

A COLLECTION OF LACE PRE-
SENTED BY MRS. MAGDA-
LENA NUTTALL

IN the limited space of the BULLETIN, it is impossible to give more than a general idea of the scope of the important collection of lace recently presented to the Museum by Mrs. Magdalena Nuttall, of Tunbridge Wells, England.

Some thirty-two countries are represented, covering an area extending from the Orient to England, from Norway south to Madagascar, and from Mexico and Yucatan south to Brazil and Paraguay. By this gift the Museum collection is at once placed on an equal footing with many foreign museums in the beauty and variety of its examples and the number of countries represented.

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The collection as a whole numbers 984 pieces, of which 308 are Italian, 214 French and Flemish, 110 English and Irish; the remainder, varying from groups of 50 to individual pieces, illustrating the development of the art of other countries. There are also three pillows for making lace and a collection of twenty-two bobbins.

The Italian specimens, which are especially interesting, show great variety in the different classes. Among the most beautiful may be mentioned a chalice veil of Venetian needlepoint, *punto in aria figurato*, showing, in the central ornament, Christ figured as the Good Shepherd; a square collar and several bands of *punto in aria* dating about 1600, and a handkerchief with insertions of *reticella* in thirty-two different designs; also an exquisitely fine bit of *point de Venise à réseau*, by some classified as *Argentella*. Nor are examples of *filet* lacking; of this there are many patterns, in color and white, quite different from those already in the Museum collection. There are also a number of rare pieces of *buratto*, two with patterns of cherubs' heads and curious horned animals, and others equally interesting and unique in design. Especially beautiful is a sixteenth-century cutwork embellished with *punto reale* and *punto riccio*, and the drawnwork with its grotesque figures. But one of the greatest charms of the Italian section is its variety of early bobbin laces illustrating the work of the different provinces. Milan, with its cultured women of the Renaissance, was famous for the beauty of its bobbin lace, the charming scroll designs with *brides* suggesting the needlepoint of Venice. Genoa, also noted for its pillow lace, is represented by bands of graceful geometric ornament, lace with rounded points, and a table cover bordered with a design of pointed leaves in *punto di Ragusa*, of which the Museum has heretofore had no example. Most interesting is the work from Siena and the Abruzzi; the *punta avorio* from the Val Vogna and neighboring valleys; the drawnwork from the shores of the Adriatic; the dainty needle-

point edgings in colored silk from Ragusa; the work of Greece and the many islands of the Mediterranean, while Spain is represented, among other things, by a splendid bedspread of *filet*.

With the French lace, as with that of Italy, no pains have been spared to make the collection representative, and examples of the work from many outlying districts show how thoroughly the donor understood the fundamental principles of a perfect collection. The needlepoints, especially the Alençon, are charming examples of the best period; the Argentan is also well represented. The bobbin laces, among which is a peasant's cap, delightful in its suggestion of rural simplicity, can but be mentioned.

Passing to the Flemish, there are many pieces deserving of more than a passing notice; one, an unusual piece with a *réseau* resembling that of Tondern lace, has for its central *motif* a crowned figure bearing a globe beneath a baldachino supported by birds. Two others, unique examples of *pollen kant*, may also be mentioned: one of the seventeenth century with a stilted design of flowerpots, the other of later date with a central vase of tulips between two alighting birds.

Turning to England and Ireland, the specimens shown are in every way representative of the work of the different sections, as is the case in Germany, Austria, and Russia. Constantinople sends a harem veil, while Jerusalem is represented by a single example.

The lace is displayed in Gallery 34, which has been redecorated and rearranged to receive the collection.

Mrs. Magdalena Nuttall, to whom the Museum is indebted for this important gift, has resided for many years abroad. She is the widow of Robert Kennedy Nuttall, for a long time a resident of San Francisco, and is the mother of Mrs. Zelia Nuttall, one of our Honorary Fellows for Life, who has resided for many years in Mexico, and who has frequently given valuable assistance to the Museum. F. M.