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 fancy,
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 Isak's angling
Bringeth to my mind the saying
That this crochet is but playing;
That we keep poor flies 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 Clothe, 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 Clothe 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;
Headless 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 book
As the poet loves a book:
Thus its charms my cares beguile,
For I'm dreaming all the while.