

LINES TO A SKELETON.

FIFTY years ago the London *Morning Chronicle* published a poem entitled "Lines to a Skeleton," which excited much attention. Every effort, even to the offering of a reward of fifty guineas, was vainly made to discover the author. All that ever transpired was that the poem, in a fair, clerkly hand, was found near a skeleton of remarkable beauty of form and color, in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn, London, and that the Curator of the museum had sent them to Mr. Perry, editor and proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*. We reprint it here:

- "Behold this ruin! 'Twas a skull
Once of ethereal spirit full;
This narrow cell was life's retreat,
This space was thought's mysterious seat:
What beauteous visions filled this spot
With dreams of pleasure long forgot!
Nor hope, nor joy, nor love, nor fear,
Have left one trace of record here.
- "Beneath this mouldering canopy
Once shone the bright and busy eye;
But start not at the dismal void!
If social love that eye employed—
If with no lawless fire it gleamed,
But through the dews of kindness beamed—
That eye shall be forever bright,
When sun and stars are sunk in night.
- "Within this hollow cavern hung
The ready, swift, and tuneful tongue;
If falsehood's honey it disdained,
And when it could not praise was chained;
If bold in virtue's cause it spoke,
Yet gentle concord never broke;
That silent tongue shall plead for thee,
When time unveils eternity.
- "Say, did these fingers delve the mine,
Or with its envied rubies shine?
To hew the rock, or wear the gem,
Can little now avail to them.
But if the page of truth they sought,
Or comfort to the mourner brought,
These hands a richer meed shall claim
Than all that wait on wealth or fame.