

CHAPTER VI.

SPAIN.

“Of Point d’Espagne a rich cornet,
Two night rails and a scarf beset,
With a large lace and collaret.”

Evelyn, Voyage to Marry-land.

“Hat laced with gold Point d’Espagne.”¹

Wardrobe of a Pretty Fellow, Roderick Ranlom.

THE COUNT. “Voglio una punta di Spagna, larga, massiccia, ben lavorata. Del disegno, della ricchezza, ma niente di luccicante.”—*Goldoni, L’Avaro fastoso.*

SPANISH point, in its day, has been as celebrated as that of Italy. Tradition declares Spain to have learned the art from Italy, whence she communicated it to Flanders, who, in return, taught Spain how to make pillow lace. Be that as it may, Spanish point was highly prized, extensively made, and Spain had no occasion to import the products of Italy. Many reasons exist why Spanish point was less known to Europe in general than that of other nations. The dress of the court, guided not by the impulse of fashion, but by sumptuary laws, gave little encouragement to the manufacture; while, on the other hand, the numberless images of our Lady and other patron saints, dressed and re-dressed daily in the richest vestments, together with the albs of the priests and the decorations of the altars, caused an immense consumption for ecclesiastical purposes. “Of so great value,” says Beckford, “were the laces of these favoured Madonnas that in 1787 the Marchioness of Cogalhudo, wife of the eldest son of the semi-royal race of Medina Cœli, was appointed mistress of the robes to our Lady of La Solidad, at Madrid, a much coveted office.” It may be surmised then that the supply scarcely exceeded the demand, and that the rich points of which we have lately heard so much were entirely employed for home consumption. At that early period, too, Spain, on whose empire the sun never set, had

¹ 1756. “Point d’Espagne hats.”—*Connoisseur.*