

Northern Institution on the character and tendency of their pursuits, in a somewhat lengthy piece of verse, written in what I at least intended to be the manner of Dryden, as exemplified in his middle-style poems, such as the *Religio Laici*, I engrossed it in the old hand, and now called on the Secretary to request that he would present it at the first meeting of the Society, which was to hold, I understood, in a few days. The Secretary was busy at his desk ; but he received me politely, spoke approvingly of my work as an imitation of the old manuscript, and obligingly charged himself with its delivery at the meeting ; and so we parted for the time, not in the least aware that there was a science which dealt with characters greatly more ancient than those of the old manuscripts, and laden with profounder meanings, in which we both took a deep interest, and regarding which we could have exchanged facts and ideas with mutual pleasure and profit. The Secretary of the Northern Institution at this time was Mr. George Anderson, the well-known geologist, and joint author with his brother of the admirable "Guide-Book to the Highlands," which bears their name. I never heard how my address fared. It would, of course, have been tabled,—looked at, I suppose, for a few seconds by a member or two,—and then set aside ; and it is probably still in the archives of the Institution, awaiting the light of future ages, when its simulated antiquity shall have become real. It was not written in a character to be read, nor, I fear, very readable in any character ; and so the members of the Institution must have remained ignorant of all the wisdom I had found in their pursuits, antiquarian and ethnological. The following forms an average specimen of the production :—

" 'Tis yours to trace

Each deep-fixed trait that marks the human race ;  
 And as the Egyptian priests, with mystery fraught,  
 By signs, not words, of Sphynx and Horus taught,  
 So, 'mid your stores, by *things*, not books, ye scan  
 The powers and history of the mind of man.  
 Yon chequered wall displays the arms of war  
 Of times remote and nations distant far :