

## DICTIONARY OF TEXTILE TERMS.

### A

- Aal:** The name of an East Indian shrub, of the madder family, from which a red dye of the same name is obtained.
- Aba:** A coarse fabric, woven in Syria from hair or wool. As a rule, stripe effects in black and white or blue and white are produced, again more elaborate patterns are met with. Also written *Abba*.
- Abaca:** Also known as Manila Hemp; the fibres of the leaf stalks of a plantain or banana, a native plant of the Indian Archipelago, and extensively cultivated in the Philippine Islands. The inner fibres of the leaf stalks are used in the manufacture of fabrics, whereas the outer fibres are used in the manufacture of hats, hammocks, matting, cordage and canvas, the well known Manila hats being one of the better class of these products. Also written *Abaka*.
- Abacot:** A cap of state, wrought up in the form of two crowns, worn by ancient British kings.
- Abai:** A silk or camelot gown with large sleeves, laced down the seams with narrow gold lace; worn by men in Turkey in the summer instead of the Kurk or loose gown and which is trimmed with furs; also the name for the ordinary vestment of the Arabs.
- Abassi:** A white, silky variety of Egyptian cotton grown in lower Egypt, furnishing about the one-hundredth part of the entire crop. It was first produced in 1895 by a Greek named Parahimona, who named it after the Khedive of Egypt. It appears to have sprung from imported seeds.
- Abb:** An English term for one of the grades made in sorting a fleece for woolen spinning; skirtings or edgings obtained by the sorter, next to seconds.  
A term formerly used in England for weft (or filling) which is inserted between the warp-threads to form cloth; in some districts the term was applied to both warp and weft yarns.
- Abbatré:** Depressed or sunken portions in the design of a fabric, like quiltings, matelasses, etc.; the opposite from embossed or raised effects.
- Abestine Cloth:** Cloth made from the fibres of asbestos, being incombustible.
- Abis Messaline Taffeta:** A superior grade of taffeta to which a messaline finish has been imparted.
- Abito:** From the Italian, means habit, dress, garment, raiment, suit of clothes, etc.
- Ablaque:** The name for the finest Persian silk used in weaving. Sometimes written *Ablack*; also called *Ardassine*.
- Abra:** A large oblong quilt, wadded with cotton; used in India as a winter wrap.
- Abrawan:** The name of a fine, sheer, East India muslin, being one of the very finest muslins made in Dacca.
- Abroma:** A fibre used in making cordage, derived from the bark of the *Abroma augusta*, of the *sterculia* family, a handsome flowering tree grown in the East Indies.
- Absorbent Cotton:** Natural cotton from which the waxy and pectic matter has been removed by saponification and emulsion with boiling caustic soda. Inodorous and tasteless; insoluble in ordinary solvents, but soluble in an ammoniacal solution of cupric oxide. After the removal of this encrusting matter, the fibres absorb water very readily, so that this product finds extensive use in surgery. When such purified cotton, previously compressed in the hand, is thrown on the surface of cold water, it should readily absorb the latter and sink, and the water should not acquire an acid or an alkaline reaction (evidence of proper purification and absence of fatty matter). Absorbent cotton should be perfectly free from all visible impurities, and on combustion should not leave more than 0.3 per cent of ash.
- Abyssinian Banana:** The stem fibres of this plant have been used in the manufacture of cordage, and for some other purposes.
- Accordion Plaiting:** Fine single plaits done on a machine and steamed and dried into shape, simulating the form of the plaits or folds of the bellows of an accordion. Used on fine soft silk and woolen goods, for vests, waists, sleeves and skirts.
- Acetate of Alumina:** See Aluminium Acetate.
- Acetate of Ammonia:** See Ammonium Acetate.
- Acetate of Chrome:** See Chromium Acetate.
- Acetate of Iron:** The mordant known as *black liquor*, produced by combining iron with acetic acid.
- Acetate of Lead:** See Lead Acetate.
- Acetate of Lime:** See Lime Acetate.
- Acetate of Soda:** See Sodium Acetate.
- Acetic Acid:** A clear, colorless liquid with a strong odor of vinegar, obtained by the dry distillation of wood. The pure concentrated product solidifies at ordinary temperature forming crystals of ice-like appearance, and is therefore called *glacial acetic acid*. Owing to its high price, it is not used for dyeing purposes.  
Acetic acid is used in dyeing for acidifying the dye liquors, mordanting and aftertreating, particularly also when dyeing in feebly acid baths, in order to cause the coloring matters to dye more slowly and evenly, especially when the sulphuric acid would act too rapidly and severely. One of the most useful agents used by calico printers and dyers, because it is a solvent of aniline dyes as well as of metallic oxides and color lakes; used largely in wool dyeing with acid colors. Acetic acid is also used largely for brightening silk. More recently, formic acid is frequently used as a cheap substitute for acetic acid.
- Acetin:** Acetic glycerine; obtained by combination of glacial acetic acid and glycerine, one part of the latter to two of the former, at boiling-point producing a costly but effective solvent.
- Achmouni:** The principal variety of Egyptian cotton grown in Upper Egypt. It is lighter in color than Mit Afifi, and the fibre is not as long. The Achmouni quality is considered far superior to all other cottons grown in Upper Egypt.
- Acid:** A liquid with a sour taste, capable of uniting with bases to form salts by the substitution of its hydrogen by the base. Acids turn blue litmus paper red, and neutralize alkalies.
- Acid Colors:** A class of coal-tar colors, usually themselves colorless salts, possessing a distinctly acid character, and which are dyed on the animal fibres as the free color acid. With the exception of picric acid, the acid colors are sold as salts, mostly alkali salts, but a few in the form of lime salts. With few exceptions, the acid colors dissolve readily in hot water, requiring about 25 to 50 times their weight of water for solution.
- Actias:** A genus of silk moths found in India, producing a silk unreliable in color, but otherwise useful; the best known is named *Actias selene*.
- Adamkiewicz's Reagent:** A solution of glyoxalic acid in concentrated sulphuric acid.
- Adelaide Wool:** Australian Merino, of a sound staple, presenting a moderately fine fibre, but of rather irregular length and containing a considerable amount of yolk and sand. It is somewhat lower than Sydney, and mostly used as filling for worsted dress goods, permitting spinning up to 50's and 60's; it is also used in the manufacture of medium grades of fancy woollens on account of its superior felting qualities.
- Adenos:** Cotton raised in Aleppo, also called *Marine Cotton*.
- Ad-hock:** The art of hand-block printing, in colors, on Jacquard fabrics.
- Adjective Dyes:** Coloring substances attached to fibres by mordants, and changing in character with the kind of mordant. They are opposed to substantive colors, which the fibres directly absorb.
- Adras:** A lustrous, usually striped, fabric made in central Asia, of silk and cotton. The gloss of the fabric is heightened by beating it with a broad, flat wooden instrument.
- Aegagrus:** A wild goat, supposed to be the species now known to inhabit the mountains of the Caucasus, Persia, etc. Claimed to be the progenitor of the domestic goat.
- Aerophane:** A name given to a thin, more or less transparent fabric, made in imitation of lace.
- Afgan Stitch:** A stitch made by hand with a long needle of uniform diameter. All the stitches of a row are taken up in turn and held by the needle until crocheting them off again. Generally two at a time are taken off so as to keep the same side of the fabric up.

**Afghanistan Carpets:** Carpets made in Afghanistan, and chiefly at Herat. They are pile or knot carpets, generally not much larger than a good sized rug or small art square. The styles of the same are very old, being strongly indicative of Tartar influence.

**Agabance:** A cotton fabric, embroidered with silk, made at Aleppo, Syria.

**Agave:** The fibre derived from the American aloe, which has been found useful in rope and twine manufacture. Also written *Argave*.

**Age:** In silkworm raising, the interval between hatching and first molt, between any two molts, or between the last larval molt and spinning.

**Ageing:** The process of oxidizing the bleaching agent in the cloths, which are taken from the chlorine bath and left lying exposed to the air. The term is used generally to denote oxidizing by exposure to the air.

**Agra Gauze:** An exceedingly fine fabric made from the lightest possible thread, usually of silk. Probably the most delicate of all textiles. Also written *Agre Gauze*.

**Ailanthus:** The name given to a kind of silkworm, *Attacus Cynthia*, because it feeds on the *Ailanthus glandulosa*, a native tree in several oriental countries and cultivated for this purpose in Italy and France.

**À jour:** Openwork effect.

**Aladja:** The name applied to a blue and white striped cotton fabric made in Greece and Turkey.

**Alagai:** The name of a fabric made of silk and cotton in Russia and Turkey.

**A la mode:** A thin, light, glossy black silk fabric, made first in the 17th century in France and England; then used chiefly for women's hoods and men's mourning scarfs.

**Alaska:** A Bradford term for a dress fabric made with a 2/80's bleached cotton warp, 40's reed with one end per dent, using 38 picks composed of 70 per cent mohair and 30 per cent ramie mix per inch in the grey cloth, interlaced with the plain weave, 49 inches in reed, 44 inches finished. The fabric is piece-dyed blue for the animal fibres, with the result of a mixture effect similar to that of a mélange, since the vegetable fibres retain their original white appearance.

A yarn composed of combed wool and cotton, carded and drawn together to form a mixture.

**Alatcha:** A blue and white striped cotton fabric made in Central Asia.

**Albatross:** A dress fabric of worsted warp and worsted filling; of open texture and fancy weaves.

**COTTON ALBATROSS CLOTH** is a plain fabric made in imitation of a worsted fabric of the same name. It has a fleecy surface. The name is taken from the bird whose downy breast the finish of the fabric resembles. A good texture to use is 28's cotton warp and 36's cotton filling, plain weave, 48 warp-threads and 48 picks per inch. The goods are finished by being burlled, sheared, washed, singed, dyed, rinsed, dried and pressed; care being taken not to press too hard. Sometimes the singeing process is omitted. Albatross cloth is generally sold in white, black or solid colors. It is light in weight, and used principally for dress goods; sometimes used instead of bunting for railroad flags.

**Albert:** A Bradford term for an alpaca lining made with 50's black cotton warp, 93 threads per inch, using 108 picks per inch of 40's alpaca in the grey cloth, interlaced with the 4-harness uneven sided (warp effect) twill.

**Albert Cloth:** A double-faced fabric, both sides of which are of a different color and each finished so that no lining is necessary, also called *reversible*; used chiefly for overcoats.

**Albumen:** According to its origin, albumen is separated into two different kinds, *egg* and *blood* albumen. The latter is rather stronger than the former, but may be bleached. Both kinds of albumen dissolve completely in cold water. The solutions coagulate when heated to a temperature exceeding 65 deg. C. (150 deg. F.).

**Albumen Color:** A term used in textile printing; applied to pigments which, through the agency of coagulated albumen, are attached to the fibres which are being treated with them.

**Alencon:** A guipure or point lace, composed of simple stitches, the loops being linked into each other over groups of transverse threads, but capable of being wrought into forms of remarkable beauty and intricacy. Also called *Point d'Alencon*.

**Alexander:** A Bradford term for alpaca linings made with 30's black cotton warp, 82 threads per inch, using 70 picks per inch of 24's alpaca in the grey cloth, interlaced with the 11 up 1 down, 1 up 1 down, 1 up 1 down, 16-harness twill.

**Algarroba:** A substance resembling catechu in appearance and properties, obtained from the La Plata, South America, and which contains tannin mixed with a deep brown coloring matter; formerly used in dyeing, calico printing, etc.

**Algerine:** A soft woolen fabric or shawl, with bright stripes.

**Algin:** An extract of red seaweeds of the genus *Zostera*. Soluble algin is an alkaline alginate. Algin is very similar to gelatine but does not coagulate to a jelly. It is used as a stiffener and binder, in cotton finishing, giving an elastic transparent dressing rendered insoluble by a passage through very dilute hydrochloric acid. Soluble alginates are substitutes for dung in Turkey red dyeing.

**Alhambra Quilt:** A special kind of cotton quilt, figured in various designs, and woven with vari-colored yarns.

**Alimentary Canal:** The food canal in a silkworm; a straight, simple tube, running from one end of the body to the other, and which it is impossible to subdivide into gullet, stomach, and intestine.

**Alizari:** The commercial name of madder in the Levant.

**Alizarine:** The red coloring matter formerly extracted from the root of the madder plant, now manufactured from coal-tar products, being an orange-red crystalline coloring compound, used for dyeing cotton, wool and silk in different shades of red. Also written *Alizarin*.

**Alizarine Blue:** A coal-tar color, appearing in commerce as a dark violet paste, used in wool dyeing and calico printing in place of indigo. Also called *Anthracene Blue*.

**Alizarine Dyes:** A series of very fast colors. Alizarine is the coloring principle in madder.

**Alkali:** A liquid with a caustic taste; its presence can be ascertained by means of red litmus paper, which it turns blue. An alkali is a combination of a metal with oxygen and hydrogen, which is soluble in water.

A base capable of forming salts and having the power of changing blue vegetable matter to green, and will restore the blue to a substance which has been reddened by acid. Soda, potash and ammonia are the alkalies.

**Alkali Blue:** A coal-tar product used for dyeing wool and silk bright blue shades; being an acid color, it consequently cannot be dyed on cotton fast to washing. The name would appear to be a misnomer, because alkalies destroy the color, and acids revive it. Owing to this quality, advantage is taken of making a dyeing solution of alkali blue, reducing it to an almost colorless state by gentle alkalies, passing the goods through, and then passing them through an acid bath which develops the color right through the fibre. Also called *Nicholson's Blue*, and *Soluble Aniline Blue*.

**Alkali-stiff:** A stiffening compound employed in the manufacture of the cheaper grades of hats. It is made of three pounds of shellac, dissolved with six ounces of sal soda in one gallon of water.

**Alma:** Cloth for mourning, woven with a 4-harness twill and dyed black.

**Allah-haik:** A Moorish, striped material, with stripes of white silk gauze and white cotton of equal widths; it is made about one yard wide, and is used for turbans.

**Alleja:** A silken fabric made in Turkestan, being interlaced with weaves producing wavy lines in the cloth.

**Allen:** A name for an extra well stapled cotton, grown in the bottom and swamp lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas. Originated by J. B. Allen, Port Gibson, Miss. The plant is vigorous, pyramidal, long limbed; bolls large, round, opening very widely, and sometimes allowing the seed cotton to drop; maturing late; lint 28 to 30 per cent; staple 30 to 35 mm., fine and silky. This, like the Cook variety, is easily affected by a change of soil or climate, and produces a longer and better staple when grown in the Yazoo Delta than elsewhere.

**Alligator Cloth:** A trade or fancy name for a cloth or stuff supposed to resemble in its appearance the scales or markings peculiar to the skin of the alligator when tanned. Produced by figured Jacquard effect Bedford cord weaves.

**Allover Lace:** Name for all wide laces used for flouncing, yokes and entire waists. Usually the lace is over 18 inches in width.

**Allovers:** The name given to a design which covers the surface all over, in contrast to fragmentary motives of borders, or stripes.

**Alnage:** Ell measure; measuring by the ell; a term formerly used in

England for measurement of woollen cloth for the purpose of levying duties on it.

**Aloe:** The fibres of some of the species are used for cordage.

**Alpaca:** A fine, soft, silky hair obtained from the Alpaca goat; one of the four species of the Llama or Peruvian sheep. Its natural colors are: white, gray, brown, and black. The properties of this fibre may be stated to be similar, but on the whole inferior to those of mohair. Commercially it was originally employed as a substitute for mohair, but, possessing a certain subtleness in handle, may now be said to be used on its own merits. The hair of the Alpaca, if shorn each year, is about eight inches long, but if allowed to grow will attain a length of from twenty to thirty inches.

The fine, thin, lustrous cloth woven with yarns spun from alpaca wool; the fine worsted or union cloths imitating alpaca; cheaper grades are made with cotton warp and alpaca, or alpaca and wool mixed filling, the latter being more in evidence.

**Alum:** A double sulphate of potassium and aluminium, or of ammonium and aluminium, it is commercially sold either as potash alum or as ammonia alum, which shows that there is practically no difference in their properties. It occurs in commerce as confused masses of crystals, colorless and transparent when fresh, but gradually becoming white and opaque by the loss of ammonia. It dissolves in ten times its weight of cold water, but more freely in hot, while it is insoluble in spirit. The aqueous solution has an acid re-action, and a sweet, astringent taste. Commercial alums are in many instances contaminated with iron; and as freedom from metal is essential, it must be tested for by adding potassium ferrocyanide to the aqueous solution, a light blue coloration, or precipitate, indicating the presence of iron.

Alum is used for increasing the fastness to water of dyed shades and also for water-proofing; it is further employed as a weakly acid salt in the place of free acids, for instance in the dyeing of basic colors on cotton, of acid colors on jute and in wool-printing. It is also used as a weighting material in cotton finishing, having also some antiseptic action.

**Aluming:** Treating cloths to be dyed with acetate of alumina as a mordant.

**Aluminium Acetate:** This is known only in the form of its aqueous solution and is usually prepared by mixing aluminium sulphate with lead acetate (sugar of lead) or calcium acetate; for instance 171 parts sugar of lead are used per 100 parts of aluminium sulphate, the two being mixed together in aqueous solution and allowed to settle, whereupon the clear solution is drawn off for use. In order to free the solution entirely from lead, a small amount of Glauber's salt in solution may be added subsequently.

A mordant largely employed in calico printing and dyeing, known as *red liquor* in the trade; commonly made by (1) dissolving

alumina in acetic acid (2) mixing together solutions of lime acetate and aluminium sulphate and (3) mixing lead acetate with alum or aluminium sulphate. It is also frequently used for water-proofing. The purer the product, the stronger is its effect; on this account the solution is to best advantage prepared for this purpose with aluminium hydroxide and acetic acid.

**Aluminium Sulphate:** It has the same properties as alum, but is stronger than the latter, 100 parts of aluminium sulphate being equivalent to 140-150 parts of alum; it is very easily soluble in water. Aluminium sulphate sometimes contains an excess of sulphuric acid or small amounts of oxide of iron and Glauber's salt; it usually contains 50 per cent pure aluminium sulphate, sometimes even more than 55 per cent. It is used for the production of color lakes, etc. Also called *Sulphate of Alumina*.

**Alsatian Comber:** A single headed cotton combing machine, treating one lap of cotton only.

**Aman:** A blue cotton cloth made in the Levant, chiefly at Aleppo.

**Amazon:** An all-wool fabric, the warp of which is composed of a fine, mule spun worsted material, usually of the merino type. The filling is of a heavier count than the warp, being either a soft spun worsted, or very often of a woollen character, which greatly assists in the production of a full soft handling cloth. During finishing, the treatment is such that fibres are raised from the cloth and laid flat on the surface, resulting in a somewhat lustrous, dress-faced type of finish. The weave employed is usually the 5-harness satin, warp effect, although in some instances the 3-harness twill, warp effect, is used as a substitute.

**American Aloe:** The parallel veined leaves yield the useful fibre known as Aloe Fibre and Pité Hemp. The fibres are separated from the leaves by bruising and steeping the latter in water and then beating them for a time. They are used in the manufacture of common cordage threads.

**American Cloth:** The English term for enameled cloth; a cotton cloth prepared with a glazed or varnished surface in imitation of morocco leather.

**American Sheep:** Sheep bred or raised in America. The first importations consisted of the common native sheep of Spain. English sheep were introduced into Virginia about the close of the seventeenth century. Leicester, Cotwold, Oxford-down and South-down have been crossed with the same. Another native breed is the American Merino, originally imported from Spain in 1809 and 1810, and to which may be added the importations of Silesian Merinos in 1857, and others since. All these have been crossed and inter-bred with the original stock and its product, until now the United States has large flocks of good wool-bearing sheep.

**Amiantus:** Mountain flax, flexible asbestos, or earth flax, a mineral having somewhat the appearance of flax, being usually grayish or greenish-white in color, and composed of delicate filaments, flexible and elastic, and sometimes long, resembling threads of silk.

It is a finer form of the variety of hornblende called Asbestos. Thread and fabrics are made from it. Also written *Amianthus*.

**Amiestes:** An old commercial name for cotton cloths which came from the East Indies.

**Ammonia:** Ammonia represents the aqueous solution of ammonia gas and has a very pungent smell. It is marketed mostly in a strength of 24 per cent (0.913 specific gravity) and is thus lighter than water. Ammonia gas is driven out of the solution by heat, and escapes into the air. The gas is sold in a condensed form in steel cylinders as a chemically almost pure liquid. Ammonia is one of the best cleansing agents used in wool scouring, being also employed for neutralizing acids and for other purposes.

**Ammonium Acetate:** The same serves for mildly acidulating the dye baths of Alphanol Blue, Diamine Colors, etc., and for stripping colors off wool and silk.

**Ammonium Carbonate:** A compound of ammonia sometimes used as a wool-scouring agent.

**Ammonium Oxalate:** A well crystallized salt dissolving readily at 15 deg. C in 24 times its weight of water. The solution of the salt may be prepared by dissolving 1 lb. oxalic acid in 1 gallon hot water and neutralizing the solution with about 1½ lbs. ammonia (0.913 sp. gr. or 24 per cent); this solution should not change either blue or red litmus paper and contains about 1½ lbs. oxalate of ammonia crystals. The salt is chiefly used in the dyeing of some Chrome Colors, to precipitate the lime salts contained in hard water, in turn rendering them innocuous. Also called *Oxalate of Ammonia*.

**Ammonium Sulphocyanide:** A salt forming colorless, very freely soluble leaflets; used in wool dyeing to reduce the effect of metallic copper on certain dyestuffs, by forming a kind of coating of sulphocyanide of copper and which protects the copper. Care must therefore be taken not to remove this coating when cleaning copper vessels, *i. e.*, not polishing them.

**Amylum:** The principle of starch.

**Anabasse:** A coarse Dutch or Normandy blanketing used in African trade.

**Anacard:** The cashew-nut; the fruit of the *Anacardium occidentale*. The juice of this nut becomes black by exposure, and is employed for marking cotton cloths, etc.

**Anacostas:** A Bradford term for a worsted dress fabric, rich in quality and appearance, made with 30's Botany worsted warp, 58 threads per inch, 40's Botany worsted filling with 100 picks per inch, using the 4-harness even sided twill for weave. These goods are woven in a grey or undyed condition and piece-dyed. Although the weave is the 4-harness even sided twill, the structure is of a pronounced filling effect surface on account of the latter predominating in the construction of the fabric; the high number of picks (nearly twice as many) compared to the warp-threads give the twill a low angle. To some extent the fabric resembles what is known as French cashmere cloth.

A woollen fabric made in Holland and exported to Spain.