A woeful and miserable matter,
Life is and it near comes to end,
Death's angel soars around all,
And over the world calls out:
"VANITY! PERISHABLENESS!"

All on Earth who breath bear,
Must fall to the ground before his glaive,
And grief alone lives on,
To carve upon the wide tomb:
"VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS!
VANITY! PERISHABLENESS!"

When the same Earth one embraces sees, The bones of common man and king, What tells less? What tells more? A marble stone or a mound of mould? VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS!

The strong one puts no solace in his power, And the wise not in wisdom, still; What is happiness and joy? Worldly goods and the price of man? VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS!

Behold, the one whose world is cramped, And the one who sets flesh to arm, Both shall they find room in the end, By the same mother's cold bosom:

VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS! VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS! VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS! VANITY! PERISHEABLENESS!