

THE HUNTER'S LEAP.

TOM HEADLONG was a lover of the chase—

We want a stronger name than that of lover—
His day was but a long-continued race,

The only plan Tom had to get time over,
Who thought Life's movements nothing had to boast,
Unless its rate was that of going post.

His conversation had no other course

Than that presented to his simple view ;
Of what concerned his saddle, groom, or horse,

Beyond this theme he little cared or knew :
Tell him of beauty, and harmonious sounds,
He'd show his mare, and talk about his hounds.

Oh, fam'd Pythagoras ! would but thy plan

Of transmigration find belief in many,

'Twould check at least some cruelty in man,

To think he must become the brute, if any
Had suffered from him in its worldly station,
For then he'd fear a just retaliation.

But this, you'll say, is nothing but digression—
 Contrivance to prolong a simple tale—
Or else to make a figure in expression,
 A sort of make-weight if your story fail,—
So, to be brief, we'll use no more delay,
But put the mighty Hunter on his way.

The gallant bay that Headlong mounted, then,
 Would something have to urge in its defence,
If in its course of speed it fail'd, and when
 It barely cleared the mound, the dyke, the fence,
That in its hoof a nail was pressing sore,
And damped its ardour, though it could no more.

But now the scent is gaining on the wind,
 The sounds of sylvan war are on the ear ;
The generous courser, never left behind,
 Springs to the cry,—his rivals in the rear
Follow, but where his onward pace is bent,
As if to yield the palm they gave consent.

Awhile the efforts of the generous steed
 (Cheer'd by the hounds and hunter's loud halloo),
Sustained the conflict with his wonted speed,—
 And now the distant game is in his view ;
But here a check, a momentary pause ;
And for the leap, the hunter bridle draws.

Nor slack the gallant bay—his chest he bears

In act to spring, when now the topmost bar
Strikes the pain'd hoof—and vainly now he rears—

His efforts fail,—he falls—and distant far
The prostrate rider feels (with parting breath
And shortened sobs) the icy hand of Death.

The merry sportsmen pass him by,

And deem some stunning blow

Has laid him, and they let him lie,

While on they cheering go.

But none take warning by his fate,

Though Death upon the leap should wait.

SIMON SUREFOOT.