

As I stand looking, a Skylark rises from a green meadow near, and soars towards the blue with a glorious outburst of passionate, loving music. It is his first song of welcome to spring. How sweet it sounds ! Like the primrose bloom, the notes are a reminder of future joys ; and although so simple and homely, there seems to be in them a great and wonderful story. The brown bird soars into the vault of heaven, singing as though his little heart could not contain the rapture he feels. At last he reaches his limit : he makes several efforts to rise higher, but fails ; and then with outspread wings he slowly descends to the earth.

Down, slowly down, but still singing ; and all the countryside around seems hushed into sympathy, listening, as it were, to his first song of welcome, and realising that these notes which come from such a small creature in the vast blue dome of heaven are the song of a genuine harbinger of spring, a bird that helps to make the spring-time what it is — an outburst of life going on into summer. Still he drops, moving in spiral circles towards the greensward, singing