

CROCHET (a French word signifying a hook), a species of handiwork, which may be described as an extensive system of looping, by means of hooks made for the purpose. You take a hook of a size proportioned to the fineness of the cotton or wool employed, and begin by making a chain of loops. You then turn, and with your hook still in the last loop, begin the double process of catching the thread through each loop of the chain, and also through that in which your hook is, and thus form another chain attached to the first, and so on. This is called simple or plain crochet. Endless varieties of patterns may be formed, and lightness and elegance attained, by twisting the thread one or more times in taking up the loop, and open work is formed by passing one or more loops. This work may be made round by beginning with a very few loops, joining the first to the last, and then proceeding to take several loops through one, and so widening on. C. has this advantage over knitting, that by drawing the last loop, and leaving it wide, there is no fear of the work running down as happens when knitting-needles slip. Shades of the same colour, and varieties of colours in wool as well as in silk, are used for this work. In white cotton, C. can be made available, from large bed-quilts to delicate lace-like edgings. See numerous small books describing and giving patterns of crochet.