

Lace is defined as an ornamental openwork of threads of flax, cotton, silk, gold, or silver, and these are made in one of three ways, (1st) with the needle, when the work is known as Needlepoint lace, (2nd) with bobbins, pins, and pillow or cushion, when the work is known as Pillow lace, and (3rd) by machinery, when imitations of both Needlepoint and Pillow lace are produced.

It is an interesting study to trace the growth of this industry and its spread from East to West, from the early embroideries of Egypt to the machine made lace of the present day. From the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries the art of lace making received particular attention, and the different "Points" are almost as many as the different localities from which they sprung. Sad to relate, the workers in needlepoint and pillow lace are fast disappearing.

The manufacture of point lace was brought to the highest perfection by the Venetians as early as the sixteenth century. The pattern books of that time contain examples of more than a hundred varieties of this costly lace. Some of these points were world renowned for their fineness and exquisite beauty. Point de Venise is the richest and most complicated of all laces. It is so strong with its tiers upon tiers of stitches that some of it has lasted for centuries. Italian influence under the Valois and Medicis spread the fashion for rich laces, and the Venetian points were in great demand in foreign countries, particularly in France. The exportation of costly laces was a source of great wealth to Venice. The making of lace was universal in every household, and the secret of the manufacture of her finest points she jealously guarded. Although both point and pillow lace were made at this time in all the leading countries of Europe, Flanders was the only rival of Italy in the markets of the world.

A very interesting story is told of the origin of the famous guipure lace. It is that of a sailor lad from the Indian seas, who, returning to his home in Venice, brought to his betrothed, a worker in needlepoint, a bunch of the delicate, pretty coralline, telling her it was lace that the mermaids made in the coral caverns under the waters of the Indian seas. "Pretty as it is," said the needleworker, "I will make something with my needle far prettier. My bridal veil shall be of the mermaids' lace." The sailor lad sailed away and was gone for months. Day by day the young girl worked with her needle, forming white knots and tiny stars and uniting them all by delicate "brides" until an exquisite long scarf of guipure was produced, so marvelously beautiful that when she wore it as her bridal veil all Venice went wild with admiration, and many noble ladies, princesses, and queens became the patrons of the young lace worker.

Early lace like contemporary point was of stiff design, and may be compared to the more formal of modern crochet edge, but towards the close of the sixteenth century lace of all kinds changed from the geometrical to the flowing style, as may be seen by comparison of Holbein's pictures with those of Vandyke. At Queen Elizabeth's death 3,000 lace trimmed habits were found in her wardrobe. Charles I wore garments adorned with rich lace. In France, as in all other countries where French

*IT IS A PLEASURE TO HAVE YOUR SILK IN A HOLDER.*