

The laugh is just as ready,
 The smile is just as sweet,
 The cadence of the ripened voice
 Is harmony complete ;
 But in the steady, serious eyes
 Both joy and sorrow meet.

The glitter of the sunlight
 Upon the dancing waves,
 The wild rush of the waters
 Within their ocean caves,
These do the little children see,
 But not the hidden graves !

The sunshine has its shadow ;
 The waters have their moan,
 And all things in Creation
 Are fashioned to a groan ;
 The children hear the melody,
 But not the undertone !

And this is God's provision—
 How wise we surely know !
 For little brains and bodies
 Must wiser, stronger grow
 Ere they can bear the common lot :
 Man's heritage of woe.

From girlhood into womanhood,
 From dreamland into life ;
 From visions to realities,
 From idleness to strife ;
 From planning to a woman's lot
 As mother, maid or wife.

The years have taught their lesson,
 Nor taught it all in vain ;
 The minor key of sorrow
 Is heard in every strain ;
 And many a careless laugh is read
 As hiding bitter pain.

But e'en as pain is keener
 And shade is darklier cast,
 So is the sun more welcome
 When once the storm is past,
 And every joy is dearer held
 Because it may not last.

For those same years that quickened
 The shrinking nerves of pain
 Made joy a deeper passion,
 And needs it to explain ;