

## CHAPTER VII.

## FLANDERS.

“For lace, let Flanders bear away the belle.”

*Sir C. Hanbury Williams.*

“In French embroidery and in Flanders lace  
I’ll spend the income of a treasurer’s place.”

*The Man of Taste, Rev. W. Bramstone.*

FLANDERS and Italy together dispute the invention of lace. In many towns of the Low Countries are pictures of the fifteenth century, in which are portrayed personages adorned with lace,<sup>1</sup> and Baron Reiffenberg, a Belgian writer,<sup>2</sup> asserts that lace cornettes, or caps, were worn in that country as early as the fourteenth century. He also brings the evidence of contemporary paintings, to show how early it was made. In a side chapel of the choir of St. Peter’s, at Louvain, is an altar-piece by Quentin Matsys, date 1495, in which a girl is represented making lace with bobbins on a pillow with a drawer, similar to that now in use. We have not seen the painting. There exists a series of engravings after Martin de Vos, 1581, giving the occupation of the seven ages of life: in the third,<sup>3</sup> assigned to “age mur,” is seen a girl sitting with a pillow on her knees, making lace (Fig. 45): the occupation must have been then common, or the artist would scarcely have chosen it to characterise the habits of his country.

The historian of the Duke of Burgundy<sup>4</sup> declares Charles the Bold to have lost his “dentelles” at the battle of Granson, 1476; he does not state his authority: probably they were gold or silver.

In 1651, Jacob van Eyck, a Flemish poet, sang the praises of lace-making in Latin verse. “Of many arts, one surpasses all

<sup>1</sup> Those in the collegiate church of St. Peter’s, at Louvain, and in the church of St. Gomar, at Lierre (Antwerp Province).—*Aubry*.

<sup>2</sup> “Mémoires de l’Académie de Bruxelles,” 1820.

<sup>3</sup> Engraved by Collaert. Bib. Nat. Grav.

<sup>4</sup> M. de Barante.