

SPINNING. There are two entirely distinct manufacturing operations to which this name is given—the one relating to animal and vegetable fibres, and the other to certain soft metals.

*Fibre Spinning.*—This kind of spinning consists in forming a flexible cylinder of greater or less diameter, and of indeterminate length, out of vegetable or animal fibres, arranged as equally as possible alongside and at the ends of each other, so that, when twisted together, they may form an uniform continuous thread. The primitive modes of spinning by the spindle and distaff, and by the spinning-wheel, which are still extensively practised in the East, and not entirely superseded in some remote districts of Scotland, only enable the spinner to produce a single thread; but with the almost automatic spinning-machinery which has been called into existence by the cotton manufacture, one individual may produce nearly two thousand threads at the same time. The history of the series of inventions by which this result has been gradually attained has been already given under COTTON MANUFACTURE; together with wood-cuts and descriptions of some of the chief machines. The spinning of flax, silk, and wool partake of the same general character as that of cotton; so far as they differ they will be found noticed under LINEN MANUFACTURE; SILK MANUFACTURE; and WOOLLEN AND WORSTED MANUFACTURE.