

CHAPTER III.

LACE.

“ Je demandai de la dentelle :
 Voici le tulle de Bruxelles,
 La blonde, le point d'Alençon,
 Et la Maline, si légère ;
 L'application d'Angleterre
 (Qui se fait à Paris, dit-on) ;
 Voici la guipure indigène,
 Et voici la Valenciennes,
 Le point d'esprit, et le point de Paris ;
 Bref les dentelles
 Les plus nouvelles
 Que produisent tous les pays.”

Le Palais des Dentelles, Rothomago.

LACE¹ is defined as a plain or ornamental network, wrought of fine threads of gold, silver, silk, flax, or cotton, interwoven; to which may be added “poil de chèvre,” and also the fibre of the aloe, employed by the peasants of Italy and Spain. The term “lacez,” rendered in the English translation of the statutes² “lace,” implies braids, such as were used for decorating the different parts of the dress, and appears long before lace, properly so called, came into use. “Passament”³ also was a general term for gimps and braids, as well as for lace. Modern industry has separated these two classes of work, but the words being formerly used to express both renders it difficult in historic research to separate one from the other.

The same confusion occurs in France, where the first lace was called “passement,” because it was applied to the same use, to braid or lay flat over the coats and other garments. The lace trade was entirely in the hands of the “Passementiers” of Paris, who were

¹ Lace. French, “dentelle;” German, “Spitzen;” Italian, “merletto,” “trina;” Genoa, “pizzo;” Spanish, “encaje;” Dutch, “kanten.”

² Statute 3 Edw. IV. c. iii.

³ “Passement, a lace or lacing.”—*Cotgrave*.