ambition is satisfied without making any permanent stay, and it begins to descend, not with a uniform downward motion, but by a series of droppings with intervals of simple hovering, during which it seems to be resting on its wings. Finally, as it draws near the earth, it ceases it song and descends more rapidly; but before it touches the ground it recovers itself, sweeps away with almost horizontal flight for a short distance, and disappears in the herbage. The time consumed in this evolution is at the most from fifteen to twenty minutes, more frequently less; nor have I ever observed it partially descend and soar upwards again. A writer in the 'Magazine of Natural History' affirms that 'those acquainted with the song of the Sky-Lark can tell, without looking at them, whether the birds be ascending or stationary in the air, or on their descent; so different is the style of the song in each case.' Yarrell was of the same opinion, though I am not certain that I have myself attained the skill of discriminating. In July the Lark ceases its soarings and song together, but in fine weather in October it receives a new inspiration and is musical again. From time to time during winter, if the season be mild, it resumes its aërial habits, but it neither ascends so high nor sings so long, two or three minutes being now the limits of its performance. Like most other birds, it sings least about noon and the first two hours of the afternoon; but it begins before sunrise, having been heard at midsummer as early as two o'clock, in the morning; and it sometimes continues its song till late on into the night, having been heard at ten o'clock, when it was quite dark. Occasionally too, it sings on the ground; and in a cage, as all the world knows, it pours out its melody with as much spirit as if its six inches of turf could be measured by acres, and the roof of its cage was the vault of heaven." In confirmation of its having the habit of singing far into the night, I may mention that Lord Falmouth has assured me that on his estate of Tregothnan, in Cornwall, he has heard it on a fine summer evening as late as eleven o'clock.

It has always been a source of happiness to me to have been born and to live in a country having such a charming accompaniment as the Sky-Lark. How much must our American cousins regret that the bird does not form part of their avifauna! how keenly also is the blank felt in Australia! and how much would either give if the Sky-Lark could be introduced and live among them! But, however much they may wish for it, I, for one, think its establishment in either country impossible. Nature's laws are strict, and difficult to understand; we cannot tell why the Nightingale will not live in Devonshire, nor the Grouse south of Wales. Audubon and others have tried the experiment by turning out cages full of Sky-Larks on Long Island, in the State of New York; but after a very short period they had all disappeared, and doubtless were soon back in Britain, if their pinions were sufficiently perfect to enable them to cross the Atlantic. In Australia similar attempts have been repeatedly made, with, so far as I can learn, no satisfactory result. How much more, therefore, ought we to value this cheerful creature, whose innate love for its native country prompts it ever to remember it! Having stated that the Sky-Lark is not found in America or in Australia, it will be well now to define the area over which it naturally ranges; and I am sure I shall not be making too sweeping an assertion, if I say that it is found in more or less abundance over the whole of North Africa, from Morocco to the Red Sea, and that it is dispersed in equal numbers over all parts of Europe, but becomes more and more scarce as we approach nearer the extreme north. I find it has been observed in the Ferroe Islands; and it is mentioned as one of the stragglers that visit Madeira. Mr. Jerdon states that it has been seen in Affghanistan and the Himalayas, but does not include it in the birds of India. Von Schrenck enumerates it among the birds of Amoorland; and Swinhoe states that it is abundant in China.

The nest is a slight structure of dried grasses, lined with finer fibres, and is placed in a depression of the ground among the corn, or under the shelter of a tuft of weeds or grasses. The eggs are four or five in number, of a greenish grey, irregularly freckled with a deeper tint of the same colour, greyish or umber brown, placed so thickly at the larger end as nearly to hide the ground-colour. The young, during the downy state of their existence, are very beautifully marked—so much so that it becomes necessary to give a description of them, in addition to the figures on the accompanying Plate. When ready to leave the nest, their wide gapes are orange; the bill pulpy and yellowish; the legs, toes, and claws thick and yellowish; the hind toe quite yellow; hind claw partially developed, being half the length of the hind toe; stripe over the eye and the throat pale yellow, as is also the whole of the under surface, except the chest, which is a vinous stripe bordered with bluish black; feathers of the upper surface spangled with brown, blackish brown, and fawn-colour, the latter occupying the margins and tips of the wing-feathers; neat eyelash, fawn-yellow.

The Plate represents a female and a nest of young, of the natural size. The flowering plant is the Ground-Ivy (*Nepeta glechoma*).