

As the result of the invention of carding, spinning and power weaving machinery—between 1760 and 1790

—the factory system in wool manufacturing developed with extraordinary rapidity in England, and this change was well advanced before it had even started in the United States,* where

it continued for a long time to be carried on as an industry of the home, as in Canada. The supply of wool was short and the breed of sheep poor in the United States, and it was only in 1802 that the first flock of merino sheep was introduced there. By the time the embargo on trade was laid on, which preceded the war of 1812, several thousand head of merino sheep had been brought in, and that conflict turned the attention of people of the young Republic to the need of both woolgrowing and woollen manufacturing to make the country independent. The price of merino wool rose from \$1 a pound in 1807 to \$2 and \$2.50 during the war. Compelled to rely on its own efforts in consequence of the Non-Intercourse Act of 1809, the wool clip increased from less than 14,000,000 pounds in 1810 to 22,000,000 pounds in 1812, and during the four or five years preceding the war "no industry was so prominent in the public eye as the manufacture of wool." The fame of the merino sheep spread until some rams sold at \$1,000 each; while broadcloths were sold at times as high as \$8 to \$12 a yard. Up to this time Great Britain had been looked to as the source of supply of woollen cloths, and, while certain duties were placed on imports by the first tariff of 1789, the duty of 5 per cent. on such goods showed that woollen manufacturing was not one of the industries sought to be developed. The United States was, in fact, the best market of the world for British cloths, as the value of woollen goods shipped thence rose steadily from £1,481,378 in 1790 to £2,803,490 in 1799, or 40.77 per cent. of the entire British exports of these goods to the world. As might be expected, "factories for making

* "A Century of American Wool Manufacture, 1790-1890," by S. N. D. North.