genoa was famous for its lace as well as for its gold work and jewellery. Perhaps it was on account of the number of goldsmiths that Genoa was among the first countries to make a sumptuous trimming made of slender wires of both silver and gold. They made this lace-like material in small quantities late in the fourteenth century. So popular was it that Venice followed suit and made it also; but it was not until several hundred years later that Genoese Points became well known and in demand all over Europe. Few of the inventories of royalty fail to mention *Point de Gênes*, and Marie de Medici had much of it; but these laces were of silk or thread, since the Genoese Republic had made sumptuary laws regulating the wearing of gold and silver lace, as did the other Italian cities.

While Venice held the palm for needle-point laces, Genoa was unrivalled for her bobbin lace, although she made needle point also. But the exquisite pillow-made fichus, collars, kerchiefs, and even aprons were universally sought, and more in demand than edging lace. Pieces like this necessitated the use of very large pillows, and each pillow required four workers to attend to the 700 or 800 bobbins used. The lace now made in Genoa is a sort of Guipure, and is sold in France.



***P**LATE XXVII.—Bobbin-made lace flounce
with brides. Made at Lucca. Seventeenth
Century.*



ITALIAN LACE

CARNIVAL OF BRIDE LACE, as it was called, was made in Italy chiefly during the sixteenth century. Like much of the lace of that period it was *Reticella*, made over drawn threads, but its characteristic was that the initial or monogram of the family or person for whom it was made was wrought in it. When such lace was made for the personal linen of brides, it was worn at the wedding, or at festival or carnival times.

ARGENTELLA POINT closely resembles the French laces, Alençon or Argentan, and was made when the heavier raised laces were less popular. It has one great point of difference from the French laces in that the figures are not outlined with a raised cord or thread, but simply have a flat buttonholing. The designs are sprays, small ovals, or circles, and it was much esteemed on account of its delicacy and whiteness. The groundwork is a fine net.

PUNTO DE RAGUSA. Ragusa, a city near the north-western coast of Greece, was one of the greatest Adriatic ports of Greece during the fifteenth and part of the sixteenth centuries. The peasants of the near-by Ionian Islands, and of the villages along the coast of Greece, sent to Venice, through Ragusa, drawn- and cut-work in which they excelled. But these were not the so-called Ragusa laces, which were made of gimps of gold and silver thread fastened together by bars, and wrought on the edge into a pattern of loops and trefoils. While Venice soon excelled in thread laces, the gold laces of Ragusa were deservedly famous till late in the seventeenth



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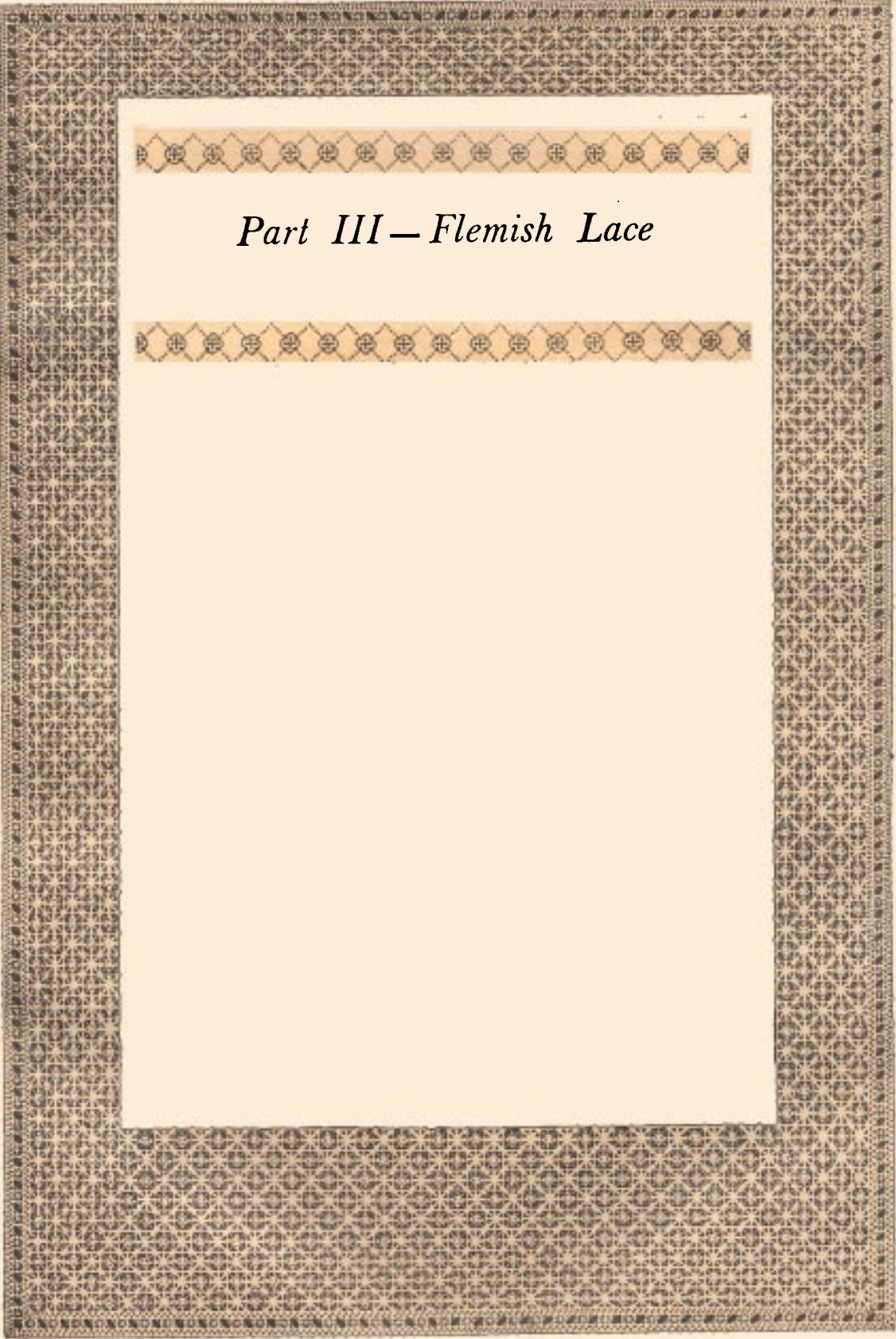
century, but were finally driven from the field on account of the expense of the material, the prohibitions against them, and the beauty of the designs and workmanship of the flax thread laces.

ALOE LACE, a fabric curiously delicate in character, considering the material of which it is made, has been woven in Italy since remote times. The pith of the aloe-tree is split into threads, and woven, tatted, knit, or twisted with bobbins into a sort of lace. Sometimes large pieces like shawls, lappets, and table scarfs are made; but the lace is of little use, since washing practically destroys it. It is made not only in Italy, but in the Philippine Islands, South America, and the Barbadoes Islands. It is always more interesting than beautiful and is seldom used.

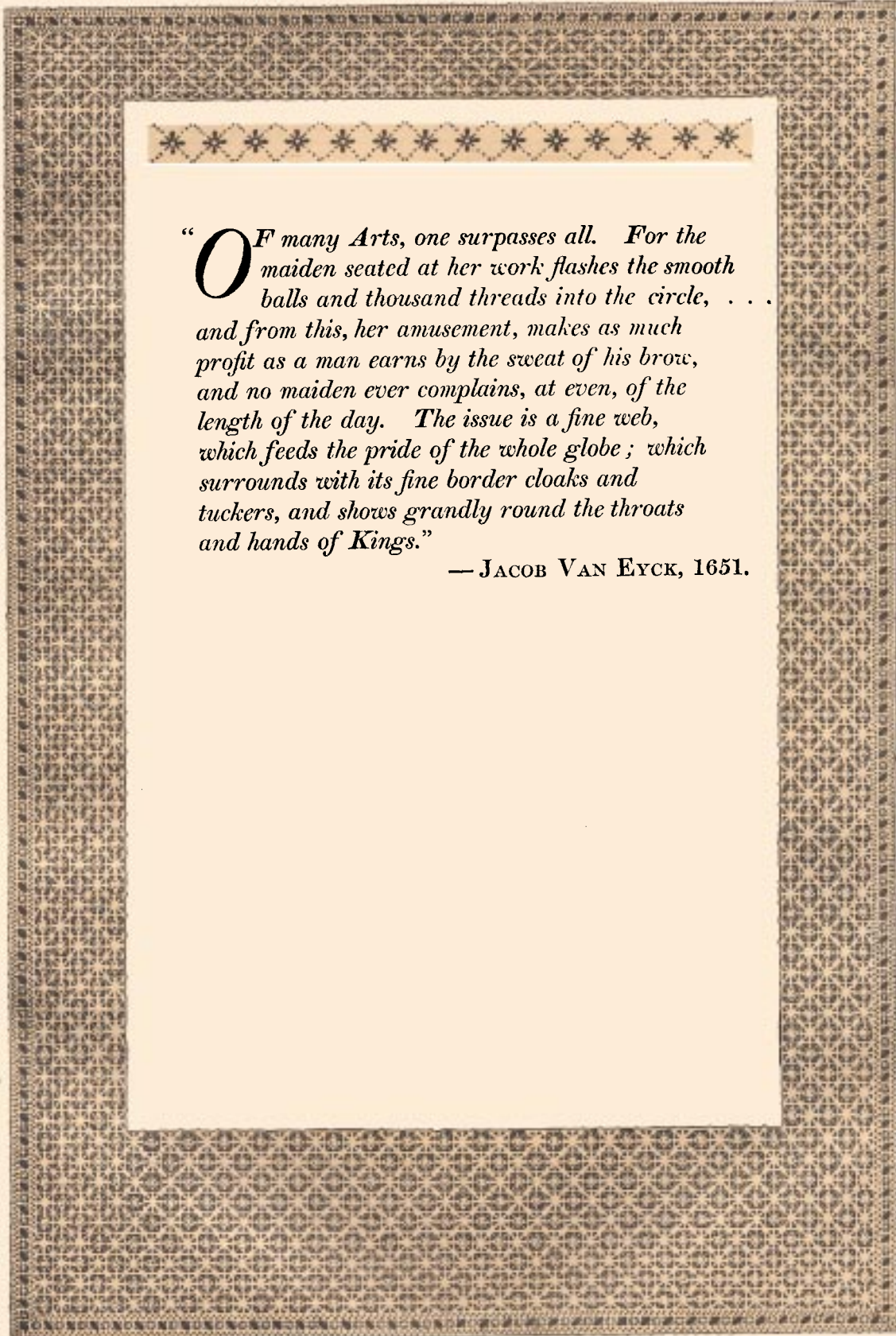
The superb Medici collars, which are familiar to us from the portraits of the period, were not complete without the framework of fine metal wires which supported them. In Italy these were called *verghetti*, and such large quantities were required that many people were employed in their construction. These workers, and others of like trades, gathered in one particular quarter of Venice, which was called after them, and it still bears the name.



*PLATE XXVIII.—Shawl made from pith of
the aloe. Made in Azores Islands. Nineteenth
Century.*



Part III—Flemish Lace



“OF many Arts, one surpasses all. For the maiden seated at her work flashes the smooth balls and thousand threads into the circle, . . . and from this, her amusement, makes as much profit as a man earns by the sweat of his brow, and no maiden ever complains, at even, of the length of the day. The issue is a fine web, which feeds the pride of the whole globe; which surrounds with its fine border cloaks and tuckers, and shows grandly round the throats and hands of Kings.”

— JACOB VAN EYCK, 1651.



Part III—Flemish Lace



O country in the world has a more interesting past than the Netherlands, not only from the historian's point of view, but from the artist's side; from the standpoint of the *élégante*; from the demand of her housewives for the union of utility and beauty; and from the lovers of flowers as well.

The Dutch, even while at war and busy wresting their little garden spot from the encroachments of the sea, had time to spend in learning and perfecting the secret of pictorial art, whose natural birthplace more appropriately seemed the sunny and beauty-loving Italy. Their conquests in China had brought to Holland specimens of porcelain, and the Dutch potter sought to imitate this in his coarse pottery, smeared with a finer surface, on which the decoration was laid, and succeeded in producing ware of great beauty and use. When commerce brought to her shores furniture carved and beautifully inlaid, she straightway set to work to copy this, and bettered the models. Her goldsmiths wrought with a delicacy and beauty that could vie even with



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Venice, and would it be natural that in lace she should fall behind? She not only had the artistic capacity to make this fabric, but had also the patience and intelligence to raise flax, the most necessary article to successful thread lace-making.

Flax is a plant native to Egypt, and, transplanted to the soil of Holland, it was tended by the best gardeners in the world, who gave to its cultivation that unwearying care which vastly improved the quality of the plant. Delicacy of fibre and silkiness of gloss were the points aimed at, and in these the Dutch flax was so superior to any other that it was soon in demand all over Europe. There were many trades, grouped around and allied to the use of flax, that soon sprang up and became important. The growth of the plant was but the first step. It had to be hackled, or the fibre separated, bleached, spun, and sometimes dyed. Into the production of the finest thread went eyesight, and almost life itself, so difficult and under such disadvantageous circumstances was the making of it carried on. In order to keep the thread moist, so that it would not break, it was spun in underground rooms. These were so dark that artificial light was cast upon the thread, which was twisted over a black cloth in order to show it, its almost gossamer character causing it to elude sight.

Sometimes the flax was more valuable than the land it grew upon, and the real Brussels thread often brought £240 (\$1,200) a pound. It was said that a pound of



PLATE XXIX.—“Little Princess.” She wears an “underpropper” of wire beneath her lawn ruff, which is edged with Gothic Point. Cuffs edged with wide needle point. Portrait by Moreelse (1571-1638).



FLEMISH LACE

flax—that is, before it was made into thread—could be manufactured into lace worth £700.

It is true that there have been no definite written records produced to substantiate the claim of Flanders that she was first in the field with pillow-made lace. There were no pattern-books published before those of Wilhelm Vosterman, who died at Antwerp in 1542. The patterns are shown on small black squares and are of mediæval designs. The prevalence of lace-making in all classes is shown by the quaint dedication, which reads as follows :

“A neawe treatys ; as cōcernyng the excellency of the nedle worcke spānisshe stitche and weavyng in the frame, very necessary to al theym wiche desyre the perfect knowledge of seamstry, quiltinge and brodry worcke, cōteinyng an cxxxviiij figures or tables, so playnli made and set tout in portrature, the whiche is difficyll ; and natoly for crafts mē but also for gentlewemē and iōge damosels that therein may obtayne greater conyge delyte and pleasure.

“These books be to sell at Andwarp in the golden Unycorne at Willm Vorstermans.”

There were also those of Jean de Glen, who died at Liège in 1597. It is also true that none of these books contains patterns for bobbin-made laces.

For the first mention of bobbin lace we are obliged to fall back on that old Italian inventory of the Sforza sisters, of 1493, in which one item reads :

“Binda una lavarata a poncto de doii fuxi per uno lenzuolo.”
(A band of work done with twelve bobbins to trim a sheet.)

If the Italians were the first to use the pillow and bobbin as well as the needle, the use to which the Dutch



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put these implements soon caused her to distance all competitors. Séguin says :

“She unremittingly applied herself to this art, and in a short time converted it into a widespread industry, possessing well-merited reputation on account of the delicacy and beauty of its productions. All countries turned to her for them, and she became, as it were, the classic country of pillow lace. Credit for the invention of the special process was readily given to her, and no one has since taken the trouble to closely examine her title to it.”

As early as 1554 the commerce between England and the Low Countries was immense. Antwerp was the port of greatest trade, and its water-front was a scene of great activity. Guicciardini gives a list of the exports and imports between the two countries :

“Antwerp sends to England jewels and precious stones, silver, bullion, quicksilver, wrought silks, cloth of gold and silver, gold and silver thread, camblets, grograms, spices, drugs, sugar, cotton, cummin, galls, linen fine and coarse, serges, demi-ostades, tapestry, madder, hops in great quantity, glass, salt fish, and merceries of all sorts to a great value, arms of all kinds, ammunition for war, and household furniture.

“From England Antwerp receives fine and coarse draperies, fringes, the finest wool, saffron, and a great quantity of lead and tin, sheep and rabbit skins, and other fine peltry and leather, beer and cheese, and other sorts of provisions.”

This list shows that, while Holland exported almost exclusively manufactured products, she imported chiefly goods in the raw, while the choicer imports were again exported to other parts of Europe.

Pillow lace was made not only in the convents, but in the schools as well, and as early as the time of Charles V it had been part of the education of girls.



PLATE XXX.—*A. Bobbin-made Flemish lace. Sixteenth Century. B. Mechlin, bobbin-made. The sprigs made separately and worked in. Seventeenth Century. This is said to have belonged to George IV.*



FLEMISH LACE

To the Dutch is given the credit of inventing many things. They claim the invention of the thimble, the napkin, pocket-handkerchief, shirt, nightdress, tablecloth, and a sack or tick for bedding. Some of these articles were in use as early as the thirteenth century. Indeed, we can trace so many of our necessities back to this little country behind the dykes that we are almost ready to yield to them on any point.

Dutch weavers had been taken to England as early as the middle of the thirteenth century, to instruct in their methods of weaving fine cloth. Starch, also a Dutch compound, had been first used in England in Queen Elizabeth's time. Great was the sensation its use created, and those who did not approve of it did not hesitate to bestow evil names on it, among the terms being that of "Devil's broth."

The Italian accompaniments of the early laces were paint and cosmetics, the very composition of which was odious. But in Holland, where flowers bloomed and art grew apace, cleanliness was glorified, the simple pleasures of home life were extolled, and health and comfort followed close in their wake.

The earliest linen garments were so costly that only kings and nobles could possess them. They were dark and discoloured, for the art and secret of bleaching had not been learned. It was the Dutch who worked and experimented till they succeeded in producing a fabric white as snow, so that the very term "Hollands" was a guarantee for its fineness and colour. Eight months of



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constant sprinkling and bleaching in the sun's rays were needed to bring the linen to the required perfection. In 1596, Stephen Gosson writes :

“These Holland smocks as white as snow,
And gorgets brave with drawn-work wrought.”

Evelyn says, in “Tyrannus ; or the Mode,” 1661 :

“Twice twelve long smocks of Holland fine,
With cambric sleeves rich point to join,
For she despises Colberteen.”

Long before what we call “lace” was made, Flanders as well as Italy had become proficient in the art of making cut-work. There are exquisite specimens of cut-work and embroidery combined, dating as far back as the time of Philip the Good (1419-1467). The writer has seen these pieces in a collection which is practically priceless, belonging to a collector in Brussels, and having specimens of all of the Dutch and Flemish laces from ancient to modern times.

The early Flemish laces, with their geometric patterns, are of great beauty, and do not differ essentially from the Italian laces of the same period, but the Dutch sooner than the Italians made lace with varied and intricate grounds, sometimes half a dozen being shown on one pattern. All the old pictures of lace-makers by the early Flemish artists show the use of bobbins and pillow, and from some of these pictures the Dutch base their claim to priority of manufacture.

As early as 1657 Mechlin lace is noted in French inventories ; Anne of Austria wore it. By 1699 Queen



FLEMISH LACE

Mary's Mechlin ruffles are noted in the Wardrobe Accounts, and "Holland shirts laced with Mechlin lace" were in great demand among the *élégantes*. Whether this was the fine, delicately flowered and sprigged lace which was known later as Mechlin, or only the commercial term under which all Flanders lace was known, it would be hard to say.

Until 1699 a prohibition upon Flemish laces kept those fabrics out of England (this being another reason for calling one kind of Brussels lace "*Point d'Angleterre*"), but after the ban was removed Mechlin immediately sprang into fashion. Mechlin is a pillow lace, made all in one piece, each little flower and sprig outlined by a flat thread. It is a rather thin lace, — a "summer lace," the French court beauties termed it, — and it looked its best on cravats, full ruffles, borders to caps, or fichus, its very delicacy preventing its looking well on the gorgeous damasks and brocades of court costume. It early declined in manufacture, and, although still made at Antwerp, Lierre, and several other places, as well as at Mechlin, its place has been almost entirely filled by other laces.

Nor were the thread pillow laces the only bobbin ones for which Belgium and Holland were noted. They used silk as well as gold and silver. The early pillow laces were all narrow, and were made on the pillow with all the bobbins at one end. This style was the only kind of bobbin lace produced in either France, Italy, Spain, or Flanders, but it presented a great variety of