This is the kid whom all of us meet
Striding on corners, crossing the street,—
Comes near getting killed six times a day,
Running wild in his sweet, childish way.

This is the kid with the sister fair;
Whenever you call you'll find him there;
He yanks your hair all out of its curl,
And then you laugh,—because of the girl.

You call him "cherub,"—smother a yawn,
And curse your luck until he has gone.
As the moments pass as light as air
And all the world seems free from care
As you bend your head o'er her dark hair,
Gently murmur soft a nothing rare;
Her eyes look up,—as much as they dare,—
Then his head appears behind a chair.

This is the kid who improves the chance
The spice of table talk to enhance
With some wildly novel, choice remark,
Whose brilliancy would shine in the dark.

Yes, this is the kid with "whys?" and "hows?"
And noise and cries, and racket and rows.
Oh, would some god the world kindly rid
Of its greatest evil known,—the kid!

This is the sage whom all of us know;
His hair as white as the country's snow,
His lifeless eyes and his gouty walk,
And endless flow of counseling talk.

This is the sage who'll tell you the way
To grasp all knowledge in one short day;
His large brain would a Lanza appall,—
The fact of it is, "he knows it all."

This is the sage who gets in the car,
And takes the seat in the corner far
Which YOU had kept for the maiden shy
Whose upward glance you chance to spy,
As the entering crowd had drawn her nigh.
For her sake you rise,—then catch her eye;
But the old man is easy to satisfy,
And, filling both seats, heaves a chronic sigh.

This is the sage with spectacled nose,
Bald shining head, and more shiny clothes,
With his sighs, complaints, his grumps and groans,
And stiff, rheumaticy, gouty bones.

Yes, this is the sage,—oh, why did fate
Let him linger in the world so late!
Poets have sung of a ripe old age,
But one is far overripe,—the sage!

These two still live, and the world still moves;
Their victims can't stir it from its grooves.
We like it well. It's a pleasant place,
Though these two evils help mar its face.

Love and charity to fellow-men?
Respect your neighbor? Well, yes,—but then,
When powerful men are seen to quail,
And frightened women, ghastly pale,
In anguish cry, and to no avail,
Because these evils live; we then fail
To see why a strong and healthy jail,
Without a chance of securing bail,
Is not a very proper resort
For the kid, the sage, and all their sort.