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Man's loftiest endeavour,
Yet doth it ever
Seem but as childlike play,
Forecasting great activities,
Of which, while sense and fancy still hold sway,
He can but strike some pleasing images.
So thrills the eagle-nestling's wing
With many a prophetic flutter,
Ere yet his feeble throat can utter
Its strong defiant cry
At the majestic sweep
Of the imperial pinions, as they fling
Adown the eery's dizzy steep,
Or mount exultingly on high
To roam at will the boundless spaces of the sky.

VII.

And therefore when that fire beneficent,
Which burns through all the processes of time,
And drains away the dross of human deeds,
Has tried the work in which these years were spent,
Your kindly recognition feeds
A hope sublime,
That that fierce trial may unfold,
Out of its fiery foam,
Some residue of that true gold
Which forms the current coin of our eternal home.