

To prove the bestial descent of man.
 Their boldness caught the boy at vantage, then,
 Even as a whirlwind to its vortex draws.
 Loose and unstable things, in sunless gloom
 Of cold materialism, taught him fast
 Knowledge of good and evil, plucked the fruit
 And gave him, and he ate; and deemed it good
 To teach himself, and not be taught of God;
 As once in Eden man ate, and was wise
 In shame of self; but all unwise to Him
 Who walks amidst Life's garden in the cool
 Of twilight, calling: "Adam! where art thou?"
 Oh! happy he who hides not from that voice
 In his transgression! but will hear the Word
 Of Life in life—without which all is vain,
 Philosophies are nought, and science dead.

But strong was Basil's nature; underneath
 The gorget of a loyal soldier, beat
 His heart with all the instincts of his race:
 Courage and honour, love of truth, and more
 Than common love for his dear country. He
 Was proud of her renown in arts and arms,
 Empire and Freedom, crowned from ancient days
 With regal splendour "by the grace of God."

No empty formula! he granted that,
 And liked the phrase, expressive of a thing
 Needed for human governance. If law
 Were without sanction greater than the man's
 Who made it, greater than or King or State,
 And without power that in itself is right,
 As warrant for authority—why, then,
 Justice were nought; obedience, policy;
 And moral good but selfishness refined,
 Earthy in all its elements, and vile.

Young Basil's bark struck on this dangerous rock,
 That lay mid-stream in all his reasonings,
 Threatening destruction to them, as they sank
 Loaded with logic of false premises
 And Godless arguments. In vain he strove
 To catch them sinking, by the floating locks,
 To rescue them, but could not. One by one
 They ever would escape his strongest grasp,
 And leave him struggling in the turbid flood
 Unanswered, angry at himself and them,
 Blinded with sun-glare.

Art alone for him
 With its ideal, like a living soul