

RARISSIMA AVIS

By far the Rarest Bird of all
 Is the bird on the lawn of my aunt.
 It has QUITE short legs and bright blue eyes,
 And shows no white when it hops or flies,
 And is only (she says) of moderate size,
 But its beak has a curious slant.

It was there on Monday and twice last week,
 It was seen by her boot-boy, Bertie,
 And it uttered a REALLY PECULIAR note,
 And its small dark crest, and a mark on the throat,
 Remind my Aunt of the Bird she wrote
 To the FIELD about, in '30.

O, what is the bird on the lawn of my aunt?
 I have searched all the books in vain,
 From the Alpine Chough to the Arctic Smew
 (For birds with a small dark crest are few),
 But my aunt is sure it's something new,
 For she saw it as plain as plain!

The age of my aunt is eighty-four,
 And her lawn is twelve by three,
 But there do the Rarest Birds drop down
 With their bright blue eyes and buff on the crown,
 And are seen by the Vicar and old Miss Brown,
 But NEVER vouchsafed to me!

From "A Bewilderment of Birds" by J.K. Stanford, published in London in
 1954 by Rupert Hart-Davis, Soho Square. Submitted by Mrs. Elise Dickerson.

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