

**Thread.** 1. In the manufacturer's language, thread is a compound cord consisting of two or more single yarns, doubled and twisted.

In the trade it is divided into

*Lace* thread.  
*Stocking* thread.  
*Sewing* thread.

*Lace* thread consists of two yarns, Nos. 140 to 350, twisted together.

*Stocking* thread varies in the number of its yarns.

*Sewing* thread consists of three or more yarns united and intertwisted.

The doubling and twisting of thread is effected by spindles and flyers operating in a manner similar to the THROSTLE (which see). The twist is usually in a direction the reverse of that given to the individual yarns.

Thread of fine quality was imported into England from Holland and Flanders for many centuries. The thread for making the Honiton (Devonshire, England) lace was imported from Antwerp.

Long-fibered cotton, as "Sea Island," or Egyptian, is best adapted for making thread. Sewing-thread undergoes the following operations in the process of manufacture:—

1. It is passed through a picker, which separates and arranges the fibers.
2. The carding-machine straightens the fibers and coils the roving or sliver into a can.
3. The combing-machine separates the short fibers, the long ones only being used in forming the thread.
4. The fiber is united, drawn out, reduced, and partially twisted, previous to spinning.
5. The rovings are spun into a very fine thread upon the mule, and wound upon bobbins.
6. When the bobbins are full, they are transferred to the winding-machine, where the threads are wound off, two together, on to other bobbins.
7. These bobbins are taken to the twisting-machine, where the two threads are twisted tightly together and wound upon bobbins again.
8. Three of these doubled threads are wound off as before.
9. They are twisted together, forming a compound thread consisting of six strands or yarns.

The thread thus made is reeled off, tied up into hanks or bunches, and taken to the bleachery, where it passes through the processes of boiling, bleaching, washing, soaping, bluing, and drying; or to the dye-house, where it is thoroughly boiled and prepared, and colored by various dyes. After bleaching or dyeing, the hanks are again returned to the mill and wound upon large bobbins, from whence the thread is wound on the small spools for market.

The spooling-machines automatically wind the thread on the spool, cut the nick, insert and fasten the end of the thread, cut it off, draw the spool off the spindle, drop it into a hopper, replace it by another spool, and continue the winding. Each machine winds eight spools at a time, at the rate of 300 dozen per day.

The thread and gauze manufacture was begun at Paisley, in Scotland. 1759.