POINT LACE WORK.

There appears to be no limit to the display of taste and ingenuity in the art of needlework, and as a grateful occupation for young girls and women, either as a source of more amusement or profitable employment, point-lace work must be hailed with pleasure.

The antiquity of fancy needlework has been often quoted and proved, and when we remember the difficulties under which our ancestors laboured, we cannot but wonder and admire the skill and perseverance we discover in the works of art now so often to be seen in our exhibition. If we remember that before 1545 needles were obliged to be procured from abroad, and that the first manufactory in England was established in 1566, we shall not be surprised to hear that the loss of one of these useful little articles—then in a very different form to our present fine and varied needles—was looked upon as a real misfortune.

How little do our careless needlewomen, young and old, who so constantly cry, "Oh, there! I have lost my needle," and as heedlessly turn to their housewives, so as not to lose time, as they say, in searching for the missing piece of steel, and so encourage a species of waste and extravagance—how little, I say, do they consider the advantages they derive from the wonderful progress of needlework arising from the manufacture of the needle, threads, silks of all kinds, as well as the material on which their embroidery may be displayed, nor the great assistance our artists are giving in their beautiful and clear designs! If the use of the needle has lost much of its "cunning," since it was the fashion for ladies to sit with their maidens for hours at their embroidery frames, the advance in the designs and truthful delineation of flower and figure has wonderfully progressed, and in this particular alone much aid has been given to the careful worker.

The present fashion for point lace in all its varieties offers a splendid opportunity for the display of taste and beauty, either in its finer forms for ornaments on dress, or in the coarser qualities, as decorations in almost endless ways.

The work is so pleasant when once mastered that we are sure our young friends will thank us if we can give them some simple rules concerning it.

In the first place we would advise the procuring a piece of dark blue or green firm cotton (not glazed), to form a sampler for the patterns of the different stitches. It should be about a quarter of an inch square, or a narrower and longer piece, hemmed all round. This is to be covered with a Honiton braid, with open edge, in squares of about an inch and a-half or two inches; care must be taken to fix the braid firmly, to keep it from stretching. The better plan is to darn the cotton up and down the centre of the braid in vandykes. The size of the lace, needles, and Mecklenburg thread will depend on the quality of the work in hand.

For working patterns a medium-size thread should be used, as the stitches can be more easily shown and copied when not very fine.

The designs which we have been carefully drawn from actual work; we therefore hope that they will be found very useful as a beginning to the learner; and empty spaces on the "sampler" can be filled in, as from time to time other patterns are given. The groundwork or first and most simple stitch in "point lace" is the point de Bruxelles, and is formed by a succession of stitches passing the needle through one of the points, or open edge, with the thread held down as for a button-hole stitch, and leaving a small loop between each stitch.

Of course, the beauty of the work greatly depends upon the evenness with which the stitches are made.

No. 1 will show the method of working this stitch. The work is commenced from left to right, and then backward and forward.

No. 2 is used for veins in leaves, or narrow openings. The thread is simply carried along in herring-bone stitch, if the space is small.

No. 3 is a larger description of leaf or space, and is first worked down one side in simple point de Bruxelles, and after turning the corner the thread is taken to the opposite side, and worked round three or four times, forming a cable or firm bar.

No. 4 is called the knotted stitch. The illustration clearly indicates the manner of working it. The thread, when turned round the needle, is held close by the thumb on the left hand before drawing the needle through.

No. 9 is the point bord; stitch. It is worked from the left to the right side in point de Bruxelles, and then the thread carried back beneath the first row, and worked in with every stitch on the next row.

No. 6. Commence the same as No. 5, forming a knot or cross-stitch. The needle is passed through the loop and under the 3d as shown in illustration.

No. 7, point filet. Put the needle through a point, and pass the thread once round the needle before drawing it through; return in same manner.

No. 8. Point dentelle is worked the same as point de Bruxelles, excepting that a second stitch is placed in each loop.
over one and under the other thread of the van- 
dyke a sufficient number of times to reach mid-
way, keeping the lines very close together; then 
carry the thread round the upper part of the 
foundation, and fasten it to the bridle, work-
ing downwards for the upper cone.

No. 11 is the "wheel" pattern, a very 
useful stitch for filling in round spaces. Make 
a line across in a straight direction and work 
back to centre by twisting the thread several 
times round the bar, then form the other seven 
bars in the same manner: finish them with a 
stitch in the centre. The close spider web in 
the middle is made by passing the needle over 
and under each bar until the width required 
is worked.

This lace is specially suitable for the large 
collars and cuffs worn with velvet costumes 
at the present time: broad and narrow laces 
for trimmings, for coverings for mantle shelf 
hangings, and bands over some bright 
coloured lining for the edges of fancy table-
covers are among the many uses to which this 
elegant work can be applied.

We hope to give patterns for the different 
styles in some future number of "Our Work 
Basket."

STORIES IN MINIATURE.

A WEDDING IN HIGH LIFE.

When young Colin, Earl of Balcarras, had won for his 
bride a charming Dutch lady, Mauritia de Nassau. 
The wedding day arrived, a noble party were as-
sembled at the church, and the bride was waiting 
for the bridgroom; but, 
to the dismay of the com-
pany, no bridgroom appeared.

Colin, who was a volatile youth, had quite 
forgotten the day of his marriage, and was 
discovered at home in his dressing-gown and 
slippers, quietly eating his breakfast.

Thus far the tale is comical enough, but many a 
tear has been shed at its conclusion. Colin 
hurried to the church, but in his haste left the 
ring in his writing-case. A friend in the 
company gave him one, the ceremony went 
on, and without looking at it he placed the 
ring on the finger of his fair young bride. It 
was a mourning ring, with a death's head and 
cross-bones.

On perceiving it at the close of 
the ceremony the bride fainted 
away, and the evil omen made 
such an impression on her mind 
that on recovering she declared she 
should die within the year, and her 
presentment was too truly fulfilled.

THE LOST RING.

Of all extraordinary stories regarding 
the loss and recovery of rings —and there are some extraordinary ones, and well authenti-
cated—none can equal the following is the 
strange we have ever met with:—

A servant boy was once sent into a country town with a valuable ring. 
He took it out of his pocket, and, as passing over a plank bridge it let fall on a 
meadow bank. Not being able to find it, he 
ran away, took to sea, finally settled in a 
colony, made a large fortune, came back 
after many years, and bought the estate on 
which he had been servant.

One day, while walking over his land with a 
friend, he came to the plank bridge, and there 
told his friend the story.

"Why, friend," said he, pushing his stick 
into the mud, "this is the very spot on which 
the ring dropped."

When the stick came back the ring was on 
of the end of it.

AN AFFAIR OF THE HEART.

When Theodore Hook was once travelling 
by coach there were but two inside passengers —a very pretty, very delicate-looking young 
lady, attended by a homely-looking maid.

The coach stopped for twenty minutes to 
allow of dinner. Hook returned first to his 
place; the maid next. During the absence 
of her young mistress Hook said to her in 
a tone of great sympathy—

"Your young lady seems very unwell?"

"Yes, sir, she suffers sadly."

"Consumption, I should fear?"

"No, sir, I am sorry to say it is the heart."

"Dear me! Anæmia?"

"Oh, no, sir! It is only a lieutenant in 
the navy."

It was an illness from which she would 
potentially recover.

THE KING OF THE CATS.

Sir Walter Scott used to tell a story 
about a gudiman who was returning to his 
occaige one night, when, in a lonely, out-
of-the-way place, he met with a funeral proces-
sion of cats, all in mourning, bearing one of 
their race to the grave, in a coffin covered with 
a black velvet pall.

The worthy man, astonished and half 
frightened at so strange a pageant, hastened 
home, and told his wife and children what he 
had seen, when a great black cat that sat 
beside the fire raised himself up, explaining:—

"Then am I king of the cats!" and vanished 
up the chimney.

The funeral scene by the gudiman was that 
of one of the cat dynasty.

On this occasion Sir Walter would add, 
"I am inclined to treat my cat with great 
respect, from the idea that he may be a prince 
ming, and may some day or other fall heir to 
the throne."

THE VALIANT KNIGHT AND THE SLEEP-
WALKING LADY.

In the olden time a knight who loved a lady at 
Greystoke, on the Lake of Ullswater, went forth 
to win renown. He succeeded in making him-
self famous, but he was so long of it, and, 
the lady heard so much of his deeds in 
behalf of distressed damsels, that doubts at 
length stole into her heart as to whether he 
still loved her.

These doubts disturbed her mind and she 
was to walk in her sleep, directing her 
steps towards a waterfall where she and 
the knight used to sit. Under a holy 
holly-tree beside the full they had plighted their 
ereas. This was the limit of her dreaming 
walks.

The knight at last returned to claim her. 
Arriving in the night, he went to the ravine 
to rest under the holly, until morning should 
permit him to knock at the gate of the tower; 
but he saw a gliding white figure among the 
trees, and this figure reached the holly before 
him, and plucked twigs from the tree and 
threw them into the stream.

Was it the ghost of her lady or was it herself? 
She stood in a dangerous place. He put 
out his hand to save her, as he thought, from 
failing. The touch awakened her. In her 
terror and confusion she slipped from his 
grip into the torrent, and was carried down 
the ravine. He followed and rescued her, 
but then, finding upon the banks, nothing 
but holly twigs, he had only, having fully understood that her lover was 
true, and had come to claim her.

The knight devoted the rest of his days to 
mourning his lost beauty; he built a cell upon 
the spot, and became a recluse for her sake.

BETWIXT THE CUP AND THE LIP.

There is a well-known proverb, "There's 
many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." This 
proverb comes to you from the Greek, and 
has a very striking story connected with it.

A man had a number of slaves, who were 
occupied in planting and otherwise cultivation 
with extreme cruelty. At last one of them, the 
most ill-used, prophesied that for his severity 
he should never drink of his wine.

When the last vintage was completed, the 
master bade this slave fill a goblet for him, 
and tasted him with the non-fulfilment of his 
prophesy.

The other replied with the words which have 
since become proverbial. As he spoke, tidings 
were hastily brought of a huge wild bear that 
was devastating the country. Not hesitating, the 
cup, the master went out to meet the wild 
beast, and was slain in the encounter. Thus 
the proverb arose.

THE SECRET OF PERFECTION.

All our girls are striving after perfection, 
each in her separate calling, so here is a short 
story for every one to lay to heart.

A friend once called on Michael Angelo, 
one of the greatest geniuses Italy has ever 
produced, and found him finishing a statue. 
Some time afterwards he called again; the 
sculptor was still at work. His friend, looking 
at the figure, exclaimed:

"You have been very idle since I saw you 
last."

"By no means," replied Michael Angelo. 
"I have retouched this part and polished that; 
I have softened this feature and brought out 
that muscle; I have given greater expression 
to the thought and more energy to that limb. 
"Well, well," said his friend, "but these 
are trifles."

"It may be so," answered Angelo, "but 
remember that trifles unite into perfection, and 
that perfection is no trifle."

The beautiful legs of a woman, the 
roundness of a child, the curves of a 
ergy of a body, the form of a vase, 
ne of an emblem, all have a meaning, 
are symbols of the life they symbolize. 
"THE HUMAN SPIRIT."