

assisted. It is related, also, that during her sojourn at Ampthill "she passed her time, when not at her devotions, with her gentlewomen, working with her own hands something wrought in needlework, costly and artificially, which she intended for the honour of God to bestow on some of the churches."<sup>3</sup>

"The country people," continues her contemporary, "began to love her exceedingly. They visited her out of pure respect, and she received the tokens of regard they daily showed her most sweetly and graciously." The love borne by the peasantry to the queen, the sympathy shown to her in her days of trouble and disgrace, most likely met with its reward; and we believe Katherine to have taught them an art which, aided, no doubt, by the later introduction of the pillow and the improvements of the refugees, has now, for the space of nigh three centuries, been the staple employment of the female population of Bedfordshire and the adjoining counties.<sup>4</sup> To this very day—though, like all such festivals in the present utilitarian age, gradually dying out, the lace-makers still hold "Cattern's day,"<sup>5</sup> the 25th November, as the holiday of their craft, kept, they say, "in memory of good Queen Katherine, who, when the trade was dull, burnt all her lace and ordered new to be made. The ladies of the court followed her example, and the fabric once more revived." "Ainsi s'écrit l'histoire," as the French say; and this garbled version may rest on as much foundation as most of the folk-lore current throughout the provinces.

Speaking of Bedfordshire, Defoe writes: "Thro' the whole south part of this country, as far as the borders of Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, the people are taken up with the manufacture of bone lace, in which they are wonderfully exercised and improved within these few years past,"<sup>6</sup>—probably since the

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Nicolas Harpsfield. Douay, 1622. (In Latin.)

Again we read that at Kimbolton "she plied her needle, drank her potions, and told her beads."—*Duke of Manchester, Kimbolton Papers.*

<sup>4</sup> Queen Katherine died 1536.

<sup>5</sup> A lady from Ampthill writes: "The feast of St. Katherine is no longer kept. In the palmy days of the trade, both old and young used to subscribe a sum of money and enjoy a good cup of Bohea

and cake, which they called 'Cattern' cake. After tea, they danced and made merry, and finished the evening with a supper of boiled stuffed rabbits smothered with onion sauce." The custom of sending about Cattern cakes was also observed at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, but the lace trade there is nearly extinct.

<sup>6</sup> "Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain," by a Gentleman. 3 vols. 1724-27. Several subsequent editions of