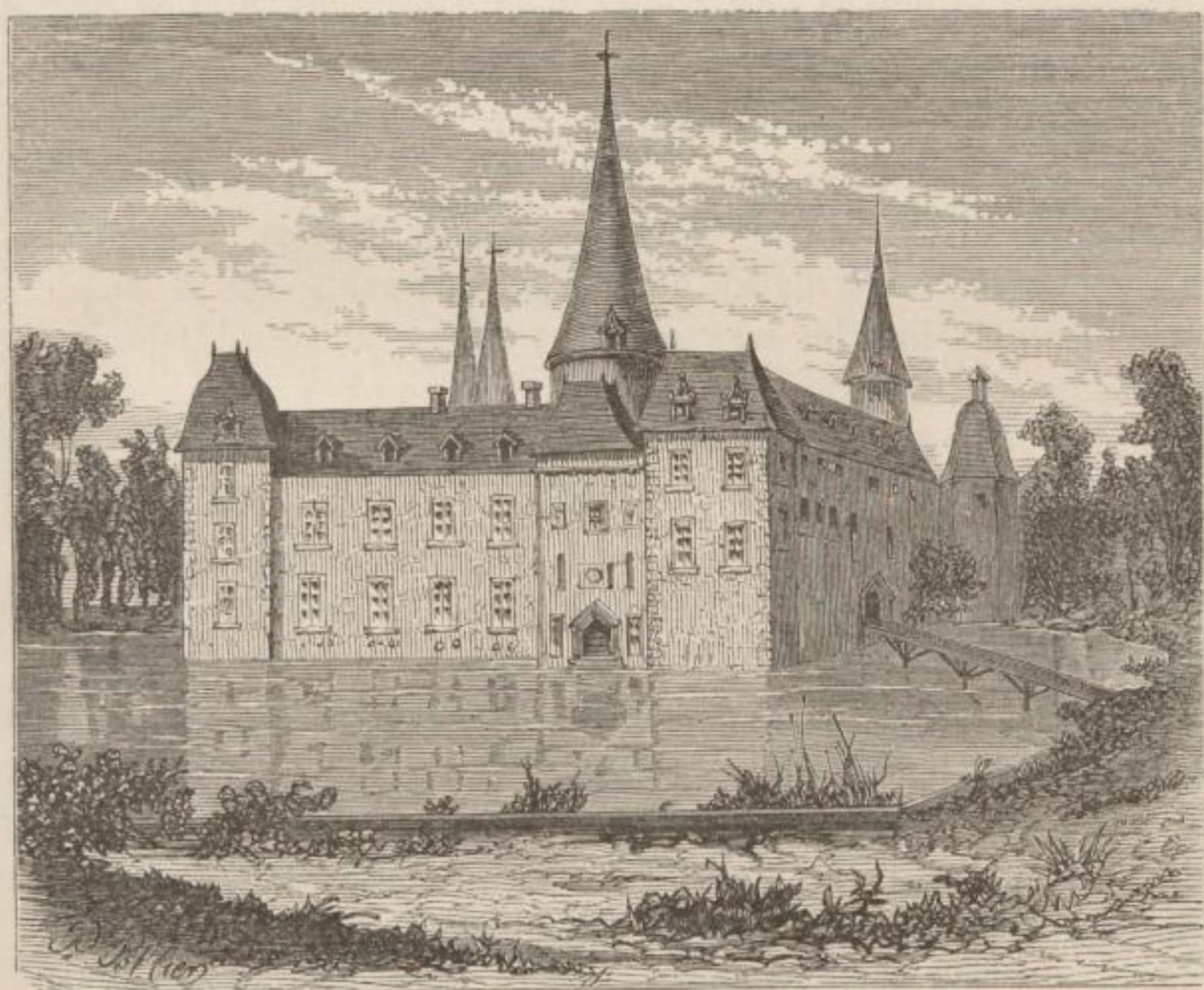


first specimens of her fabric: the king, inspired by Colbert with a desire to see the work, during supper at Versailles, announced to his courtiers he had just established a manufacture of point more beautiful than that of Venice, and appointed a day when he would inspect the specimens. The laces were artistically arranged over the walls of a room hung with crimson damask and shown to the best advantage. The king expressed himself delighted. He ordered a large sum to be given to Madame Gilbert, and desired that no other lace should appear at court except the new fabric, upon which he bestowed the name of "point de France."¹

Fig. 78.



Château of Lonray, Dép. de l'Orne.

Scarcely had Louis retired than the courtiers eagerly stripped the room of its contents. The approval of the monarch was the fortune of Alençon; point de France adopted by court etiquette, the wearing of it became compulsory. All who had the privilege of the "casaque bleue,"—all who were received at Versailles, or were attached to the royal household, could only appear, the ladies in trimmings and head-dresses, the gentlemen in cravat and ruffles, of the royal manufacture.

¹ "Mémoires historiques sur la ville d'Alençon." M. Odillon Desnos. Alençon, 1787.