

Archipelago and in Italy. Some were of white linen threads alone, some of white and gold thread intermixed, and some of colored silks, of which crimson silks seems to have been the more favored. Suited to the linens and cottons as being so much lighter in texture and appearance than silks, satins, and velvets, the embroidery was on the whole of finer and smaller stitchery. A great deal of it was of small cross and tent stitches,



FIG. 2. PART OF A BORDER OF RED SILK SQUARE MESH NET, WITH PATTERN DARNED INTO IT OF COLORED AND GOLD THREADS.

of fine buttonhole and other overcast or whipped or closely twisted thread work in conjunction with drawn thread and cut linen work, from which arose that important and special offshoot of needlework which we know so well as Needlepoint Lace. But here I cannot treat of this. It is a large subject and leads one far away from embroidery proper. A great variety of patterns abound in the 16th and 17th century embroidery on white linen; so much so, indeed, as to become a special subject of study by itself. It is therefore out of the question to convey any idea of this variety by means of the one or two specimens which are given in the illustrations. A principal feature of the whole class is the comparative modesty and the distinctive appropriateness of the patterns to their particular purposes and materials. Much of the modesty is no doubt due to the patient repetition of the same devices in the pattern, whilst the ornamental appropriateness of the embroidery to the white linens is peculiarly determined by limiting the ornament to bands, borders, or small edgings simply. To take for instance such an example of Italian linen embroidery as is given in Fig. 1, which presents one corner of a fairly large tablecloth. The restricted character of the ornamental details is as noticeable as the modest coloring of the embroidery, which is in brown, blue, and white thread. The lace edging to the cloth is a specimen of one of the earliest known classes of pillow-made lace, which was called *merletti a piombini*, and is made of interchanging brown and white threads twisted and plaited into Vandyke devices. The outer margin of plain white linen is separated from the main center of the cloth and well defined by a bold rectangular band elaborate openwork and embroidery,

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