

CROCHET.

WHILE the sun, with parting glances,
 On my zephyr web is beaming,
 Will you listen to my dreaming?
 Would you like to know my fancies,
 Know what hidden meaning lies
 In my spinster-like devotion
 To the polished shaft, which flies
 In and out with easy motion?
 How old Walton loved his hook
 He hath told us in his book;
 If I prize *my* hook as well,
 Sure I too my love may tell.

Now the thought of Izaak's angling
 Bringeth to my mind the saying
 That this crochet is but playing;
 That *we* keep poor fishes dangling
 With a wearisome delay,
 From our line so soft and pretty.
 We are anglers too, they say,
 Cruel anglers, void of pity.
 Yet we do not hide the hook,
 Do not cast it in the brook;
 If they snatch the fatal link
 Are *we* guilty, do you think?

Now I call me Clotho, spinning
 Some one's measure of existence.
 With a hero's wise persistence,
 Looking back to the beginning,
 Never thinking of the end;
 For 'tis not my task to sever,
 Nor may I from fate defend,
 When the parting comes forever.
 Thus I spin the slender thread,
 Tint it with a rosy red,
 And, with lingering touch and slow,
 Gently check its rapid flow.

But my dreams are shifting ever.
 I am striving *now* to weave me,
 From the thread which Clotho gave me,
 Such a web of pure endeavor
 As shall fold me evermore
 In a robe of light and beauty,
 When my busy life is o'er—
 When I've finished all my duty.
 But my thread is oh, so fine!
 Smallest moments form the line,
 And I weave 'mid anxious fears,
 For I dread the fatal shears.

Here a knot is in the worsted.
 See how carefully I hide it!
 Just so carefully I tied it
 When to future skill I trusted
 For concealment of the knot.
 That's the way with woman's sorrow,
 Hidden pain is half forgot
 In the bustle of the morrow.
 Yet my web is no less fair
 For the tangle hidden there,
 And our lives seem joyous still,
 Though they bury many an ill.

So, while twilight shades are falling,
 Threads of fancy I am twining
 With the rosy wool combining;
 Heedless of the voices calling
 From beyond the garden wall;
 Till, at last, the steady motion
 Knits up all my zephyr ball.
 Here's the spring of my devotion—
 This is why I love my hook
 As the poet loves a book:
 Thus its charms my cares beguile,
 For I'm *dreaming* all the while.