

GRAHAM R. TOMSON
[ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON]

“Nirvana”

Sleep will He give His beloved?

Not dreams, but the precious guerdon of deepest rest?

Aye, surely! Look on the grave-closed eyes,

And cold hands folded on tranquil breast.

Will *not* the All-Great be just, and forgive?

For He knows (though we make no prayer nor cry)

How our lone souls ached when our pale star waned,

How we watch the promiseless sky.

Life hereafter? Ah no! we have lived enough.

Life eternal? Pray God it may *not* be so.

Have we not suffered and striven, loved and endured,

Run through the whole wide gamut of passion and woe?

Strangest illusion! sprung from a fevered habit of hope,

Wild enthusiast's dream of blatant perfection at best.

Give us darkness for anguished eyes, stillness for weary feet,

Silence, and sleep; but no heaven of glittering, loud unrest.

No more the lifelong labour of smoothing the stone-strewn way;

No more the shuddering outlook athwart the sterile plain,

Where every step we take, every word we say,

Each warm, living hand that we cling to, is but a fence against pain.

And nothing may perish, but lives again? Where? Out of thought, out of sight?

And where is your cresset's flame that the rough wind slew last night?

[1884]