

since, in the remote provinces of France, a lady who quitted her house daily was remarked on. "Elle sort beaucoup," folks would say, as though she were guilty of dissipation.

So queens and great ladies sewed on. We hear much of works of adornment, more still of piety, when Katharine of Aragon appears on the scene. She had learned much in her youth from her mother, Queen Isabella, and had assisted at those "trials of needlework established by that virtuous monarch among the Spanish ladies:"²⁵

"Her days did pass
In working with the needle curiously."²⁶

It is recorded how, when Wolsey, with the papal legate, Campeggio, going to Bridewell, begged an audience of Queen Katharine, on the subject of her divorce, they found her at work with her maids, like Penelope of old, and she came to them with a skein of red silk about her neck.²⁷

Queen Mary Tudor is recorded to have followed the example of her illustrious mother, though all we find among the entries is a charge "to working materials for Jane the Fole, one shilling."

²⁵ These are alluded to in the dialogue between Industria and Ignavia, as given in Sibmacher's "Modelbuch," 1601 (French translation): "La vieille dame raconte l'histoire des concours de travail à l'aiguille chez les anciens Espagnols; comme Isabelle, femme de Ferdinand, a hautement estimé les travaux de l'aiguille."

Queen Isabella, says Prescott, "was careful to instruct her daughters in these more humble departments of domestic duty, for she thought nothing too humble to learn which is useful. If we are to believe Florez, the king wore no shirt but of the queen's making."

The "Spanish stitch," so often mentioned, was brought in by Katharine, on her marriage with Prince Arthur, in 1501. We have constantly in her wardrobe accounts, sheets, and pillow-beres, "wrought with Spanish work of black silk at the edge."

In the Inventory of Lord Monteaule, 1523 (Public Record Office), are "eight partlets, three garnished with gold, the rest with Spanish work."

In 1556, among the New Year's gifts presented to Queen Mary Tudor, most of

the smocks are "wrought with black silk, Spanish fashion."

In the Great Wardrobe Accounts of Queen Elizabeth, 3 and 4, Public Record Office, we have "Sixteen yards of Spanish work for ruffs."

"Twelve tooth-cloths, with the Spanish stitch, edged with gold and silver bone lace."—*Ibid.* Eliz. 5 & 6.

The Spanish stitch appears in France with Henry II., 1557. "Pour la façon d'ung gaban avec ung grant collet charmarrez à l'Espaignolle de passement blanc," &c.—*Comptes de l'Argentier du Roy*, Archives Nat. K. K. 106.

²⁶ Taylor, the Water Poet, "Katharine of Aragon."

²⁷ The industry of Henry's last queen was as great as that of his first. Specimens still exist at Sizergh Castle, Westmoreland, of Katharine Parr's needlework, a counterpane and a toilet cover. An astrologer, who cast her nativity, foretold she would be a queen; so when a child, on her mother requiring her to work, she would exclaim, "My hands are ordained to touch crowns and sceptres, not needles and spindles."