

OUR TABLE.

LYRICS; BY W. C. BENNETT AND R. W. EMERSON.

It is refreshing in this rhyming age to meet with a pure poetic gem like the following stanzas to the Skylark, written by W. C. Bennett, an English poet whose works have never been given to the public. A small manuscript volume only has been sent to a friend on this side of the Atlantic; from that, the stanzas named above, found their way into the pages of a Miscellany, from whence we extract them.

We have read them ourselves again and again with delight, for they breathe to our ear the very soul of music, uttered in words as simple and glowing as are the notes of the lovely songster they immortalize. The cadence, the language, the measure, are so exquisitely adapted to the subject, that, borne away by the verse, we seem to hear the rapturous strain of the bird itself, as with quivering wing it wheels upward through the golden air, to greet the bright-haired sun with its gushes of entrancing melody. Complete and refreshing is the picture—the gradual dawning of day—the dewy earth—the “bright-belled flowers,”—the songster’s swift upsoaring from its nest of love, with its sudden outburst of rapturous melody, all charm with the truth of reality, in these beautiful stanzas. They are a vivid and graphic painting of the objects they describe, and bring to us all the delicious freshness and beauty of a summer dawn in the green embowered lanes of the country.

But our readers shall judge for themselves of the “thoughts that breathe and words that burn,” which have kindled in us such enthusiastic pleasure:

TO THE SKYLARK.

Quiverer of the golden air,—
Nestled in a golden earth,—
Mate of hours when thrushes pair,
Hedges green, and blooms have birth,—
Up, thou very shout of joy;
Gladness wert thou made to fling
O'er all moods of earth's annoy,—
Up through morning, soar and sing.

Shade by shade hath gloom decreased,
Westward stars and night have gone,
Up, and up the crimsoning east
Slowly mounts the golden dawn;
Up,—thy radiant life was given
Rapture o'er earth to fling;
Morning hushes, hushed in heaven,
Dumb to hear thee soaring sing.

Up,—thy utterance silence robs
Of the extacies of earth,
Dowering sound with all the throbs
Of its madness, of its mirth;
Tranced lies its golden prime,
Dumb with utter joy; O, fling
Listening air, the raptured time,
Quivering gladness, soar and sing!

Up,—no white star hath the west,—
All is morning,—all is day;—
Earth in trembling light is blest,—
Heaven is sunshine,—up, away;
Up,—the primrose lights the lane,—
Up,—the boughs with gladness ring;
Bent are bright-belled flowers again,
Drooped with bees,—O, soar and sing!

Ah, at last thou beat'st the sun,
Leaving low thy nest of love;
Higher,—higher, quivering one,
Shrill'st thou up and up above;
Wheel on wheel the white day through,
Might I thus with ceaseless wing,
Steep on steep of airy blue
Fling me up and soar and sing!

Spurner of the earth's annoy,
Might I thus in heaven be lost!—
Like to thee in gusty joy,
O, might I be tempest-tost!—
O, that the melodious rain
Of thy rapture I might fling
Down, till earth should swoon from pain,—
Joy,—to hear me soaring sing!

Yet, high wisdom by thee taught,
Were thy mighty rapture mine,
While the highest heaven I sought,
Nought of earth would I resign;
Lost in circling light above,
Still my love to earth should fling
All its raptures;—still to love
Caring but to soar and sing!

The lyric of Mr. Emerson, a well-known American writer, bears the same characteristic marks of a genial and nature-loving soul as those which distinguish the verses of Mr. Bennett. It is an address to the “Humble Bee,” and forms a worthy accompaniment to the “Skylark.” It has the same graphic touches of life and nature, and the same felicitous adaptation of language and rhyme to the subject, as those which render that so truthful and beautiful.

Like Mr. Bennett, he too is a close observer, and an intense admirer of nature. Thus, he somewhere in his own choice language expresses his love for her: “Give me health and a day,