Kemp: Kemps are a kind of imperfect fibres met with in badly bred wool, and characteristics of an ordinary kemp fibre is a hair of dead silvery white, thicker and shorter than the good wool. Kemp fibres do not seem to be found in considerable quantities in the chemical composition from the good or true wool fibres, but possess no absorbing power, thus resisting either the entrance of dyes, or the treatment of dye stuffs; producing a different shade from that imparted to the good fibres of the same lot, hence kemp fibres will be rejected in dyed lots of wool, yarns or fabrics. The presence of kemp fibres in a lot of wool will also result in poor spinning and poor yarns, since they will not thoroughly combine with the good wool, and will show prominently on the face of the yarn or fabric. Neither will they felt. In the wild beasts of sheep kemp is plentiful and appears to be part of their nature; and in domestic sheep it may be looked upon as an inherent tendency to revert to the native type of the animal. It is sometimes found in the finest grades of wool as well as in the coarsest. In the fine wool sheep, kemp occurs most frequently in the neck of the fleece and on the legs, whereas in the coarse wool sheep, it may be found on any part, especially if there is a lack of trueness in the blood. The presence of kemp in a fleece greatly depreciates the value of the lot of wool, and a buyer is always advised to ascertain if wool contain them. On account of its non-absorbing power, occasionally this feature is made the basis of novelty for dress goods.

Kendir Fibre: The plant producing the Kendir fibre is also known as Dog’s Bane. It is a native of islands in the Adriatic Sea. Fibres obtained from the stems and branches have been used for fishing nets and ropes, also in the manufacture of Russian paper. Another species (A. Cannabinum) has been utilized for twine bags, and as a substitute for hemp.

Kendish: A Highland tartan, composed of a green ground, dark blue and black checks and red and yellow lines.

Kennet: A coarse Welsh cloth.

Kennington Quilt: Indicating the use of large patterns formed of coarse thread on a fine plain woven ground.

Kensivesh Shee: A type of sheep known in England as Romney Marsh, being raised in south-eastern England, in the extensive marshes of the County of Kent, and is the product of the crossing of the original native breed of that district with the (new) Leicester breed. The weight of the fleece is from 7 to 10 lbs. In Holland these sheep are known as the race of the Polders.

Kentucky Sheep: A cheap, but durable fabric made of cotton warp and wool weft, sometimes made in Cadet and Oxford mixtures, but now made in various shades. Used for trousers, etc.

Keswick Breed: A good American breed, known as the Improved Kentucky sheep, was begun 70 years ago by crossing the common native sheep of that locality with Southdown, Leicester, Cotswold, and Oxford down rams.

Keratin: A term applied to the combination of elements that make up the wool fibres; these being carbon 30.5 per cent, hydrogen 6.8 per cent, nitrogen 18.6 per cent, oxygen 20.5 per cent, sulphur 3.4 per cent.

Kerschief: A square or oblong piece of linen, silk, or other material, worn folded, tied, pinned or otherwise fastened about the head or neck; also a handkerchief.

Kerf: The material (flocks) shorn off with one cut of a cloth-shearing machine.

Kermer: Waist shawls for women, of pure silk, or silk mixed with cotton, made in Egypt, and worn by the natives.

Kermes: A dyestuff of great antiquity, being used by the Hebrews and mentioned by Moses, their earliest writer. It seems probable that the Hebrew word kermes (translated scarlet in the Old Testament was used to designate the blood-red color produced by kermes with alum mordant. This was one of the pigments prescribed for the curtains of the Tabernacle and for coloring the holy garments of Aaron. The term arnazow, which is the kermes by Pliny, probably on account of its resemblance to a grain or berry, was adopted by more recent writers, and is the origin of the term in, stain color, which is still in use. Our words vermilion and crimson are also derived, respectively, from the old Italian words vermiculus and cermelino, the former of which signifies the kermes insect, and the latter being probably a corruption of the original Arabic kermes or kremes. Coming to later times, we find general use as a dyestuff in Europe as early as the tenth century. In Germany, from the ninth to the fourteenth century, the serfs were required every year to deliver to the convents every year a certain quantity of kermes amongst other products of husbandry. It was collected from the oak trees, and would probably be performed between the hours of eleven and noon, with religious ceremony, and on this account it received the name of Johannishut (St. John). At that time a great deal of German kermes was sent to Venice to produce the scarlet to which that city gave its name. About the year 1550, cochineal was introduced into Europe, and since it is far richer in coloring matter than kermes, it gradually superseded the older dyestuff, which has not been used to any extent for at least one hundred years. It is, however, still employed in some countries, to which it is indigenous, i.e., Italy, Turkey and Morocco. Kermes is derived from the insect Coccus ilicis, which is found principally upon the Quercus cocifera or ilex oak. The dyestuff is obtained in a far more pure and coarser manner to cochineal, and is also of similar appearance, but it contains only about one-tenth as much coloring matter, which is, however, derived from a different chemical composition with that of cochineal. One peculiarity of kermes is that it possesses a pleasant aromatic smell, which it also imparts to cloth dyed with it. It is employed in exactly the same way as cochineal, and it has been frequently stated that it produces more permanent colors than the dyestuff, but there does not appear to be any foundation for this assertion.

Kerr: A Highland tartan, constructed thus: A wide red bar is split in the center by three narrow black stripes which are spaced their own width from each other; a black stripe, about one-sixth in width of the red bar; a dark green bar the same in width as the red bar, split with a pair of black stripes (as wide as those in the red bar) near each edge, being spaced from the edge of the green bar and from each other correspondingly to their own width.

Kersey: A compact woolen fabric, fulled so as to completely conceal the warp and filling, the face being finished with a short, extremely fine nap, and highly lustrous. A light weight heavier (from 22 to 24) having a smooth face with a soft nap, and made in all qualities, from the coarsest to the finest; used for fall overcoatings, cloakings, etc. The cheaper grades manufactured from a fine-fibred wool and shoddy, with low grades of shoddy and mungo for back. Named from the English town of Kersey, where from the 11th to the 15th century, a large woolen trade was carried on. Kersey of early history was a coarse cloth and known under various names, and consisted of cotton warp and cheap grades of woolen filling, including shoddy. Also called Kersey.

Keymo Finish: A finish (said to consist in running the fabrics through a sulphuric acid solution) given to all wool goods such as flannels, shirtings, etc., to render them unsplokable.

Khaiki: A Japanese silk of plain weave (washable) but of not so fine a texture as habutai.

Hair-tree: A hard wood tree, chiefly found in India and Ceylon (Acacia catechu) the wood, twigs, leaves and fruit of which, by boiling and evaporation, yield the commercial tannin.

Khatki Cotton: Various East Indian and Chinese cottons yielding a tan or reddish colored staple.


Khirkah: A garment made of patches, etc., worn in Mohammedan countries by derwishes and other religious enclaves.

Khum: Dyed T-cloth in Turkey; used for long coats by the natives.