

# HISTORY OF LACE.

## CHAPTER I.

### NEEDLEWORK.

"As ladies wont  
To finger the fine needle and nyse thread."—*Faerie Queen*.

"Needlework sublime."—*Cowper*.

THE art of lace-making has from the earliest times been so mixed up with that of needlework, it would be impossible to enter on the subject of the one without making some mention of the other.

From the first homely attempts of our mother Eve, we have, throughout the Old Testament, constant mention of embroidery, of curtains of "fine twined linen wrought with needlework, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubims of cunning work."<sup>1</sup>

Again, the robe of the ephod was worked with "pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet,"<sup>2</sup> around the hem thereof. We have mention in Isaiah of women's "cauls,"<sup>3</sup> of "nets of checker-work"<sup>4</sup> in Solomon's temple, with pomegranates and other matters too numerous here to record.

Aholiab is specially recorded as the great embroiderer in blue;<sup>5</sup> and the description of a virtuous woman in the Proverbs, who "layeth her hands to the spindle,"<sup>6</sup> and "clotheth herself in tapestry," and that of the king's daughter, in the Psalms, who "shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework,"<sup>7</sup> all plainly show how much the art was appreciated amongst the Jews.<sup>8</sup>

Both needlework and embroidery were highly esteemed by the

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxvi. xxvii.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. iii. 18.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Kings vii. 17. <sup>5</sup> Exodus xxxv. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. xxxi.

<sup>7</sup> Psalm xlv.

<sup>8</sup> Again, in the song of Deborah, the

mother of Sisera says, "Have they not divided the prey; . . . to Sisera a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides?"—*Judges* v. 30.