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COTTON, WOOL, AND FLAX.

An analysis of Human labour in the aggregate shows many startling results. Few care to know how the masses earn their daily bread, or in what pursuits the majority of their fellow creatures in the old monarchies of Europe sustain existence from year to year, and often acquire a comfortable maintenance, sometimes affluence, and rarely rank and power. It is not a subject of general interest to know that in the United Kingdom, there is one person in every 72 of the population employed in a Cotton factory, while in Switzerland there is one in 100, in France one in 132, and in Austria one in 1,312, so spending their lives. Such knowledge however is of great value to the statistician, the politician, and the philanthropist. It shows the direction of labour, and from it the condition of a country in 10 or 12 years time, other things being equal, may be predicated with a considerable degree of certainty. The relative quantities of textile fabrics consumed per head by the people of the United Kingdom and Austria are in the proportion of £2 6s. 3d. sterling against 14s. 1d. In France the proportion of these fabrics consumed per head amounts to £1 4s. 7d. These items, insignificant as they appear, prove that the people of Great Britain and Ireland can afford twice and three times the amount of clothing indulged in by the Austrians and French; and that whilst the British people not only clothe themselves with comparative luxury, they are enabled to send to other nations, if they will admit them, as many of their moderately priced comforts and luxuries of clothing as they require, and thus help to raise the comfort of the masses among many foreign people to a degree of equality with their own.

A very able paper has recently been read before the Society of Arts "On the progress of textile manufactures in Great Britain," by Mr. Alex. Redgrave, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Factories. The facts elicited during the discussion on this important paper were of the greatest interest, and possess an attraction quite apart from their statistical or commercial value, on account of the insight given to the public respecting the manner in which a large part of the textile fabrics sent into the market are produced. We shall endeavour in this article to give a

summary of Mr. Redgrave's paper and the discussion which followed.

There are four classes of raw products convertible into textile fabrics:—these are cotton—wool and worsted—flax, hemp, and its tribe—and silk. Wool and worsted, although the same material, are of a different nature, and require to be manufactured in a different manner; they are, therefore, treated of separately, and it is usual to divide the textile fabrics into five classes.

The cotton trade represents more than one-half of the whole of the textile fabrics.

The woollen manufacture, once the chief textile industry of the country ranks second in importance.

Worsted, which is obtained by separating the long fibre of the wool from the shorter staple, ranks as the third.

Flax is fourth; and silk is the fifth and last.

There are various methods of exhibiting the extent of these manufactures, in some of which, perhaps, the order in which they are enumerated might be varied, but taking the general importance and probable value of the several branches of manufacture, the order in which they have been named will be found the most correct.

Statistics have been procured, at intervals, by the Inspectors of Factories, with reference to the establishments under their supervision, viz., those in which either of the raw materials enumerated are spun or manufactured. No account has ever been taken of the print-works, bleaching and dyeing works, lace factories, &c., which are excluded from the operation of the Factory Acts, and the following figures refer, therefore, to those establishments only in which the first processes of manufacture, up to and including the weaving, are carried on by the aid of water or steam power.

	No. of Factories.	Horse-power.
Cotton	2,210	97,132
Wool	1,505	25,901
Worsted	625	14,904
Flax	417	18,322
Silk	460	5,176
	5,117	161,435

	No. of Spindles.	No. of Power Looms.
Cotton	28,010,217	298,847
Wool	1,786,972	14,453
Worsted	1,324,549	36,956
Flax	1,288,043	7,639
Silk	1,093,799	9,260
	33,503,580	367,205