

seventeenth century, and these fabrics made their way in spite of the bitter opposition of the woolen interests, which were at times strong enough to have the use of cotton cloth prohibited by law. But when the Manchester spinners took up the manufacture of cotton, the fight was won. The Manchester spinners, however, used linen for their warp threads, for without machinery they could not spin threads sufficiently strong from the short-fibered Indian cotton.

In the New World the Spanish explorers found cotton and cotton fabrics in use everywhere. Columbus, Cortés, Pizarro, Magellan, and others speak of the various uses to which the fiber was put, and admired the striped awnings and the colored mantles made by the natives. It seems probable that cotton was in use in the New World quite as early as in India.

The first English settlers in America found little or no cotton among the natives. But they soon began to import the fiber from the West Indies, whence came also the plant itself into the congenial soil and climate of the Southern colonies. During the colonial period, however, cotton never became the leading crop, hardly an important crop. Cotton could be grown profitably only where there