

CHAPTER VIII.

MACHINE-MADE LACE AND EMBROIDERY.

Practically all lingerie made in the United States is embellished with machine-made lace or embroidery. The brief of the National Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Association submitted to the Committee on Ways and Means in 1913 said that 85 per cent of the laces and embroideries used in the United States for embellishing muslin underwear was manufactured abroad.¹ Manufacturers who were interviewed during this investigation estimated that, of the lace used on lingerie made in the United States, from 25 to 40 per cent was of domestic manufacture, and that of the embroidery so used from 5 to 15 per cent was domestic.

Practically all of the lace used in lingerie is made on Levers or Gothrough machines. Both of these machines are large and complicated and vary according to size from 22,000 to 26,000 pounds in weight. The original Levers machine (also spelled Lever and Leavers) was invented in 1809 by an Englishman named Heathcote and was improved by John Levers, of Nottingham. The Gothrough machine is so called because it does not have the "lean bars" that the original machine has, but the "levers go through without lean bars," a phrase that can scarcely be understood unless the machine is seen. The Levers machine makes lace from 146 to 156 inches wide. The Gothrough machine has a larger capacity, as its movements are quicker and it produces lace of greater width, in some cases 222 inches wide. In lace made on these machines, the pattern is repeated many times, and the widths are clipped by hand into strips. If lace 2 inches in width is to be constructed on a machine 222 inches wide, it is made in 111 strips simultaneously, each strip being an exact duplicate of the other.

The duty on cotton, linen, and silk lace and embroidery was 60 per cent ad valorem under the tariff act of 1890; 50 per cent under the act of 1894; 60 per cent under the act of 1897; 60 per cent under the act of 1909 (except that the duty on lace made on Levers or Gothrough machines was 70 per cent); and 60 per cent under the act of 1913.

MANUFACTURE OF LACE IN THE UNITED STATES.

By the tariff acts of 1890, 1894, 1897, and 1909, the duty on machinery for making laces and embroidery was 45 per cent ad valorem, but under a clause in the act of 1909 no duty was charged on embroidery machines and Levers or Gothrough lace-making machines imported into this country for a period of about 15 months. Between August 5, 1909, and January 1, 1911, lace and embroidery machinery to the value of \$2,946,919 was imported free. The provision for the free entry of machinery during this time and the increase of the duty on lace made on the Levers or Gothrough machines from 60 to 70 per

¹ Tariff Schedules: Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, 1913, p. 3942.