

Cashmere. (*Fabric.*) *a.* A fine shawl fabric formerly made only in the valley of Cashmere, but now made in many parts of the Punjab. The best are yet made in Cashmere. It is made of the downy wool of the Thibet goat, dyed in various colors before weaving.

Several accounts have been given of the process adopted by the natives in weaving the shawls. It is sometimes woven in comparatively narrow strips, which are afterwards joined. The figures are put in by the shuttle in those of superior quality, and by the needle in those of a lower description. It appears that the waters of a canal flowing from the Lake of Cashmere have something to do with imparting the peculiar softness to the fabric.

The process is extremely slow; one account states that a single shawl occupies three men for six months. Another account states that the plain shawls only are worked by the shuttle, and the colors are all inserted by needles through the shed of the warp, a separate needle being used for each color. The work is passed through a number of hands, as customary in that old country; the merchants buying the yarn and employing weavers, who receive from 3 to 24 cents a day. The overseer of a shop receives the latter handsome amount, from which he boards himself. Eighty thousand shawls are supposed to be about the annual produce of the kingdom.

Cashmere shawls made from the imported wool of the goat are made in Paris, Lyons, and Nismes. The Jacquard loom is used, drawing the colored threads to the surface as required. The colored threads floating at the back of the shawl in the intervals of their appearance on the face are subsequently cut off, and the cut ends reveal the imitation.

A French loom has been invented for the purpose of avoiding this difficulty and making both sides alike. The yarns of the weft are not only equal in number to the colors of the pattern, but separate bobbins are provided for each repetition of a color across the shawl. Each bobbin or *pirn* stops at the end of the figure, and returns on its track after crossing the track of the adjoining bobbin. Thus the weft is made up of an interlocked series of threads, each occupying a short portion of the length of the weft, according to the limits of its figure in the general design.

The Hindoo shawl, so called, is made in France, of a *silk* chain, and *cashmere-down* filling.

In other varieties, the weft is silk and down; and at Nismes, spun silk, Thibet down, and cotton are all worked up together.

b. A woolen and cotton figured dress-goods, named in imitation of the cashmere fabric.