

**POINT AND PILLOW LACE: A
SHORT ACCOUNT OF VARIOUS
KINDS ANCIENT AND MODERN,
AND HOW TO RECOGNISE THEM**

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Point and Pillow Lace: A Short Account of Various Kinds Ancient and Modern, and How to Recognise Them by A. M. S.

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*Portrait of the
Princess Eleonora of Mantua.*

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ANCIENT AND MODERN, AND HOW
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By A. M. S.

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PREFACE

THE object of this little book is to supply to owners and lovers of Lace some clear information easily referred to, by means of which they can ascertain the true name and nature of any particular specimen.

The valuable works of which a list is given on page xiii, as the authorities consulted, are some of them, especially the late Mrs. Palliser's *History of Lace*, almost exhaustive as to the historical records on the subject, and they also contain a great deal of interesting information concerning the various lace manufactures. Yet the writer has found, in common she believes with others, that a diligent search through many volumes and much inquiry of experts has been necessary before some particular piece of Lace could be identified, even if in the end that identification did not appear doubtful.

In the present volume it is hoped that the simple statements distinguishing the features of each variety will enable the reader to recognise them readily, especially as each description is accompanied by an

illustration, on as large a scale as the size of the page will allow, so that the texture of the Lace may be the more easily seen.

Description alone, however good, without illustrations is very insufficient: this will readily be allowed by anyone who attempts the task of explaining in words the nature and peculiarities of any kind of Lace. Dr. Johnson gives as a definition of "net," "a texture woven with interstitial vacuities," and of "network," "anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections." Where the great lexicographer failed to make his meaning more intelligible to simple folk, lesser mortals may well be glad to eke out their otherwise insufficient explanations by the help of the photographer.

One difficulty attendant on the study of Lace must be mentioned. It is that at various times the same kinds of Lace were made in different localities, each imitating the other. Thus Brussels and Alençon copied Venice, and Italy in turn adopted the "réseau" ground in imitation of Flanders; nor is the reason far to seek. The laws of supply and demand were in force three hundred years ago as now, and though we are apt to think of the countries of Europe, before the days of railways and steamboats, as isolated, yet

a very cursory study of history is enough to prove that it was far otherwise. The number of travellers was no doubt much less than at present, but the richer classes were socially in constant communication with each other everywhere, as is indeed evidenced by the prevalence of the same fashions in dress throughout Europe at any given time. No sooner did the ladies of Paris in the time of Henry the Fourth adopt the high ruff, than English ladies hastened to do the same; and as soon as the Pillow laces of Genoa were admired and found suitable to the falling collars of the succeeding reigns, the lace-workers of Flanders were quick in learning to reproduce the style, in this case so exactly, that but little difference can now be detected between their work and that of the Italians. Lace also was largely made in convents and lace-making was taught in convent schools; and the fact that nuns were of all nationalities helps to account for the cosmopolitan character of the Art.

It will not be attempted here to decide from what locality any particular Lace may have come, but merely to state on good authority to what style it belongs, and to assist the reader, by a careful description of its details, to judge for himself or herself of its character. Of all the decorative works of Art

Lace is by far the most perishable ; indeed, it may be said that the more beautiful the Lace, the more delicate and more easily destroyed it is.

Much has disappeared long ago, and in the hands of ignorant owners the little that has lasted till now is in danger of being finally lost. If, therefore, what is here written should attract the notice of some who have taken but small care of their frail possessions, and have, without scruple, given them over to the tender mercies of the dressmaker who cuts, or the washerwoman who tears, and if they should be induced henceforth to pay more heed to these irreplaceable treasures, the writer will feel that she has not written in vain on a subject which has long been one of great interest to herself.

She cannot send this little book into the world without expressing her thanks to Mr. Alan Cole, of the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, for the help and advice that he has been good enough to give her on a subject on which he is so well-known an authority ; also to the kind friends to whom she is indebted for the loan of many beautiful specimens of lace here represented. Without such assistance and encouragement her pleasant task might never have been accomplished at all.

A. M. S.