

LORRAINE.

The lace manufacture of Lorraine passes for one of the oldest in France. It flourished in the seventeenth century. Mirecourt⁶ and the villages of its environs, extending to the Department of the Meurthe, was the great centre of this trade, which formed the sole occupation of the countrywomen. For some centuries the lace-workers employed only hempen thread, spun in the environs of Épinal, and specially at Châtel-sur-Moselle.⁷ From this they produced a species of coarse guipure termed "passament," or, in the patois of the province, "peussemot."⁸

As early as the seventeenth century, they set aside this coarse article, and soon produced a finer and more delicate lace, with various patterns: they now made double ground and mignonette; and at Luneville (Dép. Meurthe), "dentelles à l'instar de Flandre." In 1715, an edict of Duke Leopold regulates the manufacture at Mirecourt.⁹ The lace was exported to Spain and the Indies. It found its way also to Holland, the German States, and England, where Randle Holme mentions "points of Lorraine, without raisings."¹⁰

The Lorraine laces were mostly known in commerce as "les dentelles de Saint-Mihiel," from the town of that name, one of the chief places of the fabric. These last named laces were much esteemed on their first appearance. Previous to the union of Lorraine to France, in 1766, there were scarcely 800 lace-makers in Mirecourt. The number now amounts to nearly 25,000.¹¹

but in both cases, the word seems not to indicate a stuff, but rather a locality, probably Toulouse. Francisque Michel.

In Skelton's "Garland of Lawrell," we find, "A skein of tewly silk;" which his commentator, the Rev. A. Dyce, considers to be "dyed of a red colour."

⁶ Dép. Vosges. ⁷ Neufchâteau.

⁸ The trader who purchases the lace is called "peussemotier."

⁹ The Lorraine laces could only enter France by the bureau of Chaumont, nor could they leave the country without a formal permit delivered at Monthureux-le-Sec.

¹⁰ In a catalogue of the collection of

objects of religious art exhibited at the General Assembly of the Catholics of Belgium, at Mechlin. We find noticed therein, "Dentelle pour rochet, point de Nancy," from the church of St. Charles at Antwerp, together with various "voiles de bénédiction," laces for rochets and altar-cloths, of "point de Paris."

¹¹ The "Tableau statistique du Dép. des Vosges," by Citoyen Desgoules, An X, says: "Mirecourt is celebrated for its lace fabrics. There are twenty lace merchants; but the workers are not attached to any particular house. They buy their own thread, make the lace, and bring it to the merchants of Mirecourt