

## THE LOOM OF LIFE.

I stood within a busy room  
Where many carpet-weavers were,  
And each did ply a lofty loom,  
With ceaseless and with noisy stir ;  
Warp and roller, spool and reel—  
It was a curious scene to view,  
While slow revolved each groaning wheel,  
And fast the clashing shuttles flew.

Unnumbered threads of brilliant dyes,  
From beam to beam all closely drawn  
Seemed dipt in hues of sunset skies,  
Or steeped in tints of rosy dawn.—

As if a thousand rainbows bright  
 Had been unraveled, ray by ray,  
 And each prismatic beam of light  
 Was woven in the fabric gay.

Quick—quick the clicking shuttles flew,  
 And slowly up the web was rolled,  
 Sprinkled with purple, red and blue,  
 And strewed with stars of yellow gold;  
 The quaint device came forth so true,  
 It seemed a work of magic power,  
 As if by force of Nature grew  
 Each imaged leaf and figured flower !

I sat within a silent room,  
 While evening shadows deepened round,  
 And thought that life was like a loom  
 With many-colored tissues wound,—  
 Our souls the warp, and thought a thread  
 That since our being first began,  
 Backward and forth has ever sped,  
 Shot by the busy weaver—man !

And all events of changing years  
 That lend their colors to our life,  
 Though oft their memory disappears  
 Amid our pleasures and our strife,  
 Are added fibres to the warp,  
 And here and there, they will be seen,  
 Dyed deep in joy or sorrows sharp —  
 For *we* are all that we *have been* !

The loves and hopes of youthful hours,  
 Though buried in oblivion deep,  
 Like hidden threads in woven flowers  
 Upon the web will start from sleep.  
 And one loved face we sometimes find  
 Pictured there with memories rife,—  
 A part of that mysterious mind  
 Which forms the endless warp of life !

Still hour by hour the tissue grows,  
 (MEMORY is its well-known name,)  
 Stained bright with joys or dark with woes,  
 The pattern never twice the same !  
 For its confused and mingled gleams  
 Display so little care or plan,  
 In heedless sport the shuttle seems  
 Thrown by the maddened weaver—man !

And if our conscious waking thought  
 Weaves out so few and worthless ends,  
 Much more a tangled woof is wrought  
 When dream with dream commingling blends;  
 The toilsome scenes of weary days,  
 By night lived o'er, at morn we see  
 Made monstrous in a thousand ways,  
 Like fabled shapes on tapestry !

And as the weaver's varied braid  
When turned, a double wonder shows,—  
The lights all changed to sombre shade,  
While what was dim then warmly glows ;  
So that which now we think most bright,  
And all we deem most dark and cold,  
Will seem inverted to our sight,  
When we our inner life behold !

For thought ends not,—it reaches on  
Through every change of world or clime,  
While of itself will ever run  
The restless flying shuttle—time !  
And when the deep-imprinted soul  
Shall burst the chambers of the tomb,  
Eternity will forth unroll  
The work of this our wondrous loom !

H. W. PARKER.

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