

**Cordage**, *n.* [Ger. *tauwerk*; D. *touwerk*; Fr. *manœuvres, cordage*; It. *caolame*; Sp. *jarcia, cordaje*.] A term used to denote all manner of cords or ropes, how much soever they may differ in size; but more especially those used in the rigging of ships. The term *cord* is usually employed to distinguish *C.* of small size, that is, of small circumference; *rope*, to distinguish the larger descriptions of *C.*; and *cable*, to distinguish the largest of all, or the *C.* used in the anchoring of ships. *C.* may be made of an infinite variety of material — of everything, in fact, which is slender, flexible, and moderately tenacious, such is the fibres of various descriptions of vegetables; hair, wool, silk, leathern thongs, wire, &c. It must neither be too much nor too little twisted. Ropes consist of more or fewer yarns, according to their thickness. At an average, the fibres of hemp used in making ropes lose about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their length by twisting, but in the case of cables the loss is greater. Ropes are sometimes made of iron wire: and when properly manufactured, they have been found to answer much better than might have been anticipated. Chains are now also substituted frequently for various descriptions of ropes, and hempen cables have been generally superseded by iron chains.