

taking down houses, and dust from streets. So also will certain perfumes, notably those of the rose and peach, and certain kinds of grass in flower.

These are, after all, causes that act in a mechanical way. Perfume of flowers is invisible, but it is none the less substantial in that it consists of the volatile oils of the fruits or flowers, mixed with the seed-dust or sporules, and these impinging on the mucous membrane of the air-passages, irritate them, and the complaint is set up. When I use the word "mechanical," it is to show that I attribute no poisonous character to the vegetable or other dust which produces hay asthma, although I do not deny that poison may exist in it.

But draughts of cold air alone will set up an attack of hay asthma in those subject to it. This would be determined by the greater amount of blood sent back upon the mucous membrane, during exposure to a current of cold air.

Well, now we have got so far on with our subject that, by knowing the causes of hay asthma, we know precisely what we must carefully avoid to prevent attacks. There is only one way of preventing any disease, and that is by removing the cause from ourselves, or removing ourselves from the cause.

People subject to hay asthma have therefore to avoid: 1. Exposure to dust of all kinds, for there is no saying what the particular kind of dust may be that brings on an attack—for that matter, it may be a combination. 2. Exposure of either face or body to currents of cold air. 3. The inhalation of perfumes of grass, or fruit, or flowers that are known to have a tendency to produce it. 4. Exposure to excess of heat, direct solar rays, or intensity of light.

The Symptoms.—I need not dwell on these. I am not writing for students, but for sufferers themselves, and alas! they know the symptoms better than any person could describe them. They are those of a terrible catarrh, lasting for weeks and weeks in the season, with irritation of all the air-passages, accompanied too often by actual paroxysms of asthma, which are distressing in the extreme.

Added to other symptoms, will be heat of forehead, often headache, and burning and suffusion of eyes. Enough said.

The Treatment.—Here lies the difficulty; the patient is constitutionally prone to attacks of the complaint. This is a difficulty which may seem insurmountable at first, but it is not so much so as it appears at first glance. For, to begin with, there are differences even in constitutional tendency. There is every degree of susceptibility to the complaint, from the highest to the lowest. Secondly, although I cannot help believing that, as in the case of "winter cough," one attack of hay asthma leaves the sufferer more subject to another, still that is no reason why he should not make a brave stand, even after he has had several, to obtain not only present relief, but future immunity; and, thirdly, in the very fact that some attacks are more severe than others, lies hope to the sufferer, for it should lead him to study well the apparent causes of each, and to avoid them. He may be able to say to himself, "That last attack of mine was terribly severe, but then I have to remember that my health, at the time it commenced, was certainly a little below par."

Well, here is one step in advance already, and the hint which I shall now put in words is implied in what I have already written. It is this: People subject to hay asthma cannot be too careful in keeping up their health-status. No need for me to tell them how to do this; they must, while carefully avoiding, as far as possible, well-known exciting causes, live by rule.

Here is another hint: While living by rule, they must avoid, in the intervals of their illnesses, taking many drugs. If one does really and truly live by rule, medicine of any kind is hardly, if ever, required. This is all I, or probably any one, can say about constitutional or preventive treatment; there is no prophylactic for hay asthma, that must be apparent to every one.

Treatment during an Attack.—Cut it short, if possible, by getting away *at once* from the neighbourhood where the attack took place.

There is no end to the medicines that have been tried, but I have only two that I should recommend in the intervals of attacks, namely, iron with quinine, and the solution of arsenic.

These I cannot give the doses of, for obvious reasons; but a duly qualified medical practitioner would prescribe according to circumstances.

FLEMISH LACE AND LACE-MAKERS.



BRUGES is a quaint old city, full of curious remains of the past, with irregular streets of pointed-gabled houses, no two alike in colour, size, or shape, everywhere intersected by canals, up and down which great barges move slowly along, drawn by men or boys, occasionally by a weather-beaten bare-footed woman; at every turn bridges meet the eye, and these resemble one another so much that it is most puzzling for strangers to find their way about. During the winter months a calm,

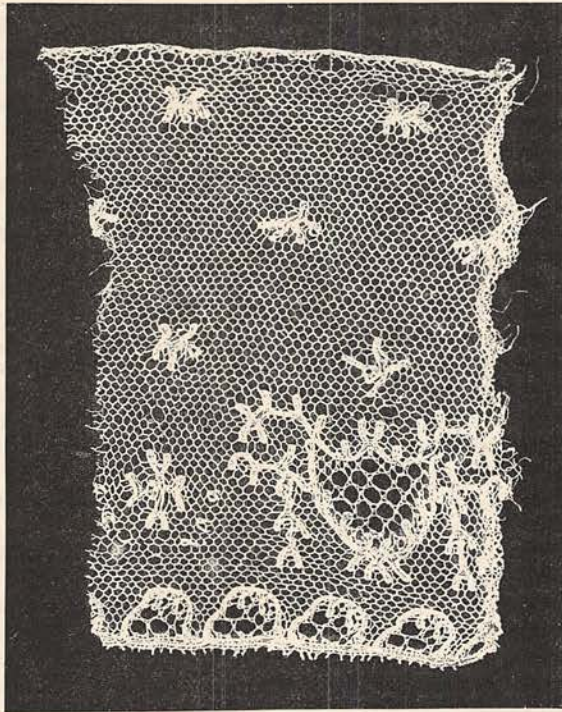
sleepy repose settles down on the city, but with the spring it wakens into life; its long straight avenues of poplar and lime trees don their delicate green garments; the gardens become gay with flowering shrubs; water-lilies, white and yellow, tall bulrushes, meadow-sweet, and forget-me-nots deck the wide canals, and all looks bright to welcome the influx of visitors from all parts of the world, who come to explore the ancient city, to gaze on the old pictures which it treasures, and the many objects of artistic value and interest to be found in it. Many of these visitors were attracted by the exhibition of ancient

and modern Flemish lace recently opened. It was specially designed to show the different kinds of lace formerly and now made in the Belgian cities, and to encourage the lace-makers by bringing their beautiful work before the public. The laces of Flanders have always been held in very high estimation; indeed, that country claims to have invented the fabric. Many varieties are special products of the Belgian towns, and, though closely imitated elsewhere, are nowhere brought to such perfection. The thread used in making the fine Brussels "Point à l'aiguille" is only made from flax grown in Brabant. It is spun in dark rooms underground, where the air is moist, and one single ray of light is allowed to enter, and fall directly on the thread being spun. So fine is it as almost to escape the sight, the worker being guided by the feel of the thread as it passes through her fingers. The lace industry seems to have been at its glory in Belgium in the sixteenth

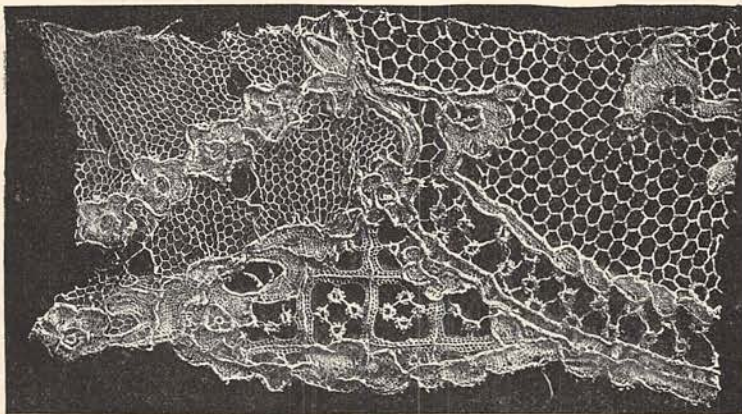
instance; and English lace was manufactured in the eighteenth century rivalling in beauty that of Flanders. The principal laces exhibited as those now made in

Belgium are Brussels Point, Valenciennes, Point Duchesse, and Torchon. Point Duchesse, called also "Point de Bruges," closely resembles Honiton, the style of pattern and ground being identical. The flowers are made on a perfectly round cushion separately, and are joined together afterwards by the same or another worker. The patterns are not so fine nor so closely worked as in Honiton generally; but there are some most exquisite specimens of this lace shown—notably small articles, such as fans, collars, fichus, &c., and a very handsome robe garniture mounted on crimson satin, consisting of flounces, a long train also forming drapery, and a long jabot.

These are quite equal to Honiton Point in fineness and beauty. This lace seems quite of modern make. There are no ancient specimens of it; it is essentially



VALENCIENNES D'YPRES.



POINT À L'AIGUILLE. (*Antique Brussels Needle Point.*)

and seventeenth centuries; and to Flanders, England owes much of her knowledge of lace-making, as the industry was introduced there from Belgium in the first

the lace of the present day in Bruges, and being handsome in appearance, durable, and exceedingly moderate in price, it is deservedly popular. The fine

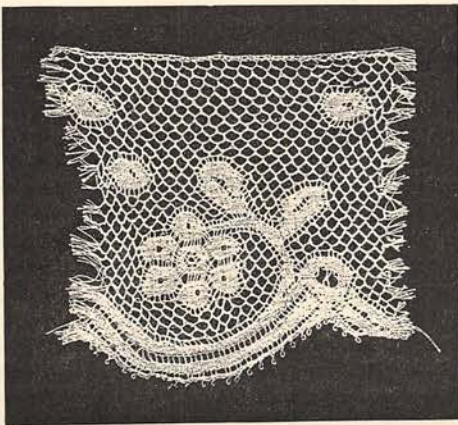
Brussels Point is too delicate a fabric for very useful wear, and from the great expense of making it, the fineness of the thread, the many hands through which it has to pass—each spray requiring several different workers to fill in the different stitches it contains—it must always remain a costly fabric; except when ordered specially it is seldom made of any width, the cost being so great. There are some lovely fans, and a most exquisite piece of flouncing, about four inches wide, of this lace, shown, with the lovely raised flowers which give such a rich effect to it. There are many pieces of antique lace of this kind shown; the ground in these seems to surpass the modern in fineness. But the raised work appears to be a special feature in the modern Brussels, adding greatly to the solidity and handsome appearance of the lace. Mechlin or Malines lace is of quite a different texture; the old specimens are most lovely. There are many dated from the middle of the eighteenth century. The very fine ground with the delicate floral pattern, run on with a flat thread, gives to this lace almost the appearance of embroidery; in former times it was much sought after in France and England, but there seems little demand for it now, and it is consequently but little made. Valenciennes seems now more generally made than the other laces in the towns of Belgium, and each town has its own special variety, easily discovered by a worker, who from examining the ground can always name the town in which a piece of Valenciennes has been made. That of Ypres is held in the highest estimation; the ground is formed of clear distinct squares, upon which the close work of the spray or pattern is beautifully shown in relief. An immense number of bobbins are required in making this lace, the meshes acquiring their beauty and clearness from the number of times the bobbins are twisted. The Valenciennes made in



A FLEMISH LACE-MAKER.

Bruges and Ghent have a round-meshed ground, in which fewer twists are used, and are not so valuable as those of Ypres and Courtrai. Binche lace is also now made in Brussels, and some most lovely pieces of it, both ancient and modern, are shown; it is a kind of Valenciennes, but the most exquisitely fine and cobweb-like of all lace, the whole ground being covered with fine, close, flowery or geometric patterns.

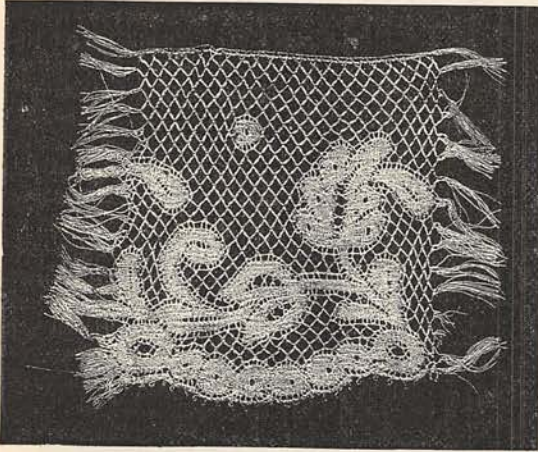
Among the exhibits contributed by a gentleman of Bruges were some old lace cushions and some quaint ancient lace-trimmed caps marked as "Kanten Pracht Muts" (1740). Can this be the origin of the "mutch," the cap worn by the women in Ross-shire? As they also wear the long black hooded cloak, identical in shape, make, and material with the "manteau à capuchon," worn by all the bourgeois in Bruges, and nowhere else, it would be interesting to know how and when these two articles of dress were introduced into the North of Scotland. The two ancient "muts" are trimmed with beautiful old lace, and one has peculiar and curious ear-flaps. Some of the old peasant-women wear exactly the same at this day. The coarse but strong and useful lace called Torchon is much made in Bruges, also thick Guipure; and in some parts of the town, at every door one may see women and girls busy at their lace cushions, throwing the bobbins about with the most wonderful rapidity, and chanting in harsh, guttural voices, an anything but musical accompaniment to their labours. The pattern is pricked on a strip of green parchment or stiff material, and given



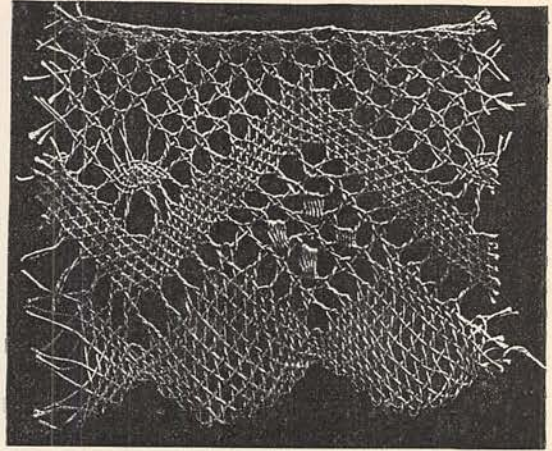
VALENCIENNES DE BRUGES.

to the worker, who finds her own thread, and, when finished, returns it to her employer. Not less than five

rather than to spend large sums of money on costly fabrics which, in a few months, may be no longer in



ANTIQUE MECHLIN.



TORCHON.

aunes is bought by the shops, but lace can always be had from the workers direct at a very moderate price. Black Guipure and black Brussels lace are also made; the latter is very delicate and beautiful. The cushion and bobbins in use now are the same in form as those used in the seventeenth century. The cushion is nearly square, and has two drawers, one into which the piece of lace is put as it is gradually worked off the cushion, and the other for spare bobbins and pins. A small soft cushion is fastened at the top for pins, and a movable piece fits in, which can be used to lengthen the cushion as the worker may require.

The lace-workers complain sadly that their industry is failing in value, that little money can now be made at it; the markets are so flooded by imitation machine-made laces of great beauty, and the fashion as to the make of lace to be worn each season changes so continually, that people—except for very special occasions—prefer to purchase what is cheap and fashionable

vogue. It is to be hoped that good results may follow the effort which has been made to bring the beautiful cushion and hand-made laces of Belgium into notice, as the industry is one which deserves constant and substantial support. The women earn their living in the shelter of home, the materials required are of small value, every spare moment is taken advantage of, the girls and women being most industrious; domestic servants frequently have a lace-cushion upon which they make lace for sale, if they have any time at their disposal. And the making of the ordinary qualities of Valenciennes and Torchon does not seem to affect the eyesight injuriously, as one constantly sees very ancient-looking crones throwing their bobbins about as quickly as the young maidens beside them.

I must here acknowledge, with thanks, my indebtedness to Mrs. Palliser's charming "History of Lace" for several of the facts I have mentioned in this little sketch.

S. R. T.

A FAIR CANOEIST.

EASY, Jim, let go!" says the stalwart chief boatman of H.M. coastguard-station at Bridlington Quay to his mate, as they lower the *Clytie* down from their shoulders on to the yellow sand, where the long rollers break in lines of sparkling foam. "I am afraid, miss, you will get a bit of a wetting going through there," he adds, nodding towards the waves, as he tucks the macintosh apron carefully round the well combing of the canoe, and over the white flannel dress of Skipper Adeline.

"Oh, I can manage them, Barker. Thanks. All right—push off!"

A vigorous heave, and the little ship is afloat and the paddle dips readily, whilst the two coastguardsmen stand to watch how she will ride through the broken water, and good-humouredly look for a white curling surf to break suddenly over the sharp bows. But the fayre pilot is a right skilful one—a pair of bright eyes see each comber as it rushes shoreward, and nimble firm little hands wield the paddle consummately.

"Back a couple of strokes"—"Easy!"—"Go ahead!"—"Pull port-hand!"—"Easy starboard!" The blue-monogrammed blades flash and dip, now slowly—now vigorously, and the wee barkie glides down across the back of the last wavelet, having