

Ab'a-ka. A fiber from which Manilla-rope is made. Ropes and cables of this material float in sea-water.

Feed-cloth. (*Fiber.*) The apron which leads the cotton, wool, or other fiber into the cleaning, lapping, carding, spinning, or other machine.

Fiber-gun. A device for disintegrating vegetable fiber. Lyman's patent, No. 21,077, of 1858. Flax, hemp, jute, cane, or wood are placed in a cylinder and charged with hot water, steam, gas, or air under great pressure; the cover of the cylinder being suddenly removed, the mass is projected into a chamber where the sudden expansion of the fluid under pressure ruptures the cells and tears the fibers apart.

Attempts have been made with more or less success to use this system of rapid exclusion of the matter, under pressure of generated carbonic acid, resulting from the treatment of the material first with a caustic alkali and then with acid. See COTTONIZING FIBER.

Fleece. 1. The fine web of carded fibers which are removed by the comb or doffing-knife from the doffing-cylinder of a carding-machine.

2. The wool of a sheep in an unbroken mat.

Fleece-fold'er. A kind of press used in condensing the folded fleece so that it may be tied by twine into a compact bundle for shipment. The platform is composed of leaves hinged to a central piece.

The wool is laid on the leaves, which are then raised and held in position by notched bars until the package is bound, when they are lowered. A plate, connecting with a spring-balance scale, is placed in the central piece and raised by a lever until the package of wool rests upon it. See WOOL-PACKER.

Flock. 1. Wool-dust used in coating certain portions of the patterns in wall-papers. The wool is the short refuse of the factory, much of it being derived from the cloth-shearing machine. It is scoured, dyed, dried, and ground, sifted into grades, and dusted over the varnished surface of the paper.

2. A fibrous material for stuffing upholstery, mattresses, etc. It is made by reducing to a degree of fineness, by machinery, coarse woollen cloths, rags, tags, old stockings, etc.

Flock-o'pen-er. A machine with pickers or stiff brushes for tearing apart the bunches of flock, so as to make a light, loose fiber which shall feed regularly to the cloth or paper to whose varnished surface it is to be attached.

Gold-thread. Otherwise *spun-gold*. A flattened, silver-gilt wire, wrapped or laid on a thread of yellow silk by twisting with a wheel or bobbins.

Line. 1. (*Fiber.*) The finer and longer stapled flax separated from the shorter, *tow*, by means of the HACKLE (which see).

Min'er-al Cot'ton. A fiber formed by allowing a jet of steam to escape through a stream of liquid slag, by which it is blown into fine white threads, sometimes two or three feet in length. These threads, though somewhat elastic, readily break up into smaller ones, and, the color of the substance being white, the appearance is that of a mass of cotton.

Being a poor conductor of heat, owing to the retention of air in its interstices, it is suggested as a covering for steam-boilers and pipes.

Pick'ing. 1. (*Fiber.*) *a.* A process in which deiled wool is examined for foreign matters and impurities. *Burring* is a substitute operation.

b. See PICKER.

Pine-wool. Fiber obtained from the leaves of *Pinus sylvestris*, from which *vegetable flannel* is made. See PINE-LEAF FABRIC.

Fly. 1. (*Fiber.*) A fold, twist, or plait.

a. A strand in a rope.

b. A thickness or fold in a carpet.

Por'cu-pine. (*Fiber.*) A heckling apparatus for flax; or a cylindrical heckle for worsted yarn.

Rib'bon.

2. (*Fiber.*) A continuous strand of cotton or other fiber in a loose, untwisted condition. A sliver.

Silk-cot'ton. A short silky and elastic fiber obtained from the *bombax* and some other trees. It is employed by the Hindoos for producing a coarse and loose yet warm kind of cloth, and has been used instead of silk for covering hat-bodies.

Slub. (*Fiber.*) A slightly twisted roving of wool. Like the *roving* of the cotton-manufacture, which occupies a condition intermediate between the *sliver* and the *yarn*, the *slub* of wool is intermediate between the *carding* and the *yarn*.

Snick. 1. (*Fiber.*) A knot or irregularity on yarn, removed by passing it through a slotted plate.

2. (*Fur.*) A small snip or cut, as in the hair of a beast.

Straw. 1. The stalk of wheat or other small grain; or of some descriptions of grass. The principal use of this material in the industries of this country and Europe is in *thatching*, *plaiting*, and *paper-making*.

Top.

3. (*Fiber.*) A narrow bundle of slivers of long-stapled wool, containing about 1½ pounds. The slivers are made by a pair of combs. See WORSTED.