

“I charge you tell this to thy wyfe in bed, and it may be that she, understanding the benefit it will be to her and her children, will turn Dutchwoman, and endeavour to save moneys.” Notwithstanding this good advice, in 1768, England received from Flanders lace-work, 250,000*l.*, to her disadvantage, as compared to her exports.

The old Flemish laces are of great beauty. Fig. 50 represents a description of lace, called in the country *Trolle Kant*, a term which has been transferred to our own lace counties, in which lace of a peculiar make is styled *Trolly*.

The guipures of Flanders were always held in high estimation. The thread of which they were made was finer than that of France, and the fine flowing pattern, extending to some length like an architectural border, had a magnificent appearance when laid flat upon the vestment, as was the fashion in the seventeenth century.

At one period much lace was smuggled into France from Belgium by means of dogs trained for the purpose. A dog was caressed and petted at home, fed on the fat of the land, then, after a season, sent across the frontier, where he was tied up, half starved, and ill-treated. The skin of a bigger dog was then fitted to his body, and the intervening space filled with lace. The dog was then allowed to escape, and make his way home, where he was kindly welcomed with his contraband charge. These journeys were repeated till the French custom house, getting scent, by degrees put an end to the traffic. Between 1820 and 1836, 40,278 dogs were destroyed, a reward of three francs being given for each.¹²

BRUSSELS (BRABANT).

“More subtile web Arachne cannot spin.”
Spenser.

“From Lisle I came to Brussels, where most of the fine laces are made you see worn in England.”—*Lord Chesterfield*, 1741.

At what period the manufacture of Brussels lace commenced, we are ignorant. The ancient churches of Brabant possess, it is said, many precious specimens, the gifts of munificent princes,

¹² These dogs were of large size, and able to carry from 22 to 26 lbs. They also conveyed tobacco. The Swiss dogs smuggle watches.