

THE BEECH WOODS

or maple. What wild promptings stirred these shadowy forms to ever move with crafty vigilance upon their endless journeys? No tentative pursuit was begun without the searching of the forest ways with covert eyes and listening ears, or upturned, delicate nose to sense the presence of an enemy. Sometimes the playful young cotton-tails would scamper out into the bright moonlight that lay in irregular patches across their paths, or by the open fields at the edge of the wood. But when the fresh scent of lurking mink or weasel crossed their trail, they used their one great natural protection and sped away on nimble feet in dodging leaps.

Sometimes when the Night had dreamed in moonlight past the midnight hours, a sleepy bird would awaken strange echoes by pouring forth its full song. How full of hope these little feathered folk must be to overflow with joy in the dark hours; or, perhaps, they dream of the bright sunshine and the activities of the day and live them over again, like the Neighbour's dog who followed the chase again at night while