



**TUBBS, LEWIS & COMPANY,
LANGFORD, ABBEY & NEW MILLS,
KINGSWOOD, WOTTON-UNDER-
EDGE.**

**One of the Largest Manufacturers of
Elastic Fabrics in Great Britain.**

ESTABLISHED IN 1864

IN view of the tendency toward the decentralisation of industry, a movement which has greatly increased during the past few years, a reference to the establishment and development of Messrs. Tubbs, Lewis and Company's business at Kingswood, near Wotton-under-Edge, will be of special interest. Not only has Gloucestershire directly benefited by the establishment of the Firm's mills, but the unqualified success which has attended the venture has amply demonstrated the advantages, from both the employers' and operatives' point of view, of selecting manufacturing sites in rural districts.

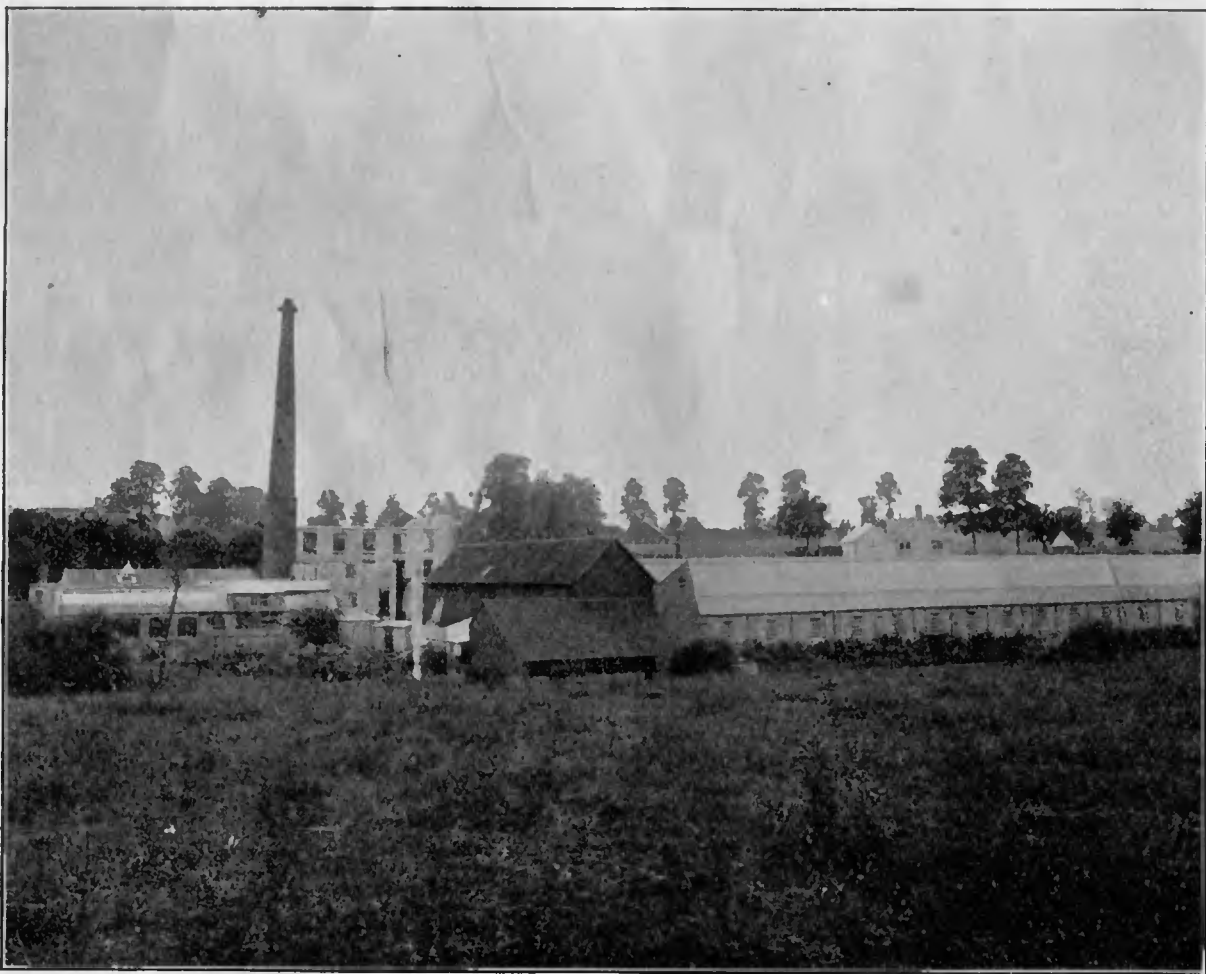
Since the several mills operated by this Firm form one of the largest and most important accessions to the county's industries in recent years, we feel it a privilege to include an account of them in this publication. The following reference, however, will be necessarily brief,



"NEW MILLS," MESSRS. TUBBS, LEWIS & CO.

adapt themselves to the requirements imposed by modern conditions.

In 1870 the Firm purchased what were known as the "Abbey Mills," immediately afterwards acquiring the "Langford Mill," and a few years later the "New Mills." The alterations to these mills, involving a very considerable outlay of capital, were carried out in the most thorough manner, and in a short period the long untenanted buildings again became the scene of activity. It should be added that the initial expense has by no means been the only outlay, as the steady expansion of the business has necessitated frequent enlargements. In 1895 a fine new weaving shed, 100 by 95 feet in dimensions, and embodying every desirable feature that forethought and experience could suggest, was erected adjoining the "New Mills"; in 1899 the "Abbey Mills," which had been partially destroyed by fire, were rebuilt, and considerably enlarged, the operatives being employed by the Firm to assist in the work of reconstruction; and almost every year has witnessed some important addition or alteration. In point of mechanical equipment the various departments could scarcely be excelled, as no effort has been spared to facilitate production and to conserve economy. The build-



"ABBAY MILLS," MESSRS. TUBBS, LEWIS & CO.

and we can but allude to a few of the more interesting features of the industry.

Something over thirty years ago the Firm, whose warehouse and counting house at 29 and 30, Noble-street, London, E.C., have long been familiar to the trade, decided to transfer their manufacturing plant to the present location. This decision was influenced by the fact that several abandoned cloth mills, which could readily be adapted to the new requirements, could be obtained. The possibility of acquiring additional building land, should it be required, and the cleanly and wholesome conditions under which the operatives would live and labour, thereby increasing their efficiency, were also determining factors.

It may be of interest to state, in passing, that at one time the picturesque village of Wotton-under-Edge was one of the most noted cloth manufacturing centres in the kingdom. In the readjustment of the industry brought by improved machinery and changing methods, the mills were one by one suspended, there now remaining but one of the old mills that has been in continuous operation for over a century. A gratifying feature of Messrs. Tubbs, Lewis and Company's industry is the proof it affords that Gloucestershire still offers every advantage to those manufacturers of textile fabrics who



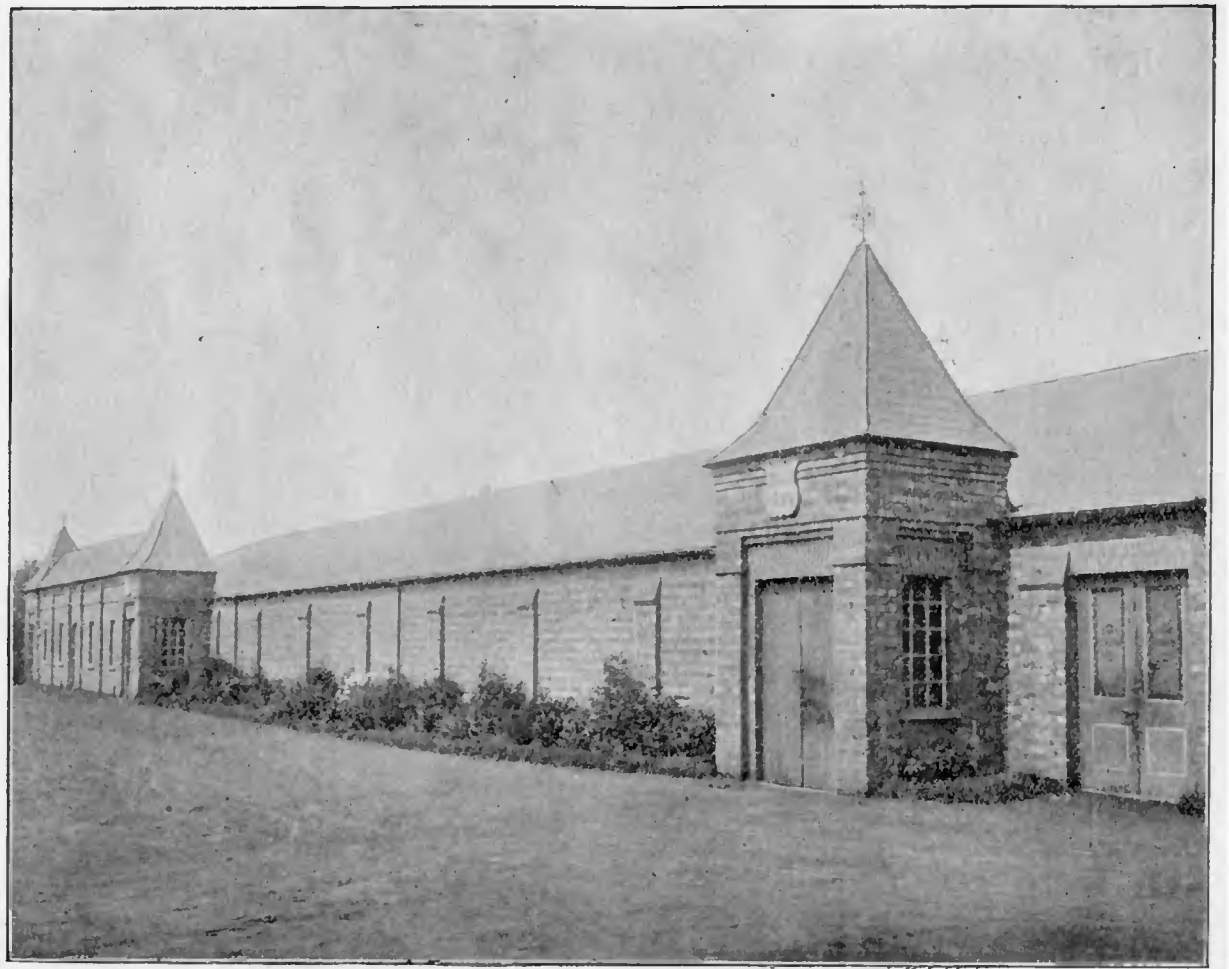
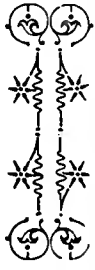
"LANGFORD MILLS," MESSRS. TUBBS, LEWIS & CO.



ings are lighted by electricity and cover a floor area of 100,000 square feet. The precautions taken against fire, the heating, lighting, ventilation, and general sanitary arrangements have all been thoroughly planned and carried out, and it is doubtful if any operatives in Gloucestershire labour under better conditions—a compliment which can be fully appreciated only by those who have had the pleasure of inspecting some of the more noted manufacturing plants in the county.

As may be seen from several of the accompanying engravings, a noticeable advantage enjoyed by the Firm is an abundance of water-power, furnished by the Little Avon, which rises in the Cotswolds a few miles above the Kingswood Mills. The waters of this stream are gathered into several large reservoirs, one or two of which are shown in the illustrations, and which comprise several acres. The Little Avon is largely spring-fed and is uncontaminated, the purity of the water being an important factor in dyeing and in other processes connected with the production of textile fabrics.

The "Abbey Mills," the "Langford Mills," and the "New Mills" are each the scene of what is practically a separate industry. The latter are devoted exclusively to the manufacture of elastic fabrics, for which looms of special pattern have been devised; in the "Abbey



"DYE WORKS," MESSRS. TUBBS, LEWIS & CO.

paratively recent addition, requires the services of upwards of one hundred operatives.

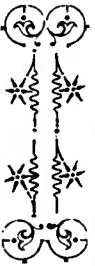
The Firm have also introduced several notable inventions of their own, including what is known in trade circles as the "Tulewco silk finish." The celebrated Lisle looms, manufactured from this fabric, are recognised as being superior to anything on the market. It met with instant success upon its introduction, still maintaining its prestige. The well-known "Langford stainless black" is also the product of this Firm's enterprise and ingenuity. Still another speciality is their "electric" process for plating pins. This process is the result of years of experimenting, and marks a distinct advance over the methods ordinarily used.

All of Messrs. Tubbs, Lewis and Company's manufactured products are distributed from their London house. Branch establishments are also maintained in the leading commercial centres of this and other countries, the Firm having a large export as well as a domestic trade. While the name of the Firm itself is favourably known wherever haberdashery is used, but few are familiar with the extent of their works or the excellent conditions under which their manufactures are made, and it is to be hoped that the foregoing inadequate sketch will prove of interest.

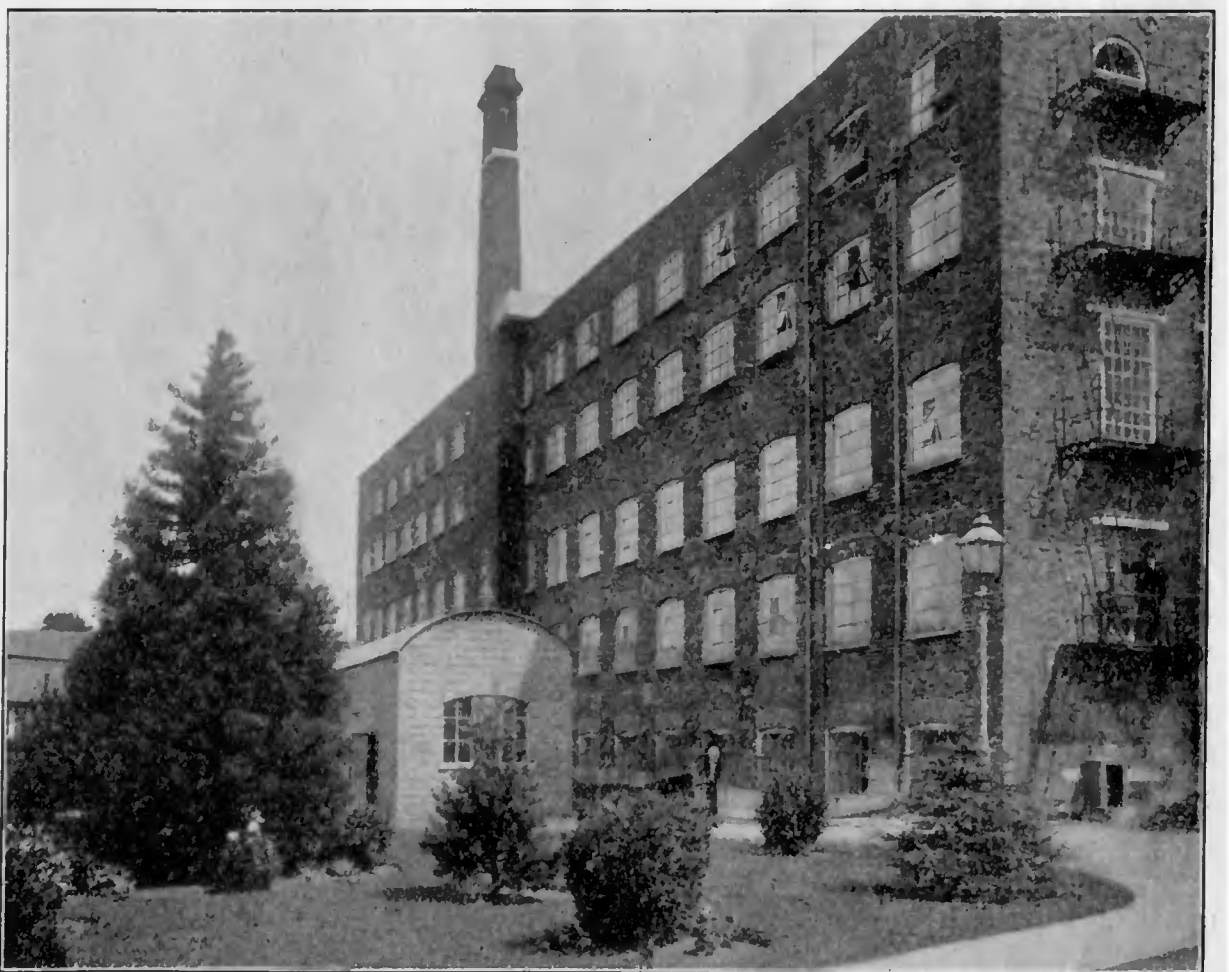


"NEW MILL" WEAVING SHED.
Messrs. Tubbs, Lewis & Co.

Mills" silk, cotton, and flax fishing lines, elastic cords and braids of every description, and similar articles are produced; while the "Langford Mills" are devoted to silk throwing, the silk being transformed direct from the raw to the finished article. Adjoining the "Abbey Mills" are the well-appointed dye-works. The manufacture of pins—quite a distinct branch of the industry—is carried on in the basement of the "New Mills" and in several outbuildings. The entire staff of operatives employed in the various departments aggregates seven hundred, all of whom reside in the immediate neighbourhood. From this statement it may be seen how large a part the Firm have taken in reviving the industrial prosperity of the district. It is but just to add that the relations between the employers and the operatives have been, and are, of the most cordial character.



While Messrs. Tubbs, Lewis and Company's manufactures cover a wide range—as may be seen from the foregoing reference to their mills—it may be proper to mention several of their products which have become particularly noted. Among these is the "Sandow Developer," invented by Mr. Eugene Sandow, and so widely used by physical culturists the world over. The manufacture of this ingenious apparatus and other exercisers, though a com-



Established 1780.

"PIN WORKS," MESSRS. TUBBS, LEWIS & CO.