

air as if its day were but begun. Lillias pointed to the bird, diminished almost to a speck, but relieved by the red light against a minute cloudlet.

“Happy little creature!” she exclaimed; “does it not seem rather a thing of heaven than of earth? Does not its song frae the clouds mind you of the hymn heard by the shepherds! The blast is but just owre, an’ a few minutes syne it lay cowering and chittering in its nest; but its sorrows are a’ gane, an’ its heart rejoices in the bonny blink, without a’e thought o’ the storm that has passed or the night that comes on. Were you a poet, Allan, like ony o’ your twa namesakes, — he o’ ‘The Seasons,’ or he o’ ‘The Gentle Shepherd,’ — I would ask you for a song on that bonnie burdie.” Next time the friends met, Thomson produced the following verses:—

TO THE LARK.

Sweet minstrel of the April cloud,  
 Dweller the flowers among,  
 Would that my heart were formed like thine,  
 And tuned like thine my song!  
 Not to the earth, like earth’s low gifts;  
 Thy soothing strain is given:  
 It comes a voice from middle sky,—  
 A solace breathed from heaven.

Thine is the morn; and when the sun  
 Sinks peaceful in the west,  
 The mild light of departing day  
 Purples thy happy breast.

And ah! though all beneath that sun  
 Dire pains and sorrows dwell,  
 Rarely they visit, short they stay,  
 Where thou hast built thy cell.

When wild winds rave, and snows descend,  
 And dark clouds gather fast,  
 And on the surf-encircled shore  
 The seaman’s barque is cast,