

is one of the prettiest laces imaginable. It is of a brilliant white, composed of pillow-made flowers united by "barrettes," or "brides à picot." It may be termed the Belgian Honiton, which lace it exactly resembles in workmanship. The patterns are larger, less delicate, and less firm, than those of the Devonshire product, but it is less costly. West Flanders has now a hundred and eighty manufactories and four hundred lace schools. Of these, 157 are the property of religious communities, and number upwards of 30,000 apprentices.⁶²

FLANDERS (EAST).

No traveller has passed through the city of Ghent, for the last hundred years, without describing the Béguinage and its lace school. "The women," writes the author of the "Grand Tour," 1756, "number nigh 5000, go where they please, and employ their time in weaving lace."

Savary cites the "fausses Valenciennes," which he declares to equal the real in beauty. They are, continues he, "moins serrées, un peu moins solides, et un peu moins chères."

The best account, however, we have of the Ghent manufactures is contained in a letter addressed to Sir John Sinclair by Mr. Hey Schoulthem, in 1815. "The making of lace," he writes, "at the time the French entered the Low Countries, employed a considerable number of people of both sexes, and great activity prevailed in Ghent. The lace was chiefly for daily use; it was sold in Holland, France, and England. A large quantity of 'sorted' laces of a peculiar quality were exported to Spain and the colonies. It is to be feared that, after an interruption of twenty years, this lucrative branch of commerce will be at an end: the changes of fashion have even reached the West Indian colonists, whose favourite ornaments once consisted of Flemish laces and fringes.⁶³ These laces were mostly manufactured in the charitable institutions for poor girls, and by old women whose eyes did not permit them to execute a finer work. As for the young girls, the quality of these Spanish laces, and the facility of their

⁶² "L'Industrie dentellière belge, par B. v. d. Dussen. Bruxelles, 1860."

⁶³ Robinson Crusoe, when at Lisbon,

sends "some Flanders lace of a good value," as a present to the wife and daughter of his partner in the Brazils.