

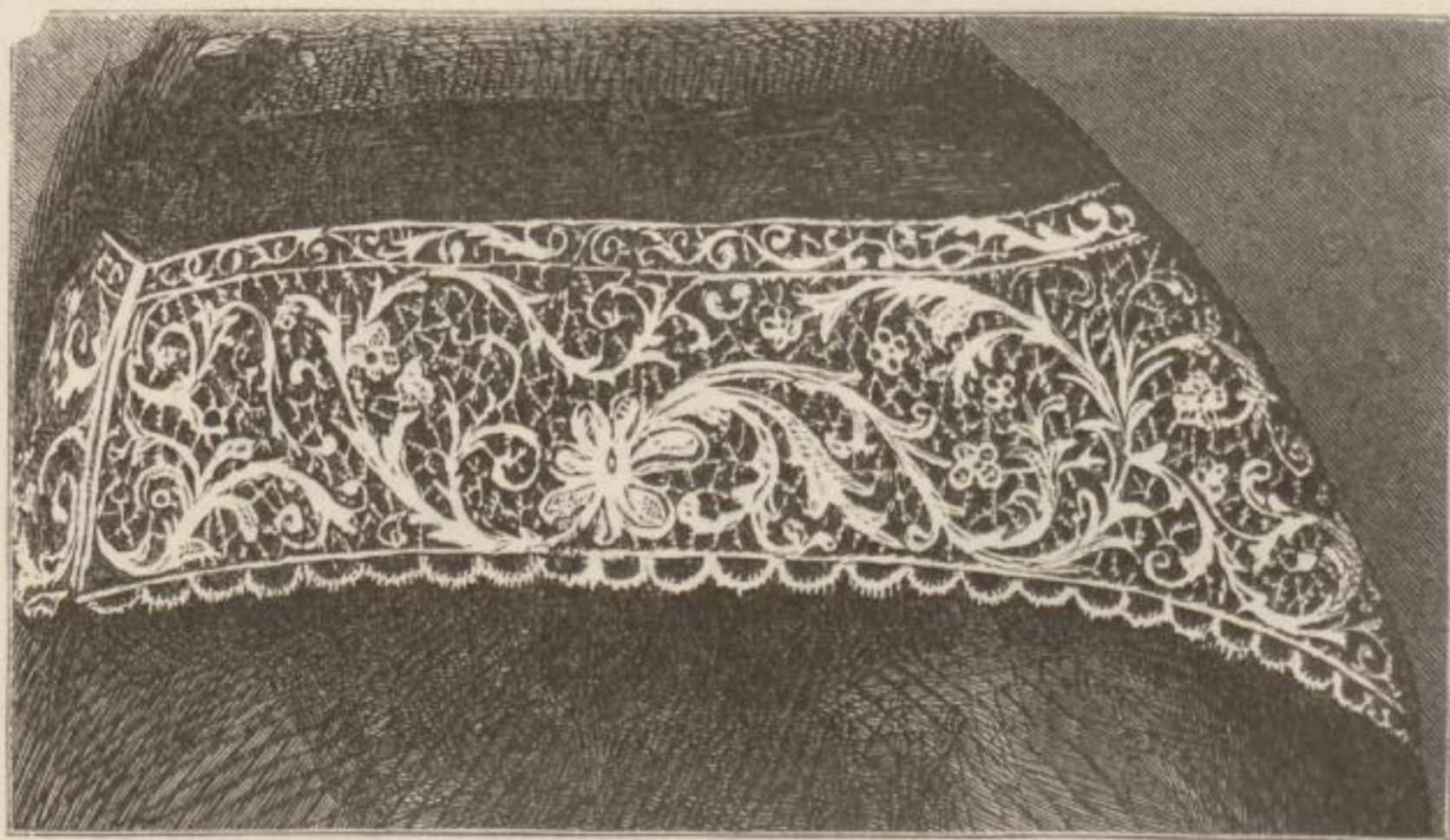
Paultre, dated 1676, is entitled "Dame en déshabille de chambre" (Fig. 68).

"La France est la tête du monde" (as regards fashion), says Victor Hugo, "cyclope dont Paris est l'œil;" and writers of all ages, whether prose or poet, seem to have been of the same opinion. It was about the year 1680 that the

"Mode féconde en mille inventions,
Monstre, prodige étrange et difforme,"

was suddenly exemplified in France.

Fig. 67.



Madame de Maintenon, - From her portrait, Musée Nationale, Versailles.

All readers of this great reign will recall to mind the story of the "Fontanges." How in the hurry of the chase the locks of the royal favourite becoming dishevelled by the wind, the fair huntress hurriedly tying the lace kerchief, with a ribbon that bound them, round her head, produced, in one moment, a coiffure so light, so artistic, that Louis XIV., enchanted, prayed her to retain it for that night at court. The lady obeyed the royal command. The ribbon mixed with lace, now worn for the first time, caused a sensation, and the next day all the ladies of the court appeared "coiffées à la Fontange." (See Madame de Lude, Fig. 70.)

But this head-dress, with its tiers of point mounted on wires,¹⁹

¹⁹ "La Fontange altièrè."—Boileau.