

The "treille"¹⁸ was finer in the last century; but, in 1803, the price of thread having risen 30 per cent.,¹⁹ the lace-makers, unwilling to raise the prices of their lace, adopted a larger treille, in order to diminish the quantity of thread required.

The straight edge and stiff pattern of the old Lille lace is well known (Fig. 97).

The laces of Lille, both black and white, have been much used in France: though Madame Junot speaks disparagingly of the fabric,²⁰ the light clear ground rendered them especially adapted for summer wear.

They found great favour also in England, into which country one-third of the lace manufactured throughout the Département du Nord was smuggled in 1789.²¹ The broad black Lille lace has always been specially admired, and was extensively used to trim the long silk mantles of the last century.²²

In 1788 there were above 16,000 lace-makers at Lille, and it made 120,000 pieces²³ of lace, representing a value of more than 160,000*l.* In 1851 the number of lace-makers was reduced to 1600; it is still gradually diminishing, from the competition of the fabric of Mirecourt and the numerous other manufactures established at Lille, which offers more lucrative wages than can be obtained by lace-making.

The old straight-edged is no longer made, but the rose pattern of the Mechlin is adopted, and the style of that lace copied: the semé of little square dots (points d'esprit) on the ground—one of the characteristics of Lille lace—is still retained. In 1862 the author saw at Lille a complete garniture of beautiful workmanship, ordered for a trousseau at Paris, but the commercial crisis and the revolutions of 1848 virtually put an end to the lace industry of Lille and Arras.

¹⁸ See page 108, note ⁵⁹.

¹⁹ In 1782, thread was 192 francs the kilogramme.

²⁰ Describing her trousseau, every article of which was trimmed with Angleterre, Malines, or Valenciennes, she adds: "A cette époque (1800), on igno-rait même l'existence du tulle, les seules dentelles communes que l'on connût étaient les dentelles de Lille et d'Arras, qui n'étaient portées que par les femmes les plus ordinaires."—*Mém. de Madame la*

Duchesse d'Abrantès, t. iii. Certainly the laces of Lille and Arras never appear in the inventories of the "grandes dames" of the last century.

²¹ Dieudonné.

²² Peuchet states much "fausse Valenciennes, très-rapprochée de la vraie," to have been fabricated in the hospital at Lille, in which institution there were, in 1723, 700 lace-workers.

²³ A piece of Lille lace contains from 10 to 12 ells.