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VENETIAN LACE

It so happens that, here and there, despite war, pillage and the ravages of time, a piece of old lace has survived the centuries. Those who love beautiful things seek out and collect these master-pieces of a bygone age.

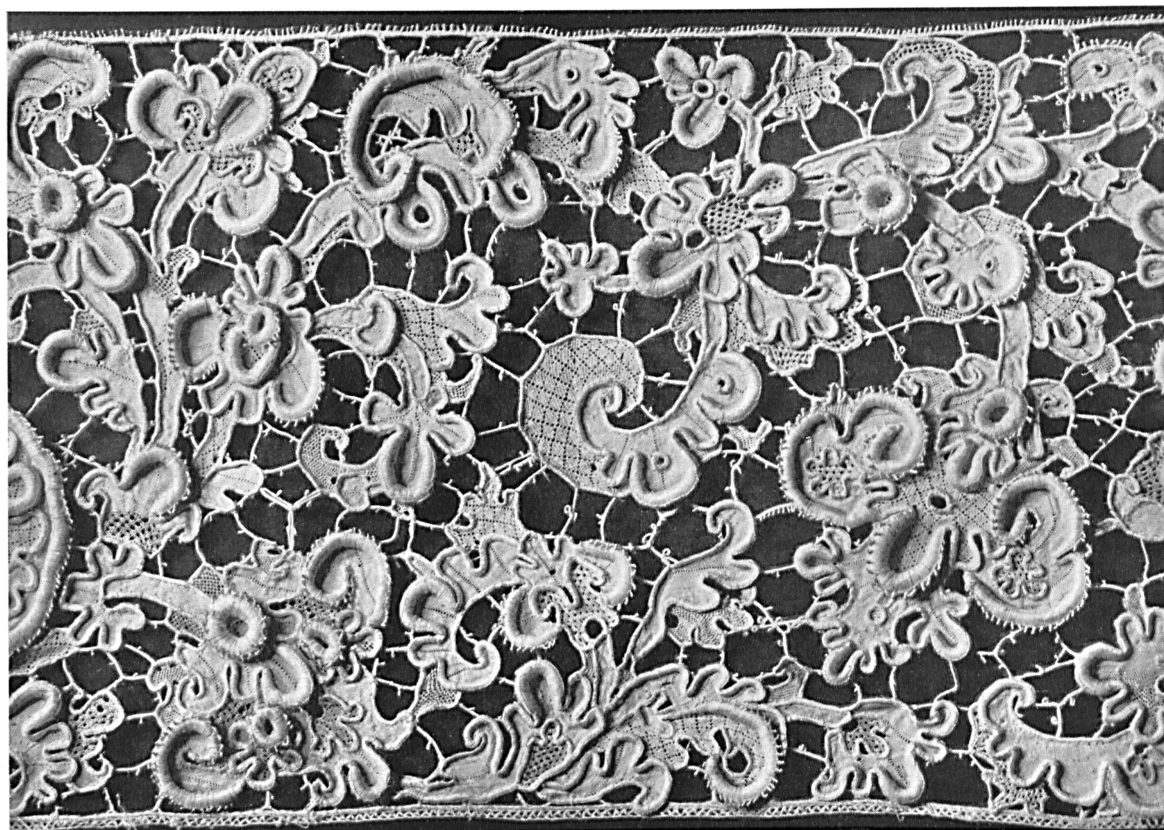
Of all lace, whatever their period or origin, Venetian is still the most beloved.

Early in the XVIIIth century, this dainty work was in great vogue, not only in Venice and Italy, but also in France, and the fashion was so widespread that, to restrict importation, the Government levied prohibitive duties on Venetian lace. This was playing into the hands of smugglers who did not fail to derive great material benefit from this illegal trade; fashionable women of the time were not the only ones to love lace, for their menfolk wore elegant jabots and cuffs and even used the dainty fabric to ornament their headgear.

Venetian lace-making was later introduced in France, Spain, England and Germany, each country adapting the technique to the divers raw materials at its disposal and to the national taste. Here the graceful scrolls of the Renaissance period were rendered more austere; there they became flatter and more delicate in the Point de Rose or, under the influence of Flemish taste and bobbin lace patterns, were transformed into what is called « flat » Venetian lace or Point de France.

The art of needlework has always been admired whatever the period and today it seems to have come into its own again. In post-war Paris, young women make lace even in the « Metro ». Swiss embroiderers and lace-makers are famed for their work and the product of their skill has never lost its vogue. At the moment, however, Venetian lace is being produced in Eastern Switzerland by the chemical process called « etching ». Swiss craftsmen — and women — are never content merely to copy the patterns created in the past; they know that imitations can so often be servile and lacking in originality. On the contrary, in their creations they do their utmost to strike a new, personal note, to produce an unexpected variety of patterns, a touch of modernity, even though the original inspiration springs from famous models. This is certainly the most effective way of keeping a craft in touch with things.

M.-O. Z.



A magnificent sample of Venetian lace made towards the end of the XVIIIth century. Iklé Collection, Arts and Crafts Museum, St-Gall. (Photo by Hegg, St-Gall).



JEANNE LANVIN

Robe noire d'après-midi, col et
manchettes en BRODERIE BLANCHE
DE ST-GALL, au point de Venise.
Chapeau en paille de WOHLER.



PIERRE BALMAIN

Organdi blanc de St-Gall,
broderie anglaise, avec
application de linon blanc,
de A. NAEF & C^{IE}, FLAWIL.



ROBERT PIGUET

Organdi blanc brodé de
ST-GALL, garni de rubans.

JANE BLANCHOT

Paillason de WOHLLEN,
marguerites et velours
noir.



LEGROUX SOEURS

Fine paille de WOHLLEN
tressée à la main.

London



Madame P. Ruegger, wife of the Swiss Minister in London, wearing a model gown in crêpe de chine printed by Messrs. Manufacture of Silk Goods formerly Edwin Naef Ltd., Zurich. The millinery model is an Agnes creation, Paris.

Photo by Gordon Anthony, Londres