

THE COUNTY STEEPLECHASE.

HLD Bayard dead? Ah! how that name brings back a glorious time,

When existence seem'd a poem, and my life a happy rhyme.
Wild leaps my very heart's blood at the mention of yon day
When I, a stripling, mounted him—a handsome compact bay,
His blood three-quarters warm, and blood is bound to tell,
Strong in the withers, well ribb'd up; his limbs? sound as a bell,
And fit to run, though life itself were staked upon the race,
That day I cross'd the hog-skin in the County Steeplechase.

Nigh all the county swells were there. Stern Busfeild of the Grange

(The sceptred line may rise and fall—"ye Busfeilds nevvre cheyng"),

The Ayscough Yorkes, old Jack Stonehenge, the Master, from St. Ives,

With Lady Vi—the sweetest hostess, and the best of wives,
And one, oh! such is love, pass'd by in calm patrician pride,
Unconscious of me as I chatted by the squire's side;
And Cain's foul brand was near my heart, as, from her winsome face

Shot witching smiles on Reggie Vyne, my rival in love's race.

Sweet Audrey Leigh! a subtle charm, a nameless beauty thine,
Within the temple of thy life the Graces held their shrine,
To Vyne—to me—thy bearing seem'd calm friendship—nothing more,

Nor glance, nor tone, a preference to either lover bore,
If Reggie proudly took the *pas* at morning rides, or calls,
I held the fort when ev'ning's ray had flush'd the western walls;
If, when the tall elms lent their shade, Vyne was the lingering swain,

I shared with thee the moonlit hour that blanch'd the oriel pane.