

of agriculture rendered it no longer a profitable employment either for the boys or the women.¹² The trade passed from the manufacturers into the hands of the hawkers and petty dealers, who were too poor to purchase the finer points. The "lace postmen" once more travelled from house to house with their little leathern boxes, offering these inferior wares for sale.¹³ The art died out. In 1840 there were not more than six lace manufactories in Schleswig.

The old people, however, still believe in a good time coming. "I have in my day," said an aged woman, "sold point at four thalers an ell, sir; and though I may never do so again, my daughter will. The lace trade slumbers, but it does not die."

SWEDEN.

At a very early period, the Scandinavian goldsmith had learned to draw out wires of gold, and twine them round threads either of silk or flax—in fact, to "guiper" them.

Wadstena, where repose the remains of Queen Philippa of Lancaster, daughter of Henry IV., has been considered from time immemorial as the cradle of lace-making in Sweden. The art, according to tradition, was introduced among the nuns of the convent by their foundress, St. Bridget, on her return from Italy. As St. Bridget died in 1335, we may be allowed to question the fact: certain it is, though, the funeral coif of the saintess, as depicted in an ancient portrait said to have been taken at Rome after death, is ornamented with a species of perforated needlework.¹⁴ By the rules of the convent, the nuns of Wadstena were forbidden to touch either gold or silver, save in their netting and embroidery.

¹² "A lace-maker earns from 3½d. to 4½d. per day of sixteen hours."—*Rawert's Report*, 1848.

¹³ The Tönder lace traders enjoy the privilege of offering their wares for sale all over Denmark without a licence (concession), a privilege extended to no other industry.

¹⁴ The early perfection of Bridget herself in this employment, which, if we may credit the chronicle of the Abbess Margaretha, 1440–46, may be ascribed to a miraculous origin.

When, at the age of twelve, she was employed at her knitted lace work, a

fear came over her that she should not finish her work creditably to herself, and in her anxiety she raised her heart above. As her aunt came into the chamber, she beheld an unknown maiden sitting opposite to her niece, and aiding her in her task; she vanished immediately, and when the aunt asked Bridget who had helped her, she knew nothing about it, and assured her relation she had seen no one.

All were astonished at the fineness and perfection of the work, and kept the lace as of miraculous origin.