

CRAPE (an anglicized version of the Fr. *crêpe*), a silk fabric of a gauzy texture, having a peculiar crisp or crimped appearance. It is woven of hard spun silk yarn "in the gum" or natural condition. There are two distinct varieties of the textile—soft, Canton or Oriental crape, and hard or crimped crape. The wavy appearance of Canton crape results from the peculiar manner in which the weft is prepared, the yarn from two bobbins being twisted together in the reverse way. The fabric when woven is smooth and even, having no *crêpe* appearance, but when the gum is subsequently extracted by boiling it at once becomes soft, and the weft, losing its twist, gives the fabric the wavy structure which constitutes its distinguishing feature. Canton crapes are used, either white or coloured, for ladies' scarves and shawls, bonnet trimmings, &c. The Chinese and Japanese excel in the manufacture of soft crapes. The crisp and elastic structure of hard crape is not produced either in the spinning or in the weaving, but is due to processes through which the gauze passes after it is woven. What the details of these processes are is known to only a few manufacturers, who so jealously guard their secret that, in some cases, the different stages in the manufacture are conducted in towns far removed from each other. Commercially they are distinguished as single, double, three-ply and four-ply crapes, according to the nature of the yarn used in their manufacture. They are almost exclusively dyed black and used in mourning dress, and among Roman Catholic communities for nuns' veils, &c. In Great Britain hard crapes are made at Braintree in Essex, Norwich, Yarmouth, Manchester and Glasgow. The crape formerly made at Norwich was made with a silk warp and worsted weft, and is said to have afterwards degenerated into bombazine. A very successful imitation of real crape is made in Manchester of cotton yarn, and sold under the name of Victoria crape.