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Parent and
Philosophical
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Soap Bubbles

From years of study and of contemplation
An old man brews a work of clarity,
A gay and involuted dissertation
Discoursing on sweet wisdom playfully.

An eager student bent on storming heights
Has delved in archives and in libraries,
But adds the touch of genius when he writes
A first book full of deepest subtleties.

A boy, with bowl and straw, sits and blows,
Filling with breath the bubbles from the bowl
Each praises like a hymn, and each one glows
Into the filmy beads he blows his soul.

Old man, student, boy, all these three
Out of the Maya-foam of the universe
Create illusions. None is better or worse.
But in each of them the Light of Eternity
Sees its reflection, and burns more joyfully.

THE GLASS BEAD GAME
Hermann Hesse