

Half an hour later we were filing through the corn-stubs towards the creek. Uncle Jethro carried his long musket under his arm; I had a stout hickory stick and a meal sack; while ahead of us, like a sailor on shore, rolled Calamity, the old possum-dog. [Pp. 11-12.]

Then there are the "swifts"—and the New Jersey "swift" is not a bird but a lizard that climbs trees and tempts the cats and the birds; there are squirrels and coons; there is the radiant beauty of the October night in the silent shadow of the woods so dimly lighted where the sleeping world yet seems all astir. There are the odorous pines, there are the tappings of the woodpeckers, there is the "spooky" appearance of the whip-poor-wills, lying lengthwise on the boughs or dropping their eggs casually among the sticks and gravel on the ground wherever they happen to be. Through all these lovely and delightful scenes our author rambles, for the most part in solitude, with eye and ear alert to catch the sights and the sounds of which the woods are full, with a keen sense of Nature's beauties in all her aspects, and with a sympathy which the reader will quickly recognize and to which will heartily respond. No pictures could be sweeter than these dainty vignettes, and hardly anything could be more engaging in these early winter days than these quiet excursions through meadows and fields on which the hand of winter has just begun to rest. The bits of human nature that sparkle through the book relieve it from anything like monotony, and its mirror-like surface faithfully reflects the quiet phases of the outside world.

WILD LIFE NEAR HOME.*

THE pine lands of New Jersey furnish the scene, the crisp clear nights of November and the following months the occasion, and "possums," coons, birds, rabbits, and chipmunks the companions, of the outdoor rambles described in this exquisitely printed volume. The glistening satin-like paper, the delicate illustrations, some of them in subdued tints, the brilliant letter press, the ready opening of the volume, and its moonlit cover, unite in allurements to a reader already captivated by the title. It is such a book as a civilized Thoreau might have written, or a spiritualized John Burroughs, or a Bradford Torrey, with attractions enhanced by the utmost that artist, printer, and binder can contribute.

The romance and the ridiculousness of the "possum up a gum tree" enliven the opening pages. It is the time of ripe persimmons, and the possum is abroad, likewise Uncle Jethro and his dog Calamity.

"Don't you sniff the 'simmons, Uncle Jeth?" Instinctively he threw his nose into the air.

"G' 'way, boy; g' 'way fum yhere! I ain't seen no possum. I's thinkin' 'bout dat las' camp meetin' in de pines;" and he began to hum:

"Lawd I wunda, who kilt John Henry,
In de la-ane, in de lane."

* *Wild Life Near Home.* By Dallas Lore Sharp. Illustrations by Bruce Horsfall. The Century Co. \$2.00.