

followed upon statute, renewed for a number of years, bearing always the same expression, and nothing more definite.¹³

The Venetian galleys, at an early period, bore to England "apes, sweet wines," and other articles of luxury. They brought also the goldwork of "Luk," Florence, "Jeane," and Venice. In our early parliamentary records are many statutes on the subject. The Italians were in the habit of giving short lengths, gold thread of bad quality, and were guilty of sundry other peccadilloes, which greatly excited the wrath of the nation. The balance was not in England's favour:—

"Thei bare the gold out of this land
And sowkethe the thirfte out of our hande
As the waspe sowkethe the honey of the be."

It was these cheating Venetians who first brought over their gold lace into England, but it is not till the reign of Henry VII. that, according to Anderson, "Gold and thread lace came from Florence, Venice, and Genoa, and became an article of commerce. An act was then passed to prevent the buyers of such commodities from selling for a pound weight a packet which does not contain twelve ounces, and the inside of the said gold, silver, and thread lace was to be of equal greatness of thread and goodness of colour as the outside thereof."¹⁴

A warrant to the keeper of the great wardrobe, in the eighteenth year of King Henry's reign,¹⁵ contains an order for "a mauntel lace of blewe silk and Venys gold, to be delivered for the use of our right dere and well-beloved Cosyn the King of Romaine"—Maximilian, who was made knight of the Garter.¹⁶

If lace was really worn in the days of Henry VII., it was probably a braid or passement of gold or silk, as one of the last

¹³ 1 Rich. III. renews 3 Edw. IV. for ten years, and that of Richard is continued by 19 Henry VII. for twenty years more.

¹⁴ 4 Hen. VII. = 1488-9.

¹⁵ P. R. O. The same warrant contains an order to deliver "for the use of and wearing of our right dere daughter the Lady Mary," together with a black velvet gown, scarlet petticoat, &c., "a nounce of lace for her kyrtel," and a thousand "pynnes."

¹⁶ In the list of the late King Henry's

plate, made 1543, we have some curious entries in which the term lace appears:—

"Item, oone picture of a woman made of erthe with a carnacion Roobe knitt with a knott in the left shoulder and bare hedid with her heere rowlid up with a white lace sett in a boxe of wodde.

"Item, oone picture of a woman made of erthe with a carnacōn garment after the Inglishe tyer and bareheddid with her heere rowled up with a white lace sett in a box of wodde." P. R. O.