

Though a club of patriots had been formed in Ireland since the beginning of the eighteenth century, called the Dublin Society, they were not incorporated by charter until the year 1749; hence many of their records are lost, and we are unable to ascertain the precise period at which they took upon themselves the encouragement of the bone lace trade in Ireland. From their "Transactions" we learn that, so early as the year 1743, the annual value of the bone lace manufactured by the children of the workhouses of the city of Dublin amounted to 164*l.* 14*s.* 10½*d.*⁶ In consequence of this success, the society ordain that 34*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* be given to the Lady Arabella Denny, to distribute among the children, for their encouragement in making bone lace. Indeed, to such a pitch were the productions of the needle already brought in Ireland that in the same year, 1743, the Dublin Society gave Robert Baker, of Rollin Street, Dublin, a prize of 10*l.* for his imitation of Brussels lace ruffles, which are described as being most exquisite both in design and workmanship. This Brussels lace of Irish growth was much prized by the patriots.⁷ From this time the Dublin Society acted under their good genius, the Lady Arabella Denny. The prizes they awarded were liberal, and success attended their efforts.

In 1755, we find a prize of 2*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* awarded to Susanna Hunt, of Fishamble Street, aged eleven, for a piece of lace most extraordinarily well wrought. Miss Elinor Brereton, of Raheen-duff, Queen's County, for the best imitation of Brussels lace with the needle, 7*l.* On the same occasion, Miss Martha M'Culloch, of Cork Bridge, gains the prize of 5*l.* for "Dresden point." Miss Mary Gibson has 2*l.* for "Cheyne Lace,"⁸ of which we have scarcely heard mention since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

⁶ That lace ruffs soon appeared in Ireland may be proved by the effigy on a tomb still extant in the Abbey of Clonard, in which the Dillon arms are conspicuous, and also by paintings of the St. Lawrence family, cir. 1521, preserved at Howth Castle.

In the portrait at Muckruss of the Countess of Desmond, she is represented with a lace collar. It was taken, as stated at the back of the portrait, "as she appeared at the court of King James, 1614, and in y^e 140th year of her age." Thither she went to endeavour to reverse the attainer of her house.

⁷ At the end of the last century there lived at Creaden, near Waterford, a lady of the name of Power, lineal descendant of the kings of Munster, and called the Queen of Creaden. She affected the dress of the ancient Irish. The border of her coif was of the finest Irish-made Brussels lace; her jacket of the finest brown cloth, trimmed with gold lace; her petticoat of the finest scarlet cloth, bordered with a row of broad gold lace; all her dress was of Irish manufacture.

⁸ "Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack," by G. Watson, Dublin, 1757.