

mentioned by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, when she speaks of "peddling-women that come on pretext of selling pennyworths of lace."

MILAN.

"Milano la Grande."

"MARGARET. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

"HERO. O that exceeds, they say.

"MARGARET. By my troth, it's but a nightgown in respect of yours: cloth o' gold and cuts, and laced with silver."

Much Ado about Nothing, iv. 1.

The earliest records of Italian lace belong to Milan, and occur in an instrument of partition between the sisters Angela and Ippolita Sforza Visconti, dated 1493.

This document is of the highest interest, as giving the inventory of an Italian wardrobe of the fifteenth century. In it, amidst a number of curious entries, are veils of gold network, with cambric pillow-cases, linen sheets, mosquito curtains, and various articles, worked "a reticella," and "a groppi," with the needle, bobbins, bones, and other different ways⁴³ mentioned in the pattern books of the following century.

Among other items, we find, "Half of a bundle containing patterns for ladies' work."⁴⁴

Though the fabric of these fine points dates back for so many centuries, there is little notice of them elsewhere.

Henry VIII. is mentioned as wearing one short pair of hose of purple silk of Venice gold, woven like a caul, edged with a "passamaine" lace of purple silk and gold, worked at Milan.⁴⁵

In a wardrobe account of Lord Hay, gentleman of his majesty's

⁴³ "Velleto (veil) uno d' oro filato.

Payro uno fodrete (pillow case) di cambria lavorate a guglia (à l'aiguille).

Lenzuolo (sheet) uno di revo di tele (linen thread), cinque lavorato a punto.

Peza una de tarnete (trina) d' argento facte a stelle.

Lenzolo uno de tele, quatro lavorato a radexelo (reticello).

Peze quatro de radexela per mettere ad uno moscheto (zanzariere, mosquito curtain).

Tarneta una d' oro et seda negra facta da ossi (bones).

Pecto uno d' oro facto a grupi.

Lavoro uno de rechamo facto a grupi dove era suso le perle de Madona Biancha.

Binda una lavorata a poncto de doii fuxi (two bobbins) per uno lenzolo."

Instrumento di divisione tre le sorelle Angela ed Ippolita Sforza Visconti, di Milano. 1493, Giorno di Giovedì, 12 Settembre.

⁴⁴ "La mità de uno fagotto quale aveva dentro certi disegni da lavorare le donne."

⁴⁵ Harl. MS. No. 1419.