

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN CARD- CLOTHING INDUSTRY

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History of the American card-clothing industry by Henry Grattan Kittredge & Arthur Corbin Gould

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HENRY GRATTAN KITTREDGE & ARTHUR CORBIN GOULD

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OF THE
AMERICAN CARD-CLOTHING INDUSTRY.

BY
H. G. KITTREDGE
AND
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PREFACE.

PORTIONS of the matter contained in the following chapters have previously appeared in papers devoted to the textile industry. Recognizing the value of this, and knowing its perishable nature if recorded only in a newspaper, the publishers have corrected certain errors in what has heretofore appeared in print, have made many additions, and by printing and circulating it in book form among their friends and customers they wish to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the existence of their business.

As the late TIMOTHY K. EARLE contributed so much to bring the Card-Clothing Industry to its present condition in this country, the publishers deem it only fitting that his portrait and a slight memoir of his life should appear in these pages.

T. K. EARLE M'FG COMPANY.

Worcester, Mass., January, 1896.



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HISTORY
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CHAPTER I.

ITS EARLY HISTORY AND INVENTIONS.

THE importance the card-clothing industry bears to the textile industry of this country is manifested in the fact that it directly contributes to the successful employment of \$350,000,000 of capital which is invested in cotton and woolen manufactures. With only three exceptions, the industry is confined to six towns in the State of Massachusetts; and, although no large fortunes have been amassed by those engaged in this industry, they have in most cases been prosperous, largely due to the fact that American card-clothing manufacturers are, as a class, men of thrifty and correct habits, their business requiring the greatest

care and constant personal supervision, and necessitating employé's possessing the same qualifications.

The use of some instrument for carding, or preparing wool to facilitate its being spun into thread, has been among the devices of man from the earliest eras of historical record. It is doubtful if carding was contemporaneous with spinning, for it is quite possible to spin the raw material into yarn without the intervention of any mechanical contrivance. The history of card clothing as we know it to-day, in its manufacture by machinery, is scarcely a century old. Immediately before this the making of card clothing was the work purely of manual labor, and the substitution of mechanical means did not affect the principle of construction. With the inventions in textile machinery that rapidly followed each other in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the necessity of some expedient by which card clothing could be more rapidly and uniformly made, was imperative; without it the ingenuity of man would have been seriously impeded in bringing his schemes to a satisfactory fruition. The manufacture of card clothing by machinery, before the latter part of the last century,