



THE OLD MARE'S GRAVE.

Where the moss-banked brooklet lingers,
Beneath yon dark grove's shade,
A little mound of greener grass
Marks where the old mare's laid.

And mem'ry takes me back again
To early, happy years,
As in the dappled pride of health
The dear old gray appears.

A head and neck so light and clean,
An eye so full of fire,
A lion's heart, and limbs of steel
Proclaim the Arab sire.

The covert side, a goodly throng
Of knights and ladies fair,
The beauties of the speckled pack
Flash in the sunlit air.

A whimper in the covert's depths,
Hearts with excitement glow,
A crash of canine melody,
The madd'ning "Tally Ho!"

Now thro' our veins in fervid streams
Courses the tingling blood,
As down the vale, like one wild wave,
Dashes the equine flood.

"Steady! my gray, and take your time,
We know what we've to do;
Just let 'the ruck' run themselves down
And then we will 'come through.'

"Our fox is taking a good line
To thin the soft ones out,
We've been so often through the mill
We know what we're about.

"There, steady! now again, old girl!
A 'yawner's' there in front;
Just let some flyer try it first
And bear the battle's brunt.

"Bravo! my lass, you took it well,
With leap so brave and sure;
Let others try the virtues of
That drain's 'cold water cure.'

"But see, now, how the pace has told—
We've run ten miles or more,
And out of near a century
You'd scarce count half a score.

"See! up yon field, with trailing brush,
Reynard, with falt'ring gait,
Makes for the spinney on the hill—
The haven comes too late!

"Old 'Banterer' is in his wake,
And ere the goal is gained
He rolls him o'er, and soon the ground
With vulpine blood is stained.

" 'Who—whoop!' is ringing in the air!
Hurrah! well done, my gray!
We've cut them down—we've come in first!
We've won the brush to-day."

Light lie the green turf o'er thy head
In this still resting place,
And bright flowers blossom on thy grave,
Dear comrade of the chase!

THOMAS S. BLACKWELL.