

"Bob White."

WHEN the sun's gold spears were falling
On the new-made morn,
Did I hear a clear voice calling,
Calling from the corn?
Did I hear it—dream, or hear it?
Was I distant, was I near it?
Was it mortal, was it sprite,
Calling: "White—Bob White!
Bob—Bob White—
Bob White?"

Ah, I hear it, and I see it
Sitting on the rail.
Is it real, can it be it,
My old friend, the quail?
Out of season, out of cover,
Turned a migrant, turned a rover,
Sitting boldly in my sight,
Calling: "White—Bob White!
Bob—Bob White—
Bob White!"

Not at hand, my gun and setter;
Left at rest till fall.
Out of service, and it's better—
Better, after all.
He has changed his covey habits,
In the rag-weeds with the rabbits,
And the manner of his flight,
And he calls: "Bob White!
Bob—Bob White—
Bob White!"

But it's he of mottled hackles,
On the field-fence rail,
Out of covey, out of shackles,
It's the same old quail.
These are not the sounds he whistles
'Mid the briars and the thistles,
In the autumn's yellow blight—
No not: "White—Bob White!
Bob—Bob White—
Bob White!"

Henry T. Stanton.

Of Laura's Bonnet.

To see my Laura put her bonnet on,—
To see her, with demure and roguish grace,
Coquetting with her own fair, mirrored face,—
'T were worthy theme to write a sonnet on.
His Julia's clothes hath Herrick done it on;
And my love's, too, might claim such honored
place,
Since no more dimpled chin may silk embrace,
Or whiter throat be crossed with Honiton.

I trow no bonnet Petrarch's Laura wore
Did look so sweet, or ribands had like those
My Laura's fingers lightly fumble o'er
Until they turn them into Cupid's bows.
Then, with half-pouting lips, doth she insist:
"I'm ready now— all ready to be kissed."

W. D. Ellwanger.

The Dilettante: A Modern Type.

HE scribbles some in prose and verse,
And now and then he prints it;
He paints a little— gathers some
Of nature's gold and mints it.

He plays a little, sings a song,
Acts tragic rôles, or funny;
He does, because his love is strong,
But not, oh, not for money!

He studies almost everything
From social art to science:
A thirsty mind, a flowing spring,
Demand and swift compliance.

He looms above the sordid crowd—
At least through friendly lenses;
While his mama looks pleased and proud,
And kindly pays expenses.

Paul Laurence Dunbar.

"A Little Brother of the Air."

THERE is a bird I know so well,
It seems as if he must have sung
Beside my crib when I was young;
Before I knew the way to spell
The name of even the smallest bird,
His gentle, joyful song I heard.
Now see if you can tell, my dear,
What bird it is that, every year,
Sings "Sweet—sweet—sweet—
very merry cheer."

He comes in March, when winds are strong,
And snow returns to hide the earth;
But still he warms his heart with mirth,
And waits for May. He lingers long
While flowers fade; and every day
Repeats his small, contented lay;
As if to say, we need not fear
The season's change, if love is here
With "Sweet—sweet—sweet—
very merry cheer."

He does not wear a Joseph's-coat
Of many colors, smart and gay;
His suit is Quaker brown and gray,
With three dark patches at his throat.
And yet of all the well-dressed throng
Not one can sing so brave a song.
It makes the pride of looks appear
A vain and foolish thing, to hear
His "Sweet—sweet—sweet—
very merry cheer."

A lofty place he does not love,
But sits by choice, and well at ease,
In hedges, and in little trees
That stretch their slender arms above
The meadow-brook; and there he sings
Till all the field with pleasure rings;
And so he tells in every ear,
The lowliest home to heaven is near
In "Sweet—sweet—sweet—
very merry cheer."

I like the tune, I like the words;
They seem so true, so free from art,
So friendly, and so full of heart,
That if but one of all the birds
Could be my comrade everywhere,
My little brother of the air,
I'd choose the song-sparrow, my dear,
Because he'd bless me, every year,
With "Sweet—sweet—sweet—
very merry cheer."

Henry van Dyke.



PAINTED BY RUBENS.

ENGRAVED BY T. COLE, FROM THE ORIGINAL IN THE MUSEUM, BRUSSELS.

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