Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes,  Deep and still, that gliding stream
In whose orbs a shadow lies  Beautiful to thee must seem,
Like the dusk in evening skies!  As the river of a dream.

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,  Then why pause with indecision,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,  When bright angels in thy vision
As the braided streamlets run!  Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Standing, with reluctant feet,  Womanhood and childhood fleet!
Where the brook and river meet,  Gazing, with a timid glance,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!  On the brooklet’s swift advance,

On the river’s broad expanse!
Maidenhood

Seest thou shadows sailing by, Gather, then, each flower that grows, 
As the dove, with startled eye, When the young heart overflows, 
Sees the falcon’s shadow fly? To embalm that tent of snows.

Hearest thou voices on the shore, Bear a lily in thy hand; 
That our ears perceive no more, Gates of brass cannot withstand 
Deafened by the cataract’s roar? One touch of that magic wand.

O, thou child of many prayers! Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares In thy heart the dew of youth,
Care and age come unawares! On thy lips the smile of truth!

Like the swell of some sweet tune, O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Morning rises into noon, Into wounds that cannot heal,
May glides onward into June. Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;— Into many a sunless heart,
Age, that bough with snows encumbered. For a smile of God thou art.