HUCKABACK: the name given to a type of cloth used for
towels. For this purpose it has perhaps been more extensively
used in the linen trade than any other weave. One of the chief
merits of a towel is its capacity for absorbing moisture; plain
and other flat-surfaced cloths do not perform this function
satisfactorily, but cloths made with huckaback, as well as
those made with the honeycomb and similar weaves, are particu-
larly well adapted for this purpose.
The body or foundation of the cloth
is plain and therefore sound in struc-
ture (see designs A and B in figure),
but at fixed intervals some of the
warp threads float on the surface of
the cloth, while at the same time a number of weft threads
float on the back. Thus the cloth has a somewhat similar
appearance on both sides. Weave A is the ordinary and most
used huck or huckaback, while weave B, which is usually
woven with double weft, is termed the Devon or medical huck.
The cloths made by the use of these weaves were originally all
linen, but are too often adulterated with inferior fibres.