

who have at all periods shown a predilection for Brussels lace, and in every way promoted its manufacture. In usage, it is termed "point d'Angleterre," an error explained to us by history. In 1662, the English parliament, alarmed at the sums of money expended on foreign point, and desirous to protect the English bone lace manufacture, passed an act prohibiting the importation of all foreign lace. The English lace merchants, at a loss how to supply the Brussels point required at the court of Charles II., invited Flemish lace-makers to settle in England, and there establish the manufacture. The scheme, however, was unsuccessful. England did not produce the necessary flax, and the lace made was of an inferior quality. The merchants therefore adopted a more simple expedient. Possessed of large capital, they bought up the choicest laces of the Brussels market, and then, smuggling them over to England, sold them under the name of point d'Angleterre,¹³ or "English point."¹⁴

The account of the seizure made by the Marquis de Nesmond, of a vessel laden with Flanders lace, bound for England, in 1678,¹⁵ will afford some idea of the extent to which this smuggling was carried on. The cargo comprised 744,953 ells of lace, without enumerating handkerchiefs, collars, fichus, aprons, petticoats, fans, gloves, &c., all of the same material. From this period, "point de Bruxelles" became more and more unknown, and was at last effaced by "point d'Angleterre,"¹⁶ a name it still retains.¹⁷

On consulting, however, the English royal inventories of the time, we find no mention of "English point." In France, on the other hand, the fashion books of the day¹⁸ commend to the notice of the reader, "Corsets chamarrés de point d'Angleterre," with vests, gloves, and cravats trimmed with the same material. Among

¹³ This fact is curiously enough corroborated in a second memorandum given by the Venetian ambassador to the English court in 1695, already mentioned (p. 45), by an informant in London, who states that Venetian point is no longer in fashion, but "that called English point, which you know is not made here, but in Flanders, and only bears this name of English to distinguish it from the others."

"Questo chiamato punto d'Inghilterra, si sappia che non si fa qui, ma in Fiandra, et porta solamente questo nome d'Inghilterra per distintione dagli altri."

¹⁴ Black lace was also imported at

this period from the Low Countries. Among the articles advertised as lost, in the "Newsman" of the 26th of May 1664, is: "A black lute-string gown with a black Flanders lace."

¹⁵ "Mercure Galant," 1678.

¹⁶ "Le corsage et les manches étaient bordés d'une blanche et légère dentelle, sortie à coup sûr des meilleures manufactures d'Angleterre."

¹⁷ We have, however, one entry, in the wardrobe accounts of the Duc de Penthièvre: "1738. Onze aunes d'Angleterre de Flandre."

¹⁸ "Mercure Galant," 1678.