

Where, wandering heedlessly, I met pale Pain,
My shadow, which will leave me not again.
If I have erred, there was no joy in error,
But pain, and insult, and unrest, and terror ;
I have not, as some do, bought penitence
With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet offence ;
For then if love, and tenderness, and truth,
Had overlived Hope's momentary youth,
My creed should have redeemed me from repenting
But loathed scorn and outrage unrelenting
Met love excited by far other seeming
Until the end was gained :—as one from dreaming
Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found my state
Such as it is—

“ O thou, my spirit's mate !
Who, for thou art compassionate and wise,
Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle eyes
If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see ;
My secret groans must be unheard by thee ;
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know
Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.
Yet few by whom my nature has been weighed
In friendship, let me not that name degrade,
By placing on your hearts the secret load