

The Alpha and Omega, First and Last,
And all that sacred letters can express,
In languages and tongues of God to man.

Said Basil: "Now I know three things above
High mark of worldly wisdom,—Isa's love
For me the helpless one!—a thing divine!
And next the love for truths above our reach,
Above the reach and earthly needs of man.
And last; those yearnings that possess the soul
For immortality and life to come!
To apprehend the infinite, no less
Than an eternity we need. Some sphere
Where love shall blossom to its perfect flower,
And full fruition, beautiful, complete,
The complement of what is here begun,
And left unfinished—broken in the stem!"
His voice grew tremulous with tears suppressed.
"As mine is now a useless burthen thrown
Upon thy love and labour."

Isa turned,
As when with soft reproach the risen Lord
Looked upon Magdalene, and "Mary!" said;
So one word uttered she—she could no more—
"Basil!" and knelt and raised his pallid hands
So thin and wasted to her lips, and pressed
Them long and lovingly, while fell hot tears
Upon them. "Basil!" that was all she said.
The sweet reproof dropped like a blessing down
Of manna, on his hungry soul. He knew
That all the seven labours poets feign,
Were nought compared to this true woman's love!

Some weeks of mortal pain with patience borne,
As manly natures bear them, left his life
Receding like a wave at ebb of tide,
Without reflux, and running out to sea.
The unknown shore loomed up not far away,
And each day nearer. In his eyes was seen
A strange expectancy; and Isa marked
The change from day to day, foreboding all,
And doubling her sweet services of love,
More anxious ever with the greater need.

All books henceforth were laid aside, save one,
The living Word, whose proof is in itself;
As Eden's trees have in themselves their seeds,
Or the Shechinah shines with its own light.
And if like Jews, men ask a sign; behold!