

The Cavaliere Antonio Merli, in his interesting pamphlet on Italian lace,⁴ mentions an account preserved in the municipal archives of Ferrara, dated 1469, as probably referring to lace;⁵ but he more especially brings forward a document of the Sforza family, dated 1493,⁶ in which the word "trina"⁷ (under its ancient form, "tarnete") constantly occurs, together with bone and bobbin lace.

Again, the Florentine poet, Firenzuola, who wrote from 1520 to 1530, composed an elegy upon a collar of raised point, made by the hand of his mistress. See "Florence."

Cavaliere Merli cites, as the earliest-known painting in which lace occurs, a maiolica disc, after the style of the Della Robbia family, in which, surrounded by a wreath of fruit, is represented the half-figure of a lady, dressed in a rich brocade, with a collar of white lace. The costume is of the fifteenth century; but as Luca della Robbia's descendants worked to a later period, the precise date of the work cannot be fixed.

Evidences of white lace, or passement, are said to appear in the pictures of Carpaccio, in the gallery at Venice, and in another by Gentile Bellini, where the dress of one of the ladies is trimmed round the neck with a white lace. The date of this last painting is 1500. We have not seen them.

Lace was made throughout Italy mostly by the nuns, and ex-

⁴ "Origine ed Uso dell Trine a filo di refe" (thread). 1864. Privately printed.

⁵ "1469. — Io, Battista de Nicollo, d'Andrea da Ferrara, debio avere per mia manifatura et reve per cuxere et candelle per inzirare . . . It. per desgramitare e refile e inzirare e ripezare e reapicare le gramite a camixi quatordece per li signori calonexi, et per li, mansonarij le qual gramite staxea malissimamente, p. che alcune persone le a guaste. Lire 1 10. It. per reve et p. candelle. L. 0 5."

"1469. — I, Baptist de Nicollo, of Andrea da Ferrara, have owing to me for my making, and thread to sew, and candles to wax . . . Item, for untrimming and reweaving and waxing and repiecing and rejoining the trimmings of fourteen albs for the canons and attendants of the church, the which trimmings were in a very bad state because some persons had

spoiled them. L. 1 10. It. for thread and wax. L. 0 5."

These trimmings (gramite), Cav. Merli thinks, were probably "trine."

⁶ See "Milan."

⁷ "Trina," like our word lace, is used in a general sense for braid or passement. Floris, in his Dictionary ("A Worlde of Words," John Floris, London, 1598), gives:—

"Trine,—cuts, snips, pincke worke on garments; and Trinci,—gardings, fringings, lacings, &c., or other ornaments of garments."

"Merlo," "merletto," are the more modern terms for lace. We find the first as early as the poet Firenzuola. (See "Florence.") It does not occur in any pattern book of an older date than the "Fiori da Ricami," of Pasini, and the two works of Francesco de' Franceschi, all printed in 1591.